

news

OC stands against racism – a note from the President

To the Okanagan College community

The events that have transpired in the United States in the last week and the important conversations they have sparked about racism in our country, in our province and in our communities reminds us that there are significant social issues that remain of great concern to all of us.

In order to fulfill our mission of transforming lives and communities, we all, whether employees or students, must continue to work together toward a more empathetic, equitable and inclusive world. That means denouncing racism in all its forms. So, to be clear: racism has no place at Okanagan College.

We are a College that values diversity. We welcome, support and celebrate learners of all backgrounds and walks of life. Every member of the Okanagan College community should feel valued, seen, heard and, above all, safe.

We recognize that racism remains far too prevalent everywhere. Sadly no country, community or post-secondary institution is immune to intolerance. If you are experiencing racism on our campuses, we want to know.

I also want to acknowledge that acts of racism, discrimination and violence in our world can weigh particularly heavily upon us right now. They come at a time when our College community is already burdened by the uncertainty and anxiety associated with COVID-19.

If you need support, please don't hesitate to reach out. Students, you can connect with a counsellor [here](#) and access the Province's Here2Talk Mental Health Supports [here](#). Employees, please contact your supervisor or Human Resources to discuss the supports available to you.

Our strength is the people of Okanagan College. We are deeply proud of, and take heart in, the efforts of our students and employees to make our College and our world a place better by fostering equity, diversity and inclusion in so many ways. Furthermore, we remain committed to doing even more.

Jim Hamilton
President, Okanagan College

Sneak peek inside Health Sciences Centre released



The Okanagan College Foundation is helping more people get inside the new Health Sciences Centre, virtually.

The Foundation has released a sneak peek tour to show just how much progress has been made since the ground-breaking for the \$18.9-million centre took place in 2018.

"We were so excited to start offering in-person tours for faculty and staff and then COVID-19 hit," explains Helen Jackman, Okanagan College Foundation Executive Director.

"This video will give people a much better sense of how big the new building is, as well as the new and updated spaces that will benefit Okanagan College students taking health and social development programs."

The virtual tour features Maxine DeHart, Campaign Ambassador for Our Students. Your Health campaign, and is being shared with the community to help raise awareness of the need for the new centre.

The Health Sciences Centre is expected to be completed this fall. Click [here](#) to experience the virtual tour.

UBCO, Okanagan College keep up contributions during pandemic

OC President Jim Hamilton and UBC Okanagan Deputy Vice-Chancellor Deborah Buszard recently collaborated on a special feature in The Daily Courier. In the letter, the two leaders illustrated the countless ways in which college and university students, employees and alumni have supported each other and their communities during COVID-19. They also touched on the diverse roles OC and UBC Okanagan will play in the region's recovery.



"As leaders of the two public post-secondary institutions serving the Okanagan region, we want to express how inspired we are to be part of a community that has responded so well to such a challenging shift in our way of life.

"As key contributors to the economic, cultural and social health of the region, we feel it incumbent upon each of our institutions to uphold our commitments to education, training and service. Our faculty, instructors and staff have been instrumental in ensuring our ability to follow through, and we are grateful to the more than 20,000 students who have been attending Okanagan College and UBC's Okanagan campus through these past weeks while making the temporary switch to online and other forms of teaching and learning."

Read the full letter [here](#).

Kelowna Chevrolet invests in health professionals



Kelowna Chevrolet is investing in future health-care professionals, with a \$50,000 donation to the Our Students, Your Health campaign for a new Health Sciences Centre at Okanagan College.

Kelowna Chevrolet Dealer Partner Ian Speckman says he felt a responsibility to support the state-of-the-art Health Sciences Centre that will train health-care professionals for the region.

"As we're all realizing, health-care professionals are essential for our community," says Speckman. "This is about supporting students so they can get the right training and literally

go on to save lives, that is impactful."

Kelowna Chevrolet is donating in partnership with Kelowna Toyota for a total of \$100,000. Each local dealership is committing \$50,000 to the Okanagan College Foundation's \$5-million fundraising goal.

"This generous gift will help us open the doors to a world class Health Sciences Centre, set to open later this year," says Helen Jackman, Okanagan College Foundation Executive Director.

