

**NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS REPORT
MARCH 2021**

ACCESS AND REGIONS

MIXALAKWILA CAMPUS- PORT HARDY

Submitted by Donna Merry

Students in the Mount Waddington region began the Carpentry Foundation Harmonized certificate program in Port McNeill on March 8. Regional Manager Donna Merry applied for funding through WorkBC's Skills and Training for Economic Recovery (STER) grant. Participants are fully supported for tuition, fees, books, PPE, tools and personal supports such as assistance with transportation and childcare costs.

Funding was announced in late December, and since then participants have been recruited, a master carpenter hired to deliver instruction and a commercial location has been completely outfitted and transformed into a classroom and shop space for thirteen students. Special thanks to the Trades and Technology department for their support and effort in bringing this program to the North island region, and to Department of Accessible Learning Services (DALs) for providing American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters to support a hearing-impaired student in the class.

Rural students have experienced two sides of the changes to online learning due to COVID-19. On one hand, there was the loss of face-to-face instruction and student services at their local campus. On the other hand, there is now access to a greater variety of programs and courses than ever before through online delivery. However, many students in the Mount Waddington region do not have personal computers or adequate skills to take advantage of the new opportunities. In response, Continuing Education and Training (CET) has launched Digital Essential Skills for Employment and Lifelong Learning. The eight-week pilot course is being offered at Tsulquate Village for Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nation members, also funded through the STER grant. The program provides computer skills training to participants from absolute beginners to those with introductory skills, to enable them to engage in online learning, make employment applications, pursue government services, and consider future online employment opportunities. The funding provides tuition and a laptop computer to participants who complete the training program. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the online program is supported by a CET program assistant who lives in the First Nation community to assist students with registration and computer access.

Small-businesses on the North island who did not have a strong internet presence were at a disadvantage when the COVID-19 pandemic suddenly closed operations in March 2020. Many businesses in the region did not have a website and had no capacity to make online sales. Enter the DEEP program: DEEP stands for Digital Elevation Experience Program and is a business development program to provide participants with the skills to build an internet brand and presence, launch digital sales and manage inventory. The DEEP program was developed in partnership with Serena Neumerschitsky, a local consultant and entrepreneur in Port Hardy, and offered in partnership with the Port Hardy Chamber of Commerce, which received a WorkBC Community Workforce Response Grant to deliver the program.

Nine participants completed the program in December and there is demand for more training. The Chamber and NIC are partnering to make another funding application, and the program is now being offered in Campbell River, with ongoing discussions to deliver it further afield through NIC's connections at Continuing Education and Training Association of BC (CETABC).

TRADES AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Trades and Technical programs seem to have two speeds. Like a traffic light, green means go fast and yellow means go faster! (not that we condone speeding violations). There are no red lights, just a brief pause and off we go again.

Who needs March to come in like a lion when you have a January with two Carpentry Apprenticeships, a Heavy Mechanical Level 2, Plumbing Apprenticeship Level 3, Electrical Level 2 and not one, but three cohorts of Electrical Apprenticeship Level 4. All things are possible with the expertise of David Johns who will see his students through to their Interprovincial exams on March 18 and 19.

February happened fast as we rolled out a full cohort of Carpentry Foundation at the Comox Valley campus and, to meet student demand, one in Campbell River. Coastal Forest Worker Certificate and Technology programs also launched simultaneously while the Coastal Forest Homalco group that began in December is now over halfway through their program with the wrap up in April. Instructor Karl Plautz joined students for the Metal Fabricator Foundation program, two new instructors have come on board to support our Electrical Foundation programs in Campbell River and Port Alberni (an introduction will follow). Oh but wait...there is also Welding Foundation, Plumbing Foundation and Plumbing Apprenticeship Level 3 (you may want to write some of this down, there will be a test at the end).

