

A large, abstract wooden sculpture of a face, constructed from various types of wood and painted in red, black, green, and white. The sculpture is set against a clear blue sky. A vertical strip of light-colored wood is visible on the left side of the image.

JOURNEYS: Camosun Stories of Indigenization

ABOUT BUKWILA:



The welcoming figure Bukwila is a larger-than-life-sized carving dedicated to and depicting the Dididaht Whaling Chief Bukwila. Bukwila is wearing a Nuu-chah-nulth hat traditionally worn by high-ranking individuals. The hat has a large open brim which tapers inward to form a smaller pointed shape at its top, and is painted reddish brown, perhaps to signify the material (red cedar) that the hat would usually be made of. Bukwila extends his right hand outward and holds a rattle in his left hand. He sits on top of a grey and black painted whale, whose eyes are visible on the left and right sides of the carving. The Chief's face is painted green around his nose and mouth, silver-grey across his cheeks and the bridge of his nose (under his eyes), and his forehead is speckled with green and black. The wooden carving is mounted on a cement cylinder that has a dedicatory plaque attached to its front.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Art Thompson was born in 1948 in Whynac, an isolated reserve of the Ditidaht (Nuu-chah-nulth) located in the south-western region of the Pacific Coast on Vancouver Island. His father and grandfather were both carvers, producing totem poles, masks, and finely crafted canoes. Thompson began drawing at an early age. At twelve he awakened to his cultural heritage through his initiation into the Tloo-Kwalla, or Wolf Society. Thompson's work was greatly influenced by fellow Nuu-chah-nulth artists, Joe David and Ron Hamilton. Thompson attended the Camosun College Visual Arts program from 1970 – 1972, and continued his fine arts education at Emily Carr College of Art and Design (now Emily Carr University) working with both two- and three-dimensional art forms. It was at Emily Carr that Thompson started producing silkscreen prints – the art form for which he perhaps received the most acclaim during his artistic career. Printmaker, carver, teacher, and mentor, Thompson's work is featured in galleries and museums across Canada (including the Royal BC Museum, University of Victoria, and Canadian Museum of Civilization) and internationally (American Museum of Natural History, International Festival of Masks, Canadian High Commission in Singapore). In addition to his prominence as a leading visual artist and key figure in the revitalisation of traditional West Coast First Nations art, Thompson was respected for his knowledge and practice of traditional Nuu-chah-nulth songs, dances, and history. Thompson attended the Port Alberni Indian Residential School, and like many of his peers suffered abuse in the school. As a result of his experiences, Thompson acted as a powerful advocate seeking justice for those who were exploited and harmed in the Canadian residential school system, later in his adult life. Thompson passed away from cancer in 2003.



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Camosun College campuses are located on the traditional territories of the Lkwungen and W̱ SÁNEĆ peoples. We acknowledge their welcome and graciousness to the students who seek knowledge here.

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MESSAGE FROM

Sherri Bell

Camosun College has embraced and valued our relationship with Indigenous community and learners for many years. The Indigenous Education Department recently celebrated its 25th anniversary of work to fully indigenize the college, which has been underway for the past 10 years.

Over the past two years, Camosun has focussed on developing an action plan to respond to the Call to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Report; the support of this initiative within the college has been truly remarkable and, I believe, a reflection of the depth of our commitment and passion to learn and to educate. I am delighted to see a growing awareness of indigenous ways of knowing and being throughout our college community – it is enriching our lives and our daily work.

I believe that all Canadians need to deepen their understanding of our history in order to reconcile our past and move forward as a country. Part of that understanding comes from the sharing of stories; personal reflections can be so very impactful. I am grateful to all the contributors to this anthology – your willingness to share is such a gift to us all!

Sherri Bell
President



MESSAGE FROM

Dawn Smith, Nuu-chah-nutlh

I am grateful for the opportunity to be working at Camosun College, as the Education Developer for Indigenization and Sustainability, particularly given my own academic interests in advancing Indigenous self-determination and worldviews within post-secondary education. Having said that I am absolutely thrilled to be involved in the publication of *Journeys: Camosun Stories of Indigenization*

The chance to gather and listen to stories of Indigenization from the diverse and multiple perspectives of Camosun staff has taught me that Indigenization, as a process, varies from one individual/department/program to the next. As you read through these stories you will begin to see that there is no one way to Indigenization, but many different and creative ways.

Indigenization is a process that requires leadership and Indigenous mentorship, and I am happy to have landed in a place where Indigenization is a priority, and as such is led by caring leaders like Sherri Bell, John Boraas, Ian Humphries, Joan Yates, Sybil Harrison and guided by giving Indigenous mentors, like Corrine Michel, Janice Simcoe, Tanya Kirkland and others.

