

2017/2018

O/SIEM

A Spotlight on Indigenous Initiatives at Kwantlen Polytechnic University

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Where thought
meets action



WELCOME FROM SAL FERRERAS

Provost and Vice President, Academic

A warm welcome to the 2017/2018 academic year at KPU. As provost and vice president, academic and as a member of our university's Indigenous Advisory Committee it gives me great pleasure to have you with us and to share important, good news on Indigenous activity at KPU over the past year.

KPU continues the tradition of hosting the Surrey campus powwow that this year saw hundreds of guests, elders, parents, relatives and children cheer and encourage dozens of participants from across the region. This powwow has quickly established itself as a destination for drummers, singers, and dancers in the Lower Mainland and sends a clear signal that Indigenous activity is on the rise at KPU.

Prime Minister Trudeau has made it clear that Canada is determined to address long-standing issues affecting Indigenous Peoples in Canada. KPU stands strongly behind these declarations and will continue to roll out new initiatives that support, encourage and reinforce the place of our First Nations at the university.

KPU hosted its very first Open Doors: Open Minds forum to encourage science, technology, engineering and medicine (STEM) as viable career paths for Indigenous students presently in the secondary system in Surrey.

The event featured KPU Elder Lekeyten and notable speakers from the Surrey School District, Eagles of Tomorrow math education program, and KPU's sustainable agriculture program. Other activities included a maker lab hosted by KPU's Faculty of Science and Horticulture featuring interactive projects led by faculty members from the physics, biology, and computer aided drafting and design (CADD) departments and the Faculty of Trades & Technology.

The keynote feature of the event was a powerful presentation by American NASA astronaut Dr. John Herrington, a member of the Chickasaw Nation (Oklahoma), the only Native American to have traveled in space. Dr. Herrington captured the attention and the imagination of the Surrey School District students with an inspiring message of resilience, perseverance and being true to one's roots.

This event was made possible through a generous grant from the KPU Foundation and will enable KPU to hold two more sessions over the next two years.

The university embarked on a comprehensive study of the needs of Indigenous learners in the KPU region with a view to making several important recommendations aimed at increasing Indigenous participation at our polytechnic university. The report will be brought to the attention of the community in the fall of 2017 and will set in motion a number of positive actions for Indigenous learners.

On June 21, KPU celebrated National Indigenous Peoples Day at the Surrey campus with activities ranging from McKenna Family Pow Wow Dance Troupe to hoop dancing by Petie Chalifoux. On that day we announced the inaugural Minor in Indigenous Community Justice program that has been developed over the past two years. We are proud and excited to offer this program option for KPU students. The launch was covered with considerable enthusiasm by our local and provincial news media.

KPU continues to partner with the Squamish Training Centre in North Vancouver and has recently applied to the Ministry of Advanced Education for funding to support an expansion of educational offerings to include areas such as design, health, and technology in addition to the existing trades and pre-trades programs.

KPU continues its quest to become a destination of choice for Indigenous learners throughout the Lower Mainland. We will achieve this through continuous dialogue, meaningful engagement, and participation with our KPU Indigenous Advisory Committee and by working collaboratively with our neighbouring nations, the Kwantlen, Tsawwassen, Semiahmoo, Katzie, Musqueam and Squamish Nations to reach new learners in new ways.

KPU is proud to now also include the Qay'Qayt First Nation into the fold of its First Nation neighbours. Their traditional territories encompass areas of north Surrey, where KPU has established the soon-to-be-completed KPU Civic Plaza campus.

Have a wonderful and inspiring year,
Dr. Sal Ferreras
Provost and Vice President Academic

kpu.ca/op-academic





4TH ANNUAL KPU POWWOW

The 4th annual KPU Powwow, held September 24, 2016, saw hundreds of people attend and engage throughout the event, which included a competition powwow and more than a dozen regional vendors.

Ornamented and dignified in regalia were female dancers who danced fancy shawl, jingle dress, and traditional categories. The men's categories included fancy, grass, traditional, and prairie chicken dances. All categories had their own distinct regalia.

Dozens of dancers along with eight drum groups took part. Dancers and drummers were diversely represented, ranging from children to seniors, and all ages in between. Close to the action, vendors featured handcrafted wares, such as clothing and jewelry.

Supporters from across the KPU and Indigenous communities came together to ensure the powwow's success. Greatest thanks goes out to the powwow participants without whom the sharing of these incredible traditions would not be possible.

Looking forward, KPU hopes to further enhance the experience for all involved.

kpu.ca/powwow

6TH ANNUAL KPU ABORIGINAL OPEN HOUSE



The KPU 6th Annual Your Path: Aboriginal Open House took place on April 19 at KPU Langley. Here, Indigenous high school students from surrounding districts got a taste of KPU's post-secondary experience and an idea of how to plan ahead before leaving high school.