We are also excited to get underway with two of our pilot micro-credential programs. In February, Motion Picture Production Assistant (MPPA) and Fundamentals of GIS Mapping and Drone Operations were extremely well received, maxing out at the cap of 60 for MPPA and 20 for GIS Mapping. With the flexible formats of these micro-credential programs, we are reaching out to learners who, under different circumstances, may not have the time, resources or opportunity to pursue the next level of their education or interests.

One of our Motion Picture students had these comments:

The course is really great. The learning materials are valuable and effective, and the instructors are great. The Panel Sessions with Industry Experts is a valuable tool for students to network with people in the Industry and get real life experiences and facts from the participants.

The learning platform for video is very well laid out even if you are a new virtual learner. Technical support works above and beyond for both the students and the Instructors. The course offers a lot of flexibility in learning styles – virtual sessions, video recording, transcript and closed captioning. There are several opportunities for the students to interact with Instructors so that everyone can participate virtually. It's a great course and I'm learning a lot.

On February 23rd, our Professional Cook Level 3 students wrote their final exam on their way to Red Seal certification. And it's official - well done students! We could not be sadder to see your recipes go.

And here we are in March. Sunshine brought the 1st in like a lamb and then... There are two cohorts of Carpentry Apprenticeship Level 3, three cohorts of Electrical Apprenticeship Level 3, Plumbing Apprenticeship Level 4, Heavy Mechanical Level 3 and sorry but you're out of luck if you had your heart set on Electrical Apprenticeship Level 1. Professional Cook Level 2 will begin the end of March with

Chef Xavier Bauby and we are offering a part-time Carpenter Apprenticeship Level 1 at the Comox Valley campus in the evenings from 6 to 9pm with new instructor Ryan McElroy.

March is a micro-credential month! There is another round of MPPA micro-credential then Parts and Warehousing Person Foundation, and now there are two more!

Motion Picture Craft Services prepares students to work in the Craft Services department of the motion picture industry. This is a critical role held by this team including the fundamentals of food and beverage preparation, service and storage as well supporting food services based out of craft kitchens and/or craft trucks.

Veteran instructor Ivan Peterson will be delivering the next micro-credential in Port Alberni. Fabricator-Welder Combo is slated for March 8th with 14 students. This unique program offers level one Metal Fabricator and Welder technical training through four micro-credentials thereby providing trades certification for both skilled trades while also offering formal endorsements of this skill-based trades program.

Special Highlights

In January we held two short programs for Women in Construction Trades. These were tuition-free hands-on orientations to various high demand skilled trades made available to women in the Comox Valley and Campbell River regions. Trade topics included Metal Fabrication, Electrical, Carpentry, Heavy Mechanical, Culinary and more.

These engaging programs received many favorable reviews with students and instructors. Given the opportunity to try what might be thought of as a non-traditional career for women in general allows students to gain the confidence to take that next step towards a new beginning.



*I LOVED this 2-week introduction and HIGHLY recommend it to women of all ages.
Janet Deakin, Women in Construction Trades student*

It has now become somewhat of a tradition at North Island College and this year was no different. Once again, the Trade Sampler program quickly filled with 12 students from School District 72 interested in trying their hand at the various Trades programs offered at NIC. The program started up January 25th and will run through to April 23rd. While students were eager to get into the shop, we still feel it is our responsibility to also provide students with “practical” skills necessary upon entering the workforce. Safety in our shops is the number one priority so day one was spent with shop technician Joe Fornari touring the shops, going over protocols and procedures and reviewing WorkSafe rules and regulations. Day two and three, students participated in a Resume Building workshop with seasoned instructor Sharon Korol and a Bullying and Harassment lecture with Marketing and Communications’ Suzanne Jolly. Suzanne welcomed the opportunity to hold a respectful open discussion with a good group of students to establish a basic understanding of what harassment or bullying really looks like in the workplace, how to recognize it and possibly preventing it or becoming subjected to it.



Students also earned their Occupational First Aid Level 1 and WHMIS certifications – valuable assets in any environment.