My hope is that one of these stories will resonate with you, and help support you in your own journey to Indigenize your practice. It has been a great honour to have borne witness to stories of Indigenization and personal growth, but more notably the desire to improve the quality of good education for everyone here at Camosun.

All My Relations,

Dawn Smith

Education Developer, Indigenization and Sustainability

John Boraas

Vice President, Education



BIOGRAPHY

John Boraas is the Vice President Education at Camosun College, a role he has held for six years. Prior to that he was Dean of the School of Access and Director of Indigenous Education since 1998. John began teaching in post-secondary education to students seeking to re-enter an educational pathway and ultimately providing leadership in remote northern communities, primarily to First Nations.

John holds an MEd from the University of Victoria and is a candidate in the PhD program in Education at UBC. He has served as chair and member on numerous provincial committees as well as a board member on several community organizations including Literacy Victoria. Most recently he was awarded the Peter Gzowski National Award for his contributions to the area of adult literacy.

Community work includes service on boards such as Aids Vancouver Island, libraries, and as a volunteer at a variety of community agencies.

Indigenization is a call to thoughtful and generous actions and considerations as I do my job. Indigenization is a call to recognize we are all learners, and as such mis-steps and mistakes are part of our journey. How do I forgive my own mistakes and help turn them into learning and growth opportunities for the people with whom I work. How do I provide space for myself and for the college to celebrate our work together?

Camosun is a college with tremendous heart. Indigenization is a reflection of that good heart – it is a reflection of commonly held values, and it gives us a chance to collectively create better learning experiences for Indigenous students most certainly, but ultimately the changes we are making

result in better learning experiences for all students. As we individually examine Indigenization it is my hope that it helps us all to recognize the gifts it can bring – generosity that benefits us all, learning that considers the whole person, services that respond to the whole person, teaching approaches that provide lived experiences.

What have I done to Indigenize my work? I have made a commitment to listen intensely and a commitment to consider all information available, and its impact on the whole college. Also a commitment to consider students access to the college and how frightening it is to many students. I am commitment

to consistently communicate care for this place and its people. I am human and do not always get it right.

I encourage everyone to read some materials that explore the strengths of Indigenous scholarship and thinking or culture. Whether you read Monique Gray-Smith's "Speaking Our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation", or "The Four R's – Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility" by Kirkness and Barnhardt. For me, the exploration of the scholarship of Indigenization has been important in framing Indigenization as a gift and an opportunity as well as a responsibility.



Sybil Harrison




I started at Camosun in 2008 and the most important gift I've received in my time here is an enhanced understanding of an indigenous ways of knowing and being. This journey began when I took TELFIN TFE WILNEW, in 2009. It was in reading for this course I made some realizations about residential schools I had never made before.

For part of my childhood I lived in Hope, the traditional territories of the Sto:lo people. My parents would occasionally take us to the Catholic Church at Shxw'Ow'Hamel, just outside of town. The congregation was entirely adults and I remember asking my parents where all the kids were. It wasn't until recent years that I made the connection—there were no children because they were in residential schools. As a child I sensed a sadness in that community, I now realize how this sadness was trauma that has impacted generations.

The next significant milestone on this journey was attending the Indigenous Knowledges: Local Priorities, Global Contexts Conference at UBC in 2012. This international conference brought together librarians, archivists and indigenous scholars from Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand and Finland (Sápmi) to explore approaches to providing access to traditional knowledge. It was at this conference where I was inspired to shift my thinking about libraries. One of the speakers was a Clyde Tillo the young man featured in the film *Cry Rock*. Clyde returned to his traditional territory of Bella Coola where, at the time, less than fifteen Nuxalk language speakers and storytellers remained. He became fluent in his language, and has become a recognized leader in language revitalization and storytelling. He talked about the relationship between the land, stories, and language, and how storytelling in the language of your ancestors allows you to understand your place in this world. Clyde suggested to the librarians at the conference, that the land is a library: the rocks, mountains, islands and streams tell the stories of generations. While it now seems obvious, this comment shifted thinking I held about my profession of 25 years. A library is not just a place to hold the books—but it's a place where community comes together to share old stories, and to create new ones. The library is not just a building, the library is a concept and a reflection of the community we serve.

Until that point, my journey towards understanding indigenization was focussed on my own learning. I was like a sponge taking in new ideas, asking lots of questions, reading and thinking. I realized the next step in this journey was to reciprocate and in a respectful and authentic way share my learning. I also began to appreciate the privilege I held at the college, and that I was in a position where I could influence.