Carrying forward tradition from previous years, an official opening, territorial welcome and song were presented by Kwantlen First Nation Elders Cheryl Gabriel and Lekeyten Antone and the Red Hawk Singers.



Faculty and staff showcased KPU programs, making sure the event was informative and engaging. The programs featured that day included those from the Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, the School of Business, and the Faculties of Health, Trades and Arts. The hands-on approach to the sessions gave attendees a chance to assemble and debug the various projects. The activities were interactive, interesting, and, thanks to an adjusted format, just the right length of time. The day wrapped up with students learning about all of the opportunities provided at KPU, facilitated through discussion circles.

kpu.ca/aboriginal/events



INDIGENOUS STUDIES AT KPU

Melinda Kachina Bige, (Cree and Dene) from the Lutsel K'e Dene community in the Northwest Territories and KPU alumni, taught Introduction to Indigenous Studies 1100 this past year. After graduating from KPU with a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in sociology, she went on to obtain a Master of Indigenous Governance from the University of Victoria.

Her students explored histories, cultures, and the contemporary situation of Indigenous Peoples in North America, with special attention to Indigenous Peoples in Canada as well as pre-contact histories and cultures. Critical examinations challenged assumptions acquired from colonial culture in order to help develop informed views on Indigenous cultures and histories. Students also gained Indigenous teachings and traditional knowledge from various Indigenous perspectives, including those of Elders and local communities.

Melinda is a proud mother of a daughter named Piyesis, meaning "Little Bird" in Cree. Her husband, Brandon Gabriel, is her biggest inspiration and continues to support her and her endeavors.

kpu.ca/calendar



Melinda Kachina Bige
& Brandon Gabriel

Quotes from students who took the course:

"This class isn't just about learning history in Canada – it goes so much further, into culture, healing, storytelling and still affects Indigenous people today in the 21st century. It's a must to go beyond the Eurocentric world and learn the truth behind Canadian history."

"It is a very unique course offered at KPU and it provides education and insight into Indigenous culture and understanding the effects of colonialism."

"I think every Canadian needs to learn Canadian history through an Indigenous lens. It is an eye-opening course."

CONGRATULATIONS TO JO-ANN ARCHIBALD

Dr. Jo-ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem, of Stó:lō and Xaxli'p ancestry, was the recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Laws at KPU's spring convocation ceremony. Honorary doctorate degrees are the highest form of recognition granted by KPU to recognize persons who are distinguished by their significant contributions and accomplishments and whose excellence will reflect positively upon KPU.

Jo-ann's career extends over 40 years and has been marked with a considerable amount of success as an educator, leader and author in the field of Indigenous education. Jo-ann is a professor of educational studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC) where she also served as associate dean for Indigenous education and director of the Faculty of Education's Indigenous teacher education program, NITEP. Jo-ann's work has shaped Indigenous education through curriculum, program development, policy, teaching and research.

She is a visionary and change agent, and has enhanced Indigenous education in many ways. Jo-ann is the author of *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*, a book which is held as a sacred vision by Coast Salish Elders and has been cited and referenced as a seminal work in the field of Indigenous knowledge systems and community protocol. At UBC, she served as the director of the First Nations House of Learning and worked with the Faculties of Arts, Agricultural Sciences, Law and many others to develop and implement Indigenous projects.

Jo-ann is also nationally recognized for creating culturally relevant teacher education and graduate programs for Indigenous students. In her role as the associate dean for Indigenous education in the Faculty of Education, Jo-ann advanced a number of initiatives including SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement) and the Faculty of Education's "Year of Indigenous Education."

Jo-ann has received a great deal of recognition for her work. In 2000, she received a National Aboriginal Achievement/Inspire Award, and, in 2012, the Simon Fraser University Outstanding Alumni Award for Academic Achievement. In 2013, Jo-ann received a distinguished career achievement award from the American Education Research Association's Scholars of Colour. In 2015, Jo-ann was presented with the UBC Killam Award for Excellence in Mentoring.

kpu.ca/alumni



Dr. John Herrington

OPEN DOORS: OPEN MINDS

On May 15, KPU successfully launched the Open Doors: Open Minds Indigenous STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) forum at KPU Surrey. Made possible by the KPU Foundation Board, this forum brought together Indigenous students from Surrey School District 36 with Indigenous leaders and advocates from the Surrey School District, BCIT, the Squamish Trades Centre, Science World and the math-support program, Eagles of Tomorrow.

