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# ubc reports

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**PEDAL PUSHERS** The action was fast and furious for the participants pictured above at the annual trike race on the SUB plaza, a yearly ritual in the bonanza of events held by the Science Undergraduate Society to celebrate Science Week. Another annual favourite, Beyond First Year, attracted more than 1,000 students to the SUB ballroom to explore program options available after first year in Science as well as 11 other faculties. *John Chong photo*

## Undergraduates put peer teaching to the test in pilot

*Students choose the topics they tackle in a trial student-led initiative*

by **Andy Poon** staff writer

SOME SENIOR UNDERGRADUATE students are taking part in a unique experiment on campus this term—earning university course credits in a class that they help create and conduct.

The student-led initiative, called Group Directed Studies, is a pilot project based on similar classes given at the University of California at Berkeley.

Each three-credit course has a student co-ordinator who handles course content under faculty supervision. Eight to 15 students who are currently in their third or fourth year of study are enrolled in each of the classes.

"It was truly a student-generated idea," says Neil Guppy, associate vice-president, Academic Programs. He says that Vivian Hoffman—former Alma Mater Society president—championed the idea.

"The basic idea is to enhance student-directed learning at UBC," he says. "It is a way for students to come up with topics for study that are not part of our curriculum."

Guppy says that while students were free to come up with whatever area of study they wished to pursue, the topics had to be academically sound and each course had to have a faculty member willing to sponsor the class.

Besides helping students develop a course outline, the supervising faculty member attends some

of the student-run classes and meets individually with students to discuss their work and help evaluate their assignments.

This term, there are four classes being offered: Film in Post-Colonial Asia; Integrative, Alternative and Complementary Medicine; Management of Natural and Human Health. *see Peer page 2*

## Vice-president's job all about students

*Adventure, passion, engagement are all words Brian Sullivan uses to describe why he's at this university*

by **Bruce Mason** staff writer

BRIAN SULLIVAN'S JOB TITLE—vice-president, Students—is unique in Canada. He was intrigued when, one year ago, he first heard about a position being created at UBC, thousands of miles away.

"Sounds like an adventure," said his wife and four teen-aged children.

"Last February, I was associate vice-president, Student Affairs, at the University of Guelph and had no intention of leaving," he recalls.

"But I have a passion for universities and making them better for students, so I seized the opportunity of a portfolio which bundles together all the concerns for and of students, from A to Z."

Sullivan is the senior university officer responsible for shaping the student experience on a continuum that encompasses prospective students, current undergraduate and graduate students and alumni. He jokes that the portfolio covers the spectrum from "cradle to grave."

## Two chemists win top research prizes

*"I remember thinking, 'Why isn't everybody up here,'" says Chemistry Assoc. Prof. John Sherman*

A PAIR OF CHEMISTRY professors have won UBC's top research prizes for 1999.

Prof. Anthony Merer was named the recipient of the Prof. Jacob Biely Faculty Research Prize. Assoc. Prof. John Sherman was awarded the Charles A. McDowell Award for Excellence in Research.

Looked upon as UBC's premier research award, the Biely Prize is given in recognition of a distinguished record of recently accomplished published research in any discipline.

"I have to admit, it was a total surprise," says Merer, who has been conducting research in the field of laser spectroscopy at UBC since the mid-1970s.

The Oxford University-educated Merer, who describes his research as "measuring the sizes and shapes of small molecules using their interaction with light," joined the Chemistry Dept. in 1968.

His current experiments use intense coloured lasers to study free radicals—chemical molecules that tend to be highly unstable because of the presence of unpaired electrons. He recently discovered the family of the simplest possible organometallic radicals made up of just three atoms: carbon, hydrogen and a metal.



Prof. Anthony Merer



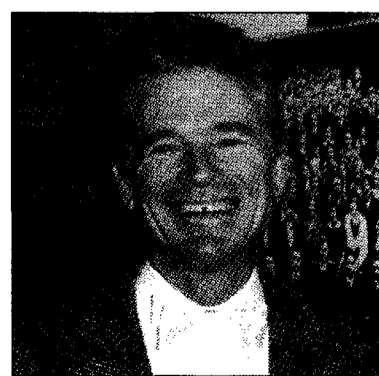
Assoc. Prof. John Sherman

For Sherman, receiving the McDowell award—presented for excellence in pure or applied research—was merely half of the accolades he received in one day.

The 38-year-old organic chemist was also named one of 10 recipients of the UBC Killam Research Prize.

"It was a very good week," chuckled Sherman.

Since arriving on campus in 1991, Sherman has focused his research on... *see Killam page 2*



Brian Sullivan, vice-president, Students

Since arriving on campus in August, he has become ubiquitous—an easily approachable, bow-tied figure, equally at home with students and senior administrators and comfort-

able in the remarkable diversity of a large, complex university.

Anchored in a role he describes as a "constructive conscience concerned for the student view," he is immersed in change. "Engagement" is a word he uses often and very seriously—particularly "student engagement."

Pushing aside a slice of pizza he has picked up enroute from a meeting with student leaders, he produces an eight-page questionnaire currently being widely circulated. It surveys students' overall health and level of stress, use and degree of satisfaction with campus health services and extracurricular... *see Sullivan page 2*

## Honour Roll

Senior TRIUMF researcher **Doug Bryman** has been appointed to the Warren Chair in the Physics and Astronomy Dept.

The Warren Chair was established in 1991 in memory of John B. Warren, the founder and first director of TRIUMF—Canada's national laboratory for particle and nuclear physics.

The chair was created through private grants, funding from TRIUMF and matching provincial government contributions.