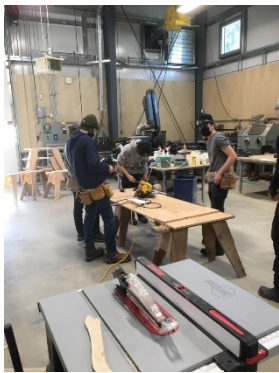
Now that they were all “safetied-up” it was time to get their hands dirty! To finish off the first week students were ready to master the forklift! Instructor Dave Green guided students through the Forklift Operator course. After completing the theory and exam portion, each student put NIC’s forklift through its paces with a number of maneuvers meant to teach students how to

safely and efficiently handle cargo. All 12 students breezed through the course with flying colors and now have a valid operator certificate good for 2 years.

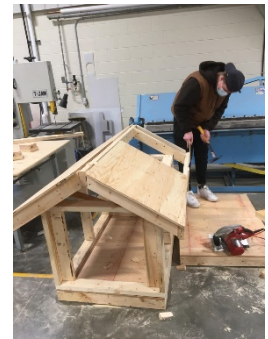
In week two, students spent working on the basics of electrical wiring with Trades Facilities Technician Robert Stone before moving into the shop for some practical exercises with lighting. From wiring a simple switch (please keep in mind that the use of the word “simple” is coming from someone whose vast electrical knowledge is not to stick a fork in the toaster) to setting up a more sophisticated surface mount circuit by bending EMT pipe.



Moving right along, students went from Electrical to Small Engine Repair. Trades and Technical Support Technician Dean Weslosky is our resident expert when it comes to small engines. The students started out in the classroom learning to use and read precision measuring tools used in diagnostics and rebuilding of small engines. Students disassembled and reassembled 5hp Briggs & Stratton engines according to manufacturer specifications, added fuel and fired them up! We are happy to report they all met with success!



In the past three weeks, students have been knee-deep in saw dust with Carpentry instructor Eric Patterson. Carpentry is one of the integral modules of the Trade Sampler program where students spend a good portion of their time. Before students move to the shop and practical components of their projects, they should be well versed in the use and safety of both hand and power tools. Current projects have students building sawhorses, doghouses and working with chisels and clamps for some basic joinery skills. As AutoCad is also used frequently in Carpentry, Eric has introduced students to the time saving advantages of this program by having them design and complete a basic blueprint drawing.



In the weeks to come, the Sampler agenda continues to provide students with a variety of potential career options in Forestry, Automotive, Heavy Mechanical, Welding and Plumbing. They will return to Carpentry for their final project the last two weeks in April.

Of Special Note

Taking an exceptional initiative for the North island communities, Regional Manager of the Mixalakwa campus in Port Hardy, Donna Merry, applied for and was awarded a Skills and Training for Economic Recovery Grant allowing for a cohort of Carpentry Foundation to be offered from March to August in Port McNeill. This program is open (and tuition-free) to unemployed or under-employed individuals impacted by COVID-19. This opportunity is not often available in remote areas and it is exciting to deliver it to students who may not have access to the larger institutions.



We welcome new members to the team!

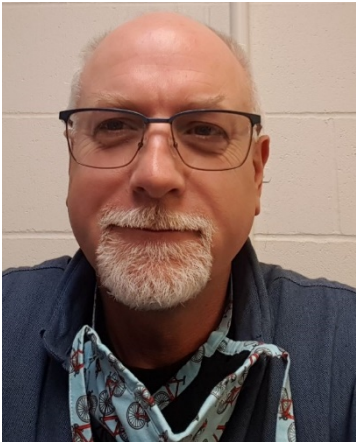
Ian Talbot is our new Trades and Technical Program Support Technician. A Master Electrician, he spent the last six years with BC Hydro as a Generation Electrician and Plant Operator as well as owning an electrical contracting company. Ian was born and raised in Courtenay and has the West Coast coursing through his veins. An avid outdoorsman, Ian shares his love of camping, skiing, sailing, rock climbing and anything to do with nature itself with his two children. His talent does not stop at Electrical, he has a Doctorate in Traditional Chinese Medicine and is currently halfway to acquiring his

Provincial Instructor's Diploma. With such a wide range of interests and field experience, we are excited to have him onboard as our new Support Technician.