Our special guest was retired NASA Astronaut and first Native American (Chickasaw) to travel to space, Dr. John Herrington, who delivered an inspiring message and shared compelling stories about achievement and perseverance. Open Doors: Open Minds was established to introduce Indigenous students to a wide range of STEM career opportunities. Students participated in a maker lab organized and animated by the computer aided drafting and design, physics, sustainable agriculture and biology departments, as well as the Faculty of Trades and Technology.

Students and local school district participants expressed their support and encouragement for an additional two annual events scheduled as part of the generous KPU Foundation allocation.

TSAWWASSEN FARM SCHOOL

The Tsawwassen Farm School is thrilled to be starting its third season of on-the-farm learning. On March 23, a cohort of 15 students embarked on a journey to learn how to grow food.

The program is a partnership between the Institute of Sustainable Food Systems at KPU and the Tsawwassen First Nation.

The 20-acre farm is on Tsawwassen First Nation traditional territory and has been developed with the goal of becoming a hub for the community. The teaching curriculum includes topics from soil science to Indigenous food systems and students from all over B.C. attend every year.

Get a taste of what the Farm School has to offer by checking out our video at [youtube.com/watch?v=-JiZ1sTfl2o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JiZ1sTfl2o) To learn more about the Farm School, contact us at 778.846.FARM or visit us online.

kpu.ca/tfnfarm



NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

On June 21, KPU hosted its third-annual celebration honouring National Aboriginal Day.

The event started off with a feast for local Indigenous leaders hosted in the KPU Aboriginal Gathering Place, along with a welcome from the senior director of Student Affairs at KPU, Joshua Mitchell.

In west coast fashion, KPU's Elder in Residence, Lekeyten Antone, was blanketed so as to carry out duties as the day's emcee. Following his warm welcome, Lekeyten delivered a historic overview of the KPU Coat of Arms, as well as describing what National Aboriginal Day means to him.

Attendees were honoured by two performances. Champion hoop dancer, Petie Chalifoux, gave a spectacular performance, along with explanations of how hoop dancing came to be and its cultural significance. This was followed by dancers of all ages comprising the McKenna Family Pow Wow Dance Troupe. With their performances, they provided explanations as to the significance of their respective regalia and the types of dance each performed.

In closing, KPU's vice provost, students, and dean, Faculty of Educational Support and Development, Dr. Jane Fee, detailed KPU's ongoing commitment to Truth & Reconciliation and unveiled the minor program of Indigenous community justice.



GATHERING OF NATIONS POWWOW

The Gathering of Nations Powwow is an annual cultural event that takes place in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It is the largest powwow in North America which brings together all Indigenous Nations from North and South America for a two-day cultural celebration.

This year, Indigenous students from KPU - Justin Bige, Samantha Davis, Amiee Risby and Alanna Edwards – attended. These students discovered that for first timers, such a gathering has a profound effect on identity and cultural pride, and presented unique opportunities to meet with fellow Indigenous Peoples.

One of the major highlights is the Miss Indian World Pageant, which selects the winner to be a representative of all Indigenous Peoples in North and South America for the year. This year a

representative from the Mohawk Nation in Canada was selected.

The competition powwow dancing featured men's and women's fancy, chicken, grass, traditional and jingle categories. There were also musical performances showcasing different Indigenous musicians from all over the Americas.

A trade centre hosted the numerous vendors, highlighting the talent of Indigenous artisans' handmade jewelry, such as silver and turquoise earrings, necklaces, along with drums, traditional fans, Indigenous-owned clothing lines and other crafts. Food vendors were on site selling various food items, including popular powwow foods such as fry bread, Indian tacos and grilled corn on the cob - just some of the perennial favourites!

KPU OFFERS NEW INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY JUSTICE MINOR PROGRAM

KPU announced its new minor in Indigenous community justice program on National Aboriginal Day. The first-of-its-kind Indigenous studies program, launching this fall, focuses on community and justice.

The program offers unique Indigenous perspectives and includes partnerships with local Indigenous communities and Peoples throughout Turtle Island, the name given to North America by some Indigenous communities.

“My hope is that this minor will play a role in honouring, acknowledging, and respecting Indigenous Peoples,” said criminology instructor Dr. Lisa Monchalin, who developed the program. “Canada is Indigenous land, it always has been, and it always will be.”

Monchalin, who is of Algonquin, Métis, Huron, and Scottish descent, says the innovative program was created to provide students with a richer awareness and understanding of Indigenous communities, cultural knowledge and justice issues.

Courses in the program will be taught by Indigenous instructors and instructors with practical community justice experience using Indigenous teaching techniques such as a focus on oral tradition, Elder teachings, learning through experiences, and sharing-circle learning.

As part of a KPU undergraduate degree, students will be encouraged to challenge false assumptions, identify the impact of colonialism, explore systemic and institutional racism and the impact of European influence on Indigenous life, cultures, and languages. Students will also critically assess government and corporate intrusion on Indigenous rights and lands, and Indigenous Peoples’ collective resistance and activism.