I chose to use my influence by inviting Richard Wagamese, the late Ojibway writer, to be the keynote speaker at Conversations Day in 2013. The story he shared that day was



a deeply human and courageous account about the power of stories and books and the power of story to inspire and heal. When Richard passed away in 2016 I received several calls from Camosun colleagues thanking me for bringing Richard to Camosun, His gift continues to give, he motivated many to tell their stories, and inspired us to listen deeply to others. In his book *One Story, One Song* he wrote:

“All that we are is story. From the moment we are born to the time we continue on our spirit journey, we are involved in the creation of the story of our time here. It is what we arrive with. It is all we leave behind. We are not the things we accumulate. We are not the things we deem important. We are story. All of us. What comes to matter then is the creation of the best possible story we can while we’re here; you, me, us, together. When we can do that and we take the time to share those stories with each other, we get bigger inside, we see each other, we recognize our kinship – we change the world, one story at a time...”

Richard Wagamese in *One Story, One Song* (2011)

His writing continues to be a guide for all I do.

And, my journey continues. I now reflect on my role as an ally, and how my actions might support reconciliation. I seek beacons along the way to light my journey. When I need that light, I visit the women’s drumming circle in Na’tsa’maht. Suzanne, Doreen, Christine, Grace Anne and Alli always open their circle to me. I stand with them and look up to the sky and feel the power of the drum and of women’s voices. It’s a moment of peace, and I’m always overcome with gratitude for being part of this community. We are one.



Suzanne Thiessen

BIOGRAPHY

Gasán uu dǎng gǐidang? Susanne's (Sah Sen) ancestry traces its roots through Haida and Scottish lineage. She acknowledges her relationship as a guest on the traditional territories of the Lkwungen (Esquimalt and Songhees) on which she works. She is an experienced educational leader with success in academic leadership, research and teaching in higher education. Her teaching focuses in Leadership Development, Strategic Human Resource Management, Indigenous Management, Diversity Management, Cross Cultural Awareness and Inclusion, Program Evaluation, and Curriculum Development.

She has applied professional experience in research, policy development, Indigenous recruitment and retention, small business management, leadership, cross cultural leadership and strategic human resource management in private and public sector settings.

Susanne's research is focused in the areas of "Organizational Leadership" & "Human Resource Management", looking specifically at diversity, Indigenous people, and work engagement. Her dissertation research examines cultural approaches to work and this relationship to work engagement for First Nations people.

Susanne is passionate about teaching and learning and in supporting and inspiring new leaders whether it is in the classroom, in the office or in the community. She believes that knowledge is powerful and that we can create/reclaim vibrant holistic communities through empowering learners and helping new leaders find their own voice. Through leadership learning and practice, we transform ourselves and enrich our perspectives, which allows for more meaningful and enriching interactions with others.

My approach to indigenizing education is based in principles at the core of my cultural heritage as a Haida and Canadian, person. I seek to embody these philosophical principles, which are inter-related elements in our worldview, in the curriculum I present to students and in my teaching practices. These principles are those that Haida people believe are the foundations of a strong and healthy existence on both an individual and collective level. In the Haida world, it is understood that you cannot separate the land and water; they depend on each other to make the whole. An ancient Haida saying, "everything depends on everything else," drives this point home. In the same way, you cannot separate education from a way of life, for without this context it has little meaning. We must recognize that education is cultural, social, spiritual, physical and political, and needs to be responsive — through participatory processes — to the diverse cultural values of the people it affects. This is my basic philosophy to indigenizing my teaching practices and the wider work I do in the College community. In essence, these practices support a human centered and applied approach to learning and leadership in education.

A student-centered approach to teaching reflects the awareness that teacher and student are connected to learning and to each other through a unique relationship. This demands that while I am a deeply knowledgeable - grounded in a body of knowledge, myself and my students play an equally active role in the learning process and are expected to actively participate in that learning. I employ inquiry-based learning as a teaching method that focuses on student investigation and hands-on learning. My role moves between that of a facilitator, providing guidance and support for students through the learning process; leading by example while demonstrating to students, best processes; and as a delegator, acting as a resource to students while fostering a sense of autonomy in the learning process. I practice cooperative learning as another method of teaching and classroom management that emphasizes group work, a strong sense of community and respectful interaction with one another. This model fosters students' academic and social growth and includes teaching techniques such as discussion, writing and reciprocal teaching.

Shane Johnson



BIOGRAPHY

Shane M. Johnson, I've been at the college for almost ten years. I have been living on W SÁNEĆ and Lekwungen territories since 1994. I love the island, and do many outdoor activities. I am really into wildflowers and climbing mountains and spending time in the last remnants of old growth forests. I have a wonderful daughter who is 13 now.