"But, as I mentioned, it also does so much more. By supporting the education of health care students, Kelowna Chevrolet and Kelowna Toyota are creating a legacy of excellent health care for our community."

Read the full story [here](#).

Note: The photo above was taken prior to the start of physical distancing measures.

people

JaceMasks ignite a spark of hope, encouragement and safety for community

A real-life homeschooling lesson quickly transpired into a successful mask-making business for OC's Teresa Kisilevich and her teenager, Jace.



In mid-May, the Associate Dean of Trades and Apprenticeship at Okanagan College found herself in need of a mask to visit a friend. A proficient quilter, she navigated an online tutorial and sewed one together. Noticing how straightforward it was, she decided to teach Jace how to make them.

"We put it out on Facebook that we were making masks and it got a little crazy," laughs Kisilevich. "At that moment Jace piped up: 'Let's call it JaceMasks!'"

By the start of June, the duo had made 220 masks with orders still coming in. The influx of orders provided Jace with the perfect opportunity to learn about running a business, alongside sewing the masks.

"It's become a little business and we've talked spreadsheets, profits, shipping, supply and demand. What's been great are the positive messages that have come alongside it," says Kisilevich. "It's part business, part community service."

Due to COVID-19, Jace made the switch to online learning, and Kisilevich adds that, "The lessons that have come alongside our small business have been so good."

"Some people have connected with us over Facebook, some have ordered from out of town and another person ordered 15 for her office. A friend of mine who is a naval officer ordered some for herself and her colleagues."

As for the process of mask-making and connecting with the community, Jace says, "I'm so thankful that I've been given the opportunity to become an entrepreneur."

ESLSAP Zooms: OC instructor helping new Canadians learn English and reduce feelings of isolation



Olia Bullen is an English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program (ESLSAP) instructor and coordinator at Okanagan College in Salmon Arm. She recently shared her experience delivering settlement English instruction through Zoom.

Okanagan College (OC): How long have you been instructing this course with OC?
Olivia Bullen (OB): I have been teaching settlement English since 2013. This is my first experience instructing online.

OC: What has been the most positive aspect about teaching online during the pandemic?
OB: The most positive aspect has been maintaining meaningful social connections and providing the learners with an opportunity to continue improving their English language skills through task-based learning. Another positive aspect is helping students gain computer skills that are increasingly important in the modern world.

OC: Why, from your perspective, is it so valuable that OC is still able to provide this program online for people new to Canada?
OB: Immigrating to a new country always implies some degree of social isolation. The current crisis intensifies the negative impact of it.

OC: How many students are in the class?
OB: I am currently instructing three levels – from absolute beginner to strong intermediate. There are four students in the absolute beginner class, five in strong beginner class, and 11 in intermediate.

OC's ESLSAP program offers learner-centred, small group language instruction focused on speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

With the help from community volunteer tutors, ESLSAP learners learn about life in Canada and establish connections with the members of the local community.

To learn more about the program, contact Olia Bullen: obullen@okanagan.bc.ca

Kelowna Mayor, WFN Chief shave their heads for health care

With their wives wielding clippers, Kelowna Mayor Colin Basran and Westbank First Nation Chief Christopher Derickson expressed a hint of apprehension for the looming buzz cuts they'd committed to, but not an ounce of regret for the profile they've been able to raise for a cause near and dear to their hearts.



Both leaders were able to raise more than \$10,000 each for Okanagan College's [Haircuts for Health Care](#) campaign and, having met their fundraising goals, met up in the College's courtyard recently for a physically-distanced buzz cut from their partners, Leanne Basran and Jordan Derickson (click [here](#) to see a video of the haircuts).

"I'm a huge supporter of Okanagan College and I wanted to do my part in helping this campaign," says Colin. "I know Christopher serves on the College's Board and I thought the two of us could lend our names to this amazing campaign to raise some money."

In less than two weeks both leaders exceeded their goals, helping raise more than \$23,000 for Okanagan College's new Health Sciences Centre that will train students for eight frontline health care professions. The Chief and Mayor's involvement also unlocked another gift. Okanagan College President Jim Hamilton donated \$5,000 after the campaign surpassed \$10,000.