Access to Indigenous content and learning methods will be ensured through ongoing input from KPU’s Indigenous Advisory Committee, composed of local Indigenous community members from shared territories, school boards and community organizations.

“There is an urgent need for awareness and capability regarding Indigenous justice issues in an array of professions, particularly service delivery, education, economics, geography and criminal justice,” said KPU Faculty of Arts dean, Dr. Diane Purvey. “Completing this minor will open new doors to employment for students wanting to work respectfully and effectively with Indigenous Peoples and communities.

“KPU proudly borrows its name from the Kwantlen First Nation. Our university is located on the shared traditional, unceded territories, of the Kwantlen, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen, Qay Qayt and Musqueam people,” said Dr. Salvador Ferreras, provost and vice president, academic. “The knowledge and traditions of these communities must play an important role in the university that serves them. Our new Indigenous community justice program reflects the importance that KPU places on addressing Indigenous participation and inclusion. This program effectively puts our words into action and practice.”



GREETINGS FROM THE GATHERING PLACE

Tansi! It's always a privilege and pleasure to welcome and guide Indigenous learners along their educational journey at Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

Our services, from the initial introduction to university life through to the excitement of graduation, range from advising, counselling, recreation, financial aid and career exploration, to access to a wide array of programs informed by long-standing connections with traditional, cultural and spiritual communities.

Our Aboriginal Gathering Place, along with our Elder in Residence on the Surrey campus, have become a reality that continues to welcome students, faculty and staff to learn and reflect through a variety of events and activities: guest speakers, tutoring, meetings of the Aboriginal Student club, powwows, conferences and more.

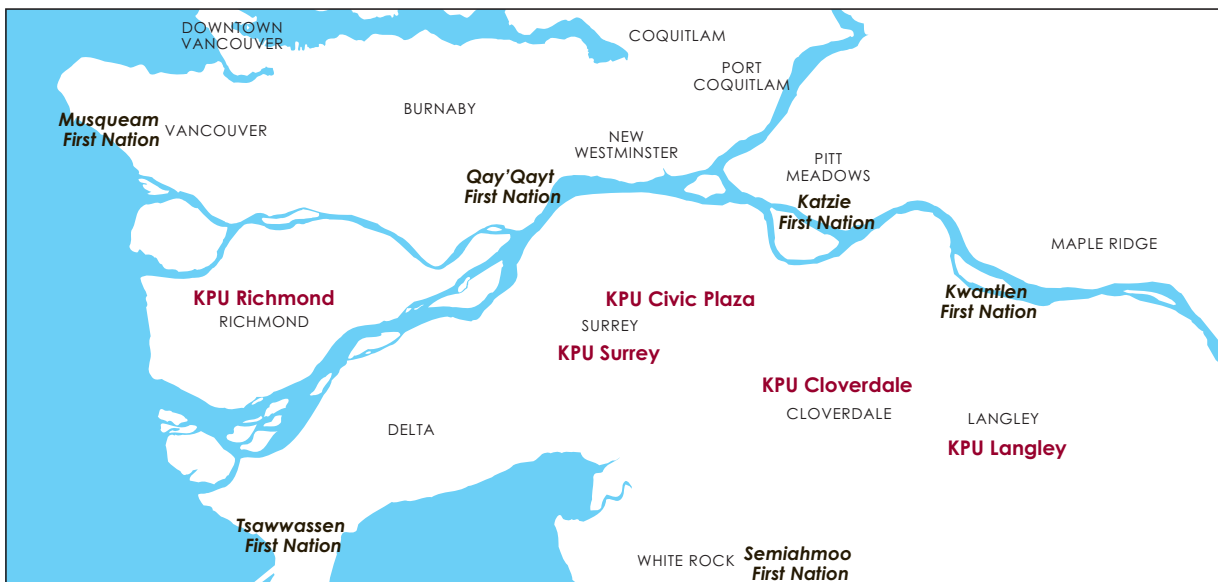
Come by our Aboriginal Gathering Place, located at the KPU Surrey Main Building, room 168. To find out more, be sure to visit our website at kpu.ca/aboriginal

GatheringPlace@kpu.ca | 604.599.2269



Two of the three hosts,
Sarah and Alanna

KPU wishes to acknowledge the First Nations in our region on whose traditional territories our campuses reside:



Indigenous Services for Students:

- Academic advising
- Counselling
- Recreation and cultural activities
- Connections to Indigenous organizations

Information and Support for:

- Band and Metis funding
- Employment opportunities
- Scholarships and awards
- Emergency funding

CONTACT

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kpu.ca/aboriginal

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