Brent DiGiuseppe is one of our new Electrical Foundation instructors. After spending the '90's in Japan teaching ESL, Brent moved to BC in 2000. Working all over the mainland as a Commercial/Industrial Controls Electrician, he finally settled in the Central Interior. Maybe "settled" is the wrong word. His last adventure saw him teaching Industrial Electrical in the Middle East to recruits of the Qatari Royal Navy in Doha at the College of the North Atlantic, Qatar. Obviously, that was the most boring job EVER, so here he is at our Port Alberni campus sharing his knowledge and expertise with a full cohort of Electrical Foundation students. Brent is happily married with two daughters that are the apples of his eye (one enrolled in NIC's Bachelor of Business Administration program!) and he is passionate about all things music, learning and technology. Welcome Brent!



And in this corner...Introducing Jamie Leslie as part of our Electrical team! Jamie is currently instructing a full cohort of Electrical Foundation students at the Campbell River campus. No stranger to the classroom, Jamie spent 13 years as an Industrial Electrician before deciding to share his knowledge by becoming a teacher. Prior to coming to NIC, Jamie spent six years at Howe Sound Secondary School, three of which were under Kwantlen Polytechnic University as a remote campus teaching Electrical Foundation to high school students. He also has 19 years of teaching in a variety of technology educational areas at Highland Secondary School where he established a popular and successful Electronic Program whose students over the years participated in the Skills Canada competitions, with a number of Provincials Champions and a National Champion – for bragging rights! Jamie and his wife raised their children in the Comox Valley and are the proud (and brave) grandparents of three!



Bidding Farewell

And yet again we must say goodbye to one of the most familiar faces of NIC. For the past 23 years, students at the Campbell River bookstore were greeted by Jill Xotta who guided them through the shelves of books, binders, supplies and materials for each and every program. A daunting task for some, new and returning students were set at ease with Jill's friendly and thoughtful manner and her willingness to go that extra mile to ensure students had every resource they needed to excel and succeed. For that, we in Trades and Technical programs are truly grateful. We will miss Jill's wealth of experience and knowledge, her meticulous work ethic and dedication to her position and to our students. Now you will probably find Jill kayaking in the estuary, hiking through the Beaverlodge Lands, camping in the great outdoors or doting on her three grandchildren, and putting her skills as a perfectionist to work planning her daughter's wedding! Happy Retirement Jill!!!



OFFICE OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT (OGE)

Updates from International Education

Submitted by Romana Pasca

Global Greening Project

NIC has been invited by one of its partners in Ireland to enter in a worldwide competition to win one individual **Study Abroad Scholarship** for an NIC student to study abroad in Ireland. The value of the scholarship is approximately **€5000 plus return flights**.



Students and staff at NIC are invited to upload a Go Green photo on Instagram for a chance to win the big prize.

The Culinary Arts Program will join the competition by preparing an Irish menu to be served on March 17th at the Campbell River Campus.

Faculty Mobility

NIC has successfully submitted an application to the Faculty Mobility for Partnership Building Program, a very competitive program subsidized by Global Affairs Canada. The Faculty Mobility for Partnership Building Program provides Canadian faculty with short-term opportunities to build or expand partnerships with Latin American and Caribbean institutions through teaching and/or research at the college, undergraduate, and graduate levels.

Through this application, Laura Johnston, Instructor in the English Department, will aim to initiate a teaching collaboration with the Indigenous Department at the Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica exploring to reimagine connections and geographies from Indigenous perspectives through shared teachings and experiences.

Peer Connection

OGE and Student Life have partnered to launch the NIC Peer Connections program, a new initiative to help new NIC students, particularly students studying from overseas, during their transition and adjustment to post-secondary life. New students are connected with peers already studying at NIC with the aim of providing practical and social support and encourage engagement. Students are invited to join virtual groups designed as safe and informal spaces to share experiences, opinions, challenges and successes.