"This is a very worthy cause. I'm glad to have been a part of it. I'm excited to see the amount of support we generated from this campaign and they still need to raise money, the campaign itself isn't over," says Christopher.

Read the full story [here](#).

notices

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:

- [Government of Canada announces flexibility in post-graduation work permit rules to help international students and Canadian post-secondary institutions](#)
- [Government of Canada is now accepting applications for the Canada Emergency Student Benefit \(CESB\)](#)
- [Province of British Columbia announces its Restart Plan for COVID-19](#)

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, ext. 4789
- 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 information.

Working on campus alone?

On behalf of Occupational Health and Safety

Reminder: any employees working on campus in isolation, located in a low traffic area, and/or outside of regular business hours, should please contact the security office for the campus by phone so they are aware of your presence. Work/study alone check-in, campus maps, security and emergency procedures are also available via the [OC Safe app](#).

Please send an email to your Regional Dean's office if you have any questions.

New Emerita/Emeritus Status Policy published

Okanagan College's Emerita/Emeritus Policy has been updated.

Originally developed for Okanagan University College in 1999, the current policy was assumed by Okanagan College in 2005. The new policy is the result of extensive internal consultation and review. It combines Emerita/Emeritus policies for professors, instructors and administrators, which were previously separate.

The appointment of an individual to Emeritus status is made to enhance teaching, scholarship, research, service and professional practice at the College. The appointment is made to recognize the meritorious service of a College professor, instructor, non-instructional faculty or administrator who is no longer an employee of the College but wishes to remain connected to the institution and contribute further to the academy. Emeritus status will allow the continuation of the commitment to the mission and mandate of the College.

Click [here](#) to read the policy and to learn more about eligibility criteria and appointment procedures/details.

Your health and safety rights and responsibilities

Did you know all workers in British Columbia have four basic health and safety rights?

Right No. 1 – You have the right to know about any potential hazards in the workplace. You have a right to training and information on machinery, equipment, working conditions, processes and hazardous substances. Training and information will be shared with staff related to COVID-19 responsibilities and expectations.

Right No. 2 – You have the right to participate in the process of identifying and resolving workplace health and safety concerns. You can participate through worker membership on [Joint Health and Safety Committees](#) and reporting [concerns](#) to your supervisor or employer. Workers also have the right to participate in workplace inspections and investigations.

Visit the [B.C. Federation of Labour Health and Safety Centre](#) website for detailed information. Stay tuned for rights no. 3 and 4 in the next issue of Inside OC.

Municipal Pension Plan statements available online

By the end of June, employees should receive their Member's Benefit Statement by mail directly from the Pension Corporation. This statement is a snapshot of your account and shows an estimate of the monthly pension payments you may receive when you retire.

Employees can also view their Member's Benefit Statement online available now by signing into My Account on the pension plan website located at mop.pensionsbc.ca.

- Sign into My Account
- Click reports > Benefits Statements
- Choose the year
- View the MBS as a PDF, or print it

Go paper-free for future pension statements

Employees are now able to choose to receive their future member benefits statement (MBS) and other important pension information and notifications digitally.

- Sign into My Account
- Confirm your contact information and select "yes"

Employee and Family Assistance Program is available to help

The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) can support employees and their eligible dependents. Here are some ways Lifeworks can help:

- 24/7 confidential access to professional support to help employees manage stress, anxiety, grief, financial concerns and more.
- Connected to support by phone, video or chat anytime, anywhere.
- Vast library of online resources for coping with trauma, building resiliency, self-care and managing change.
- A COVID-19 webpage with links to resources on topics such as self-isolation and caring for others.

More information is available on the [Lifeworks website](#).

- Username: okanagan
- Password: healthy
- Or by phone: 1-888-307-0590

events

Public health announcement

Ongoing – Please refer to the College's [coronavirus page](#) for more information on events, updated regularly.

Partners for Life – Canadian Blood Services Drive

Canadian Blood Services clinics are still open and accepting blood donations at this time. Help contribute to the Okanagan College team annual pledge as part of the 2020 Partner for Life campaign and consider donating to Canada's lifeline.