Bryman's research is in experimental particle physics concentrating on rare decay processes of elementary particles. He has been at TRIUMF since 1972.

Electrical and Computer Engineering Prof. **David Pulfrey** has been elected a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

The honour recognizes his contributions to the field of modeling of semiconductor devices used in



Award winner Jo-ann Archibald

personal communications products and fibre-optic systems.

Pulfrey was also elected to serve a three-year term on the administration committee of the Electron Devices Society of the IEEE.

New York-based IEEE has over 330,000 members in 150 countries and its membership produces 30 per cent of the world's published literature in electrical engineering, computers and control technology.

**Jo-ann Archibald**, director of the First Nations House of Learning (FNHL), has been selected as a recipient of the 2000 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards—the highest award given by Canada's aboriginal community.

Archibald, a UBC alumna who is a member of the Stó:lo First Nation, joined the Faculty of Education in 1981 and has served as director of FNHL since 1993. Her specialty is First Nations curriculum development.

She has also been active in aboriginal affairs at the community, provincial and national levels.

Chief Simon Baker, a 1990 UBC honorary degree recipient and leader of the Squamish Nation, also received the award.

Baker has lectured at UBC, across Canada and internationally and is recognized as an ambassador for the Squamish people.

The award, which recognizes commitment to ideals and level of achievement, is judged by 16 aboriginal leaders representing diverse career backgrounds and geographic regions and the three major aboriginal groups.

### NEWS DIGEST

#### Symposium probes record-keeping

An international symposium called *How Do You Know It's The Real Thing: Authentic Records in the Electronic Age*, will be held at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts Feb. 19 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The symposium is co-sponsored by the UBC Institute for European Studies, Vancouver's Instituto Italiano di Cultura and the InterPARES Project, an international research

initiative directed by Archival Studies Prof. Luciana Duranti.

The symposium is free and open to the public, but registration is required. For further information contact (604) 688-0809 or [italcult@iicvan-ca.org](mailto:italcult@iicvan-ca.org).

#### Alumni office opens in Hong Kong

A new Alumni Office has been opened in Hong Kong.

The office will serve as a link among UBC, its alumni and potential students. It will also be made available to visiting UBC faculty.

The office is the result of support from the UBC Alumni Branch in Hong Kong, the Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration and the Alumni Association.

Space for the office, which is located in central Hong Kong, was provided by UBC alumnus and Hong Kong alumni branch governor Dr. Anthony Cheng.

The Hong Kong branch is one of the largest and most active outside Canada.

For more information see [www.ubcalumni.com.hk](http://www.ubcalumni.com.hk), e-mail [ubcalumni@hknet.com](mailto:ubcalumni@hknet.com) or call (852) 2111-9553.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
VANCOUVER HOSPITAL & HEALTH SCIENCES  
CENTRE

## DEPT. OF RADIOLOGY HEAD

The Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia (UBC) and Vancouver Hospital and Health Sciences Centre (VHHSC) invite applications and nominations, internal to the University, for the position of Head of the Department of Radiology at UBC and VHHSC.

We seek an academic leader to be responsible for directing and developing the teaching, research and service programs of the Department. The Department has 6 full-time, 23 part-time and 32 clinical faculty members and attracts strong research support. There is an extensive undergraduate education endeavour and an excellent residency program. The successful candidate should hold a specialty qualification in Radiology, have broad and proven administrative experience, substantial academic and clinical experience, a proven record of scholarly activity, and a commitment to undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate medical education. Anticipated start date will be July 1, 2000. Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Within the hospital, the successful candidate will be accountable for professional issues relevant to the strategic directions of the organisation. The candidate is responsible for quality of patient care and professional standards and collaborates with the senior executives for physician workforce planning, recruiting and performance management.

The University of British Columbia hires on the basis of merit and is committed to employment equity. We encourage all qualified persons to apply. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Applications, accompanied by a detailed curriculum vitae and names of three references, should be directed by March 15, 2000 to: Dr. J.A. Cairns, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, Room 317, Instructional Resources Centre, 2194 Health Sciences Mall, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z3.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
CHILDREN'S AND WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
VANCOUVER HOSPITAL & HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE  
PROVIDENCE HEALTH CARE

## DEPT. OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY HEAD

The Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia along with Children's and Women's Health Centre of British Columbia, the Vancouver Hospital and Health and Sciences Centre, Providence Health Care and British Columbia Cancer Agency invite applications and nominations for the position of Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

We seek an academic leader, internal to the University, to be responsible for directing and developing the teaching, research and service programs of the Department in conjunction with Hospital Department Heads (appointed jointly with Hospital CEOs). The leader will be responsible for supporting the highest standards of patient care, education and research. The Department is extensively involved in undergraduate medical education and has an excellent residency program. The Department has 20 full-time and 54 clinical faculty members and attracts strong research support. The successful candidate should hold a specialty qualification in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, have substantial academic and clinical experience, a proven record of scholarly achievement, and a commitment to undergraduate, graduate and post graduate medical education. Anticipated start date will be Spring 2000. Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

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The Madeleine Sophie Barat Award  
**THE USE OF FREEDOM  
ESSAY CONTEST 1999/2000**  
**Prize: \$1000**

Subject: "The Creative and Responsible Use of Freedom"

Choose your own focus, e.g. Literature, Art, Capitalism, Philosophy, the Environment, Interpersonal Relations, Economics, History, etc.

Eligibility: Open to third- and fourth-year undergraduate and graduate students of UBC and affiliated theological colleges.

**Deadline for entries:** Friday, May 26, 2000

Prize awarded: Friday, Sept. 29, 2000

Application forms may be picked up Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Mark's College, 5935 Iona Drive, at the extreme northeast corner of the campus.