I am uncertain why I have been chosen to be part of this project, but I am humbled and agreed to participate. Whereas in many areas of the college that teach and have directives it makes sense why an indigenization approach can be seen and directed and documented. In my department of grounds, I have not had any official direction nor would our department necessarily be part of such an effort. There is still so far to go, and I only know enough to know that I don't know very much.

I can only speak in my voice and so I'll begin. In certain capacities I am very primed to make transitions towards a more indigenous perspective. In high school I began questioning everything, and began critical thinking and deconstruction. I identified as an anarchist, in particular my vehicle into the world of politics and anarchism came through the 1990's punk scene in Victoria. In which I was exposed to harsh critiques of nationalism, colonialism, and capitalism. Issues like Gustafson lake and Oka were presented from a more thorough and potent source than mainstream media. I began reading books by authors like Ward Churchill, and studying the real history which has occurred here in Canada and on the continent of North America, and anywhere colonialism occurred. This was a critical shift in breaking the standard indoctrination I received in public school and I never looked back.

Coming from those ideas and with a passionate interest in nature and natural things, has made perhaps some of the rewarding and fruitful events in grounds happen for me. Being able to participate in the pitcooks, and to get to plant and maintain the native plant garden at Natsamaht. My ongoing interest and enthusiasm for native plants has allowed me to spend time there and keeps me dreaming of always improving. I can only assume that my role and interests in the grounds and in particular the native plants, is why I was asked to participate in the spotlight. I am very grateful for many of my experiences here at the college and most of that center around activities that occurred around or through Natsamaht.

Chivonne Graff

Senior Educator



BIOGRAPHY

Chivonne Graff is the Senior Educator at the Lansdowne Toddler & Preschool Centres at Camosun. She is also Camosun alumni having completed her training in Early Childhood Care and Education in 1995.

Chivonne's first experience engaging with the topic of residential schools and colonization was during the course that addressed personal and professional issues.

She remember feeling a myriad of emotions...disgust, betrayal, shame. She says 'I felt like there was something terribly wrong in our country, and that this insidious secret permeated and stained all the things I loved about Canada. I deeply believed that until this piece of our history was cracked wide open and reconciled, we could not achieve true unity and serve as a model to other nations. I wasn't sure what my role in reconciliation could be at that time.' She adds, 'when a friend completed her Masters examining cultural safety in our local school district, I read it and knew, without hesitation, that the process of reconciliation and decolonization must begin in the early years.' She initiated dialogue with the Manager, ELC faculty, and colleagues around what the responsibilities were as Early Childhood Educators. In 2016, Child Care Services secured funding through the President's Innovation Funds. The team embarked on a project in collaboration with the Early Learning and Care faculty and Eyē? Sqā'lewen called Indigenization and Reconciliation in Child Care Services. Issues explored several goals that are still in progress today:

1. Identifying ways to help CCS be more welcoming and relevant to Indigenous families;
2. Identifying ways to prepare CCS staff to better understand and co-exist with Indigenous children, families, and students;
3. Identifying ways to help CCS respect and acknowledge Indigenous worldviews;
4. Identifying ways to help CCS better understand colonization, reconciliation and our role in it.

She concludes by saying 'we (children, staff and families) have begun a learning journey of understanding more deeply the effects of colonization, our shared history, and the importance of reconciliation. It is the responsibility of each of us.'

Early Learning and Care



photo by Charisse Mariveles

BIOGRAPHY

The Early Learning and Care team consists of a dynamic collective. It reaches far beyond the teaching Faculty and originated by many before us. We are honoured to be part of a dedicated group and are strongly influenced by our relationships in communities. Thank you for the opportunity to give voice to the many people who have inspired and challenged us to re-think our ways of being, knowing and doing.

For further information, please contact Jeanne Puritch,
Program Lead for Early Learning and Care

The Early Learning and Care program is taking steps towards challenging colonial legacy within education. We are moving forward by taking action: we are deliberately and thoughtfully reflecting on and rethinking about the way we are learning with students.

We have entered into a dialogue with each other, allowing principles of Early Childhood Education to speak to the wisdom we hear from elders, from material in TELTIN TTE WILNEW, from our own research and explorations. Welcoming place into our

thinking and on-going process encourages us to listen deeply to the local knowledge of place, to the lessons from the land and to place itself. Listening deeply guides our process and helps us develop a “curriculum” that fits for here.

One of the ways this occurred for the program was with a project we lovingly refer to as the ‘wool project’. Our aim was to support students learning about themselves, their community and the experience of learning and valuing Indigenous knowledge and teaching.