CICan Conference 2021/BC Council for International Education Summer Conference 2021

OGE has been accepted to present two recent initiatives developed at NIC:

Toward Decolonizing International Exchange and Academic Mobility

What type of preparation do we offer students and faculty engaging in academic mobility? How do we ensure field schools and semesters abroad mean more than an international experience to add to a resume? How do we go from “going abroad” to “learning abroad”? This session will discuss the work to develop diverse means of cultural introspection as a non-traditional approach to intercultural learning and competence development. The session will talk about using stories, cultural autobiographies, and more hands-on approaches such as creative journaling as alternatives to euro-centric intercultural competence development approaches.

Changing Attitudes to Study Global

Attitude, confidence or lack thereof, unclear understanding of the future benefits and opportunities for employment, lack of encouragement to participate, as well as financial challenges have been considered as main factors contributing to discourage study mobility experiences pre-COVID-19. This session will explore an innovative approach to changing students’ attitudes to outbound mobility post-COVID-19. A BC-Northwest Territories Study Abroad Peer Support pilot project designed to address barriers to outbound mobility in a collaborative virtual space, presents the results of investigating ways to create a new, more inclusive, and socially just model of study abroad in the emerging post-COVID-19 post-secondary education landscape.

STUDENT SERVICES AND REGISTRAR

Student Services

Submitted by Felicity Blaiklock

Counselling Department Updates:

Digital orientation presentations on "Thriving not surviving" have continued from fall through the winter term. Subjects included classroom presentations on *How to manage the stress of learning in a digital environment*, and the *Practice of Compassionate Enquiry*, as well as *Healthy living and Relationships in Canada* for international students. The Thriving in Action series also included presentations on anxiety and getting rid of unhealthy habits.

Healthy Relationship week was held in February, and presentations were held on Resiliency and on Gratitude.

In addition to all these activities, counsellor Amy Rowes has been supervising a counselling practicum student. Amy along with other counsellors also sit on several college committees including: Campus Life Advisory Committee, Sexual Violence Education Team, Student Case Management Team, and the Mental Health and Well-being committee. They remain at the ready to receive calls from Faculty in the event their students need immediate support, are also provide key support for the Early Assist service.

Campus Suicide Prevention Grant

NIC submitted a successful application for a \$50,000 campus suicide prevention grant from the Canadian Mental Health Association’s BC Division, in partnership with BC’s Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions. NIC will be using this grant to fund various initiatives including:

1. Hiring a 50% Well-Being Strategist.

2. Offering suicide prevention training to students employees and volunteers.
3. Offering 2 internal grants to engage faculty and staff in initiatives to promote mental-health and well-being across all NIC campuses.

Staff and Faculty Thank you Initiative

In November 2020, we launched an initiative so that students could recognize the contribution of NIC instructors and staff. Students nominate someone whose expertise, kindness and/or support has made a difference. Nominees are sent an thank you e-card with the comments included. To date, we have recognized 14 faculty and 3 staff.

Small Rural College Collective (SRC Collective)

Student Affairs managers and directors from some of BC's smaller, rural PSIs are collaborating to share information, ideas and events to support student success. NIC Student Life/Affairs are coordinating the collaboration, and it includes representation from: Selkirk College, College New Caledonia, College of the Rockies, University of Northern BC, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology.

New Student/Dual Credit Orientation

An Orientation session was held on February 1 for all dual credit students, as well as any other new students starting a program in February. Over 100 students attended the live session which covered a variety of important topics, including Indigenous supports, academic supports, personal supports, and student engagement opportunities. Representatives from the Library and Learning Commons, Student Technical Services, NISU, and Student Services were present. The session was recorded and placed on our Virtual Orientation webpage for those unable to attend. We made a point to communicate directly with District Coordinators so they were aware of the session, and to encourage their students to attend. The next live orientation session will be held in May for students starting the spring/summer term.