Donation information:

- All donors are asked to make an appointment online prior to donating. Book individually at blood.ca or GiveBlood APP or 1-888-2DONATE. Canadian Blood Services has implemented new safety requirements for COVID-19 in all of donor centres.
- Be sure to register your donation once so the Okanagan College Team gets credit. You only need to register once and all your donations are counted. (Okanagan College PARTNER ID# OKAN002612)
- Ongoing donation events can be found at blood.ca

Donation events:

- Kelowna – Donation Centre, Tue to Thu from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Sat, June 20
- West Kelowna – Lakeview Heights Baptist Church on Mon, June 29 from 12 – 6:45 p.m.

media

Kelowna Chevrolet made a \$50,000 donation to the Our Students, Your Health campaign, raising funds for the new Health Sciences Centre at Okanagan College. Featured on [Castanet](#), the dealership partnered with Kelowna Toyota to donate a collective total of \$100,000 to the new centre.

Kelowna Mayor Colin Basran and Westbank First Nation Chief Christopher Derickson shaved their heads after exceeding their fundraising goals for the Our Students, Your Health campaign. Together they raised over \$23,000 as showcased in the [Daily Courier](#), [Castanet](#) and [KelownaNow](#).

Dr. Tim Walters, English Professor at the College, was interviewed on [CBC Radio](#) talking about COVID-19 signs in Salmon Arm (30:00 start).

Brittani Sali, winner of the \$5,000 college tuition contest sponsored by the Payton and Dillon Budd Memorial Fund in partnership with Virgin Radio and the Okanagan College Foundation, was featured on [Castanet](#) and in the [Daily Courier](#).

OC alumnus James Palanio was featured in the [Penticton Herald](#), noting his contributions throughout COVID-19 and prior to the pandemic as a board chairman for School District 67.

The [Penticton Herald](#) highlighted the dynamic challenges that have come with COVID-19 for the College, interviewing interim vice-president Allan Coyle.

Okanagan College President Jim Hamilton and Deborah Buszard, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UBC Okanagan, co-contributed a letter in the [Daily Courier](#) highlighting the respective campuses ongoing efforts during COVID-19.

Sharon McKenna, alumna from the College's first class of Diploma Nursing (RN) students in 1976, was featured in the [Daily Courier](#). McKenna recently set up an annual scholarship for practical nursing students, covering the full program tuition costs.

Alumnus Ben Klick's online music fundraiser for the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, held on May 24, raised \$34,000, noted in the [Daily Courier](#).

The Greater Vernon Museum showcased the College's chemistry department on their [Instagram page](#), analyzing taxidermy and looking for traces of arsenic which were one used as preservatives.

The [Kelowna Capital News](#), [Daily Courier](#) and the [Salmon Arm Observer](#) recapped the College's decision to cancel CampOC for the summer of 2020 to ensure the health and safety of all attendees.

Director of Continuing Studies and Corporate Training Dennis Silvestrone was interviewed by [CBC Radio](#), [Daybreak South](#) in late May on the cancellation of CampOC (1:28 start).

Canadian Minister Mona Fortier was the keynote speaker for a webinar hosted by the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce and Okanagan School of Business on May 25, as featured in the [Kelowna Capital News](#).

Tyler Olsen, forward for the North Okanagan Knights of the Kootenay International Junior Hockey League, was highlighted in the [Vernon Morning Star](#) as one of 14 players from the league awarded a \$500 bursary. Olsen, who hails from Kelowna, will be attending Okanagan College in Vernon this fall to study business administration.

The [Keremoss Review](#) and [Revelstoke Review](#) both highlighted the Alahmad family, who spent a morning in early June filling sandbags for their Salmon Arm host family. A Syrian refugee family, the Alahmad's noted that they love to "volunteer," a word which family member Saraya stated she learned in her Okanagan College ESL class.

feedback

Do you have comments, questions or a message for INSIDE OKANAGAN COLLEGE? Please email Public Affairs c/o [Katie Marychuk](mailto:Katie.Marychuk).

To ensure the best chance for your submission to be 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 June 23, 2020.