Early Assist

Early Assist continues to be well utilized by faculty and staff with 62 referrals received to date this term. We continue to promote this program widely to encourage usage.

Diversity & Inclusion Training

Student Life partnered with Human Resources and CUPE in coordinating two, 3 ½ hour diversity and inclusion workshops for CUPE staff. This opportunity was provided to all CUPE staff from Student Services and was then available to CUPE staff campus wide. Kwela Leadership and Talent Management provided the training which explored several topics, including defining and celebrating diversity, understanding and tackling unconscious bias, challenging systems including privilege and oppression, and what it means to be an ally. Almost 80 staff attended the training and the feedback was very good.

Suicide Prevention Training

Student Life coordinated a suicide prevention training opportunity for front line Student Services staff. This training opportunity is online, asynchronous 90 minute course. It will provide staff with the skills to recognize the signs of suicidal ideation and to be able to make a referral to appropriate supports. The training is called LivingWorks Start and is provided by LivingWorks, the same organization that provides Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).

Student Engagement Opportunities

Despite the challenges COVID has created engagement with students has been quite successful this term. Student Life presented Healthy Relationships Week in February with a variety of live and passive programs to engage students. The third in our series of 4 Brave Spaces sessions was held in February with the topic of White Privilege. Over 70 students and staff attended this engaging session. In addition to the

Student Life Facebook group we have expanded our social media presence by creating an Instagram account and a channel in Discord. We have also tasked our student Campus Life Assistants in engaging with students on these platforms.

Library & Learning Commons Update

Submitted by Jennifer Evans

Black History Month (February)

The campaign for BHM included print book displays, digital displays, and an online guide. LLC staff worked closely with Student Life to promote events and learning opportunities to bring awareness of Black history to the College community.

Healthy Relationships Week (February)

The Library participated in the College's Healthy Relationships campaign by developing an online subject guide with links to library collection titles that support healthy relationships. We also offered the Blind Date With A Book promotion in which LLC staff customized book bundles for students/staff based on the patron's reading tastes.

Love Your Library Event (March 2-4)

This virtual event, attended by 33 students, featured multiple workshops (statistics, writing, presenting), extended research and writing support hours, contests, and socializing opportunities through BlueJeans chat rooms.

Curbside Pickup / Print & Video Borrowing

Students, staff and faculty may borrow laptops as well as items from our print and video collection by using the Curbside Pickup service. Library users can place a hold on a book or video from the library catalogue online. When they arrive to pick up their items, they contact lending services and staff bring the requested items to the entrance of the building.

Laptop Borrowing

Students may borrow laptops from the library hourly or by the day/week. If they would like to borrow a laptop, they can call ahead or buzz the library and staff will meet them at the entrance of the building to complete the transaction.

Workshops

- Citation
 - 25 workshops
 - 50 registrations
- Writing
 - 10 workshops
 - 107 registrations
- Math
 - 5 workshops
 - 4 registrations

Library Statistics (January 1, 2021 – March 12, 2021)

- Curbside Pickup
 - 364 books
 - 60 Laptops

- Research Appointments (Jan/Feb)
 - 137 appointments
- AskAway Appointments
 - 55 appointments
- Research Orientations
 - 10 orientations
 - 202 students attended
- Writing Support Appointments
 - 207 appointments
- Write Away Appointments
 - 71 appointments
- Math Support Appointments
 - 156 appointments
- Peer Tutors
 - 19 peer tutors
 - 105 appointments
- LLC webpages (views)
 - APA Style Guide: 36,745
 - LLC Website: 17,534
 - Student Tech Services: 10,006
 - MLA Style Guide: 6,453
 - Research Help: 1,949
 - Citation/Style Guide: 1,948
 - Writing Support; 1,874
 - Book a Computer: 1,764
 - Plagiarism: 1,716
 - Annotated Bibliographies: 1,409