As we embarked on this project, one instructor noted “I feel quite excited about the possibilities of the project...and a little nervous. How will the students respond?” This prompted us as a team to challenge ourselves to reflect:

- What do we notice as we head into a project that is not carefully delineated?
- What are thoughts about being away from the college environment?
- What do we notice about the students’ responses that might be different from being in a classroom? How do we feel about not being in a classroom?
- What surprises are there? What are the disappointments?

We started this journey by watching the NFB film *Cowichan Knitters*, this project then took us into the community to visit and learn with Elders May and Skip Sam. The students and instructors were welcomed to May and Skip’s home to wash, card, tease and spin wool. They heard stories of what wool and knitting meant to the Skip family and their culture. We were enveloped by the spirit of generosity and this humbling experience allowed relationship to develop, and ideas to bud. This learning was brought back to the classroom and on to practicum placements. An ELC student Stephanie shared a teaching about wool, “the wool reacts to how you are feeling, responding”. This was such a nice concept for us to think about, how might our own feelings/inner state influence the wool, as of course it influences learning and caregiving.

The ripple effects of this project are still being felt, as a program we have committed to taking on a project each year that threads through more than one course, has a community component, and gives voice to Indigenous people, place and culture.

Andrew Bryce

Digital Communication

BIOGRAPHY

Andy worked for more than 15 years in the broadcast news industry, doing everything from producing award-winning documentaries to presenting the weather on newscasts. He began teaching part-time at Canadore College in 1993. In 1998 he moved to the United Arab Emirates where he taught video and audio production at Dubai Men's College. He has a degree from Trent University, and is an alumnus of the Electronic Film Media Program at the Banff Centre, School of Fine Arts. Andy has a hands-on approach that gives students an opportunity to stretch their imaginations while exploring the medium.

I am concerned that we will forget. Canadian society seems to have a short attention span, and I worry that as the years go by our treatment of Indigenous people will be forgotten by the non-Indigenous. But if there's to be reconciliation then the stories must be remembered, and must be acknowledged as part of our history.

The commissioners of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are also concerned about our society's amnesia, and that's why they made education one of their calls to action. In its executive summary, the commission quotes Senator Gerry St. Germaine (Metis) who said, "While we cannot change history, we can learn from it and we can use it to shape our common future.... This effort is crucial in realizing the vision of creating a compassionate and humanitarian society, the society that our ancestors, the Aboriginal, the French and the English peoples, envisioned so many years ago—our home, Canada."

As the Chief Medical Officer for the Department of Indian Affairs in 1907, my great-grandfather, Dr. Peter H. Bryce, was the first person to systematically record health abuses in residential schools, and for many years afterwards he lobbied for improved living conditions for Indigenous people. His reasoning was based on sound scientific principles. He showed how the narrative of the day that Indigenous people were physically inferior to Europeans, was false. Instead he showed how high death and disease rates among Indigenous people were the result of the living conditions imposed on them by the federal government.

Unfortunately this is not just a story from the past. More than 100 years after Peter Bryce's report, Dr Cindy Blackstock of the First Nations Caring for Children Society successfully argued in front of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal that the federal government discriminates against Indigenous children by inadequately funding social, educational and health programs. This is why we have to remember the stories of people like Peter Bryce before we can move forward to reconciliation. We have to overcome the amnesia to see ourselves in the right perspective.

Kelly Pitman

English Department

BIOGRAPHY

Kelly Pitman was raised in Calgary in the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikuni, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina and the Stoney Nakoda First Nations, including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nation. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. Kelly has lived on the traditional territories of the Lkwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples since 1993 and has worked in the English department at Camosun College since 1999.

How can this english teacher contribute to Indigenization? One principle of critical thinking is to distinguish fact from inference and speculation, so I can contribute to indigenization by addressing historical facts: the land was stolen or tricked away from the people who lived on it; policy and law has devalued or ignored the rights and experiences of Aboriginal people; government-mandated programs have been racist in theory and practice and have caused immense and lasting harm. As Mande McDonald, a Swampy Cree/Metis scholar, says, "The fact is that colonization is unjust and ongoing [and] . . . is the root cause of the oppression and social suffering of Indigenous peoples." All Canadians should know this.

Another principle of critical thinking is seeking to understand perspectives, so I can contribute to indigenization by interrogating the way that Canadian identity has been constructed and by welcoming the perspectives of Aboriginal people. This is especially important to me because teaching English has been fundamental to colonization. The history of language and literature is a history of power, exemplified by the attempted eradication of Indigenous languages by the settlers from whom I descend. I can help to mitigate historical silencing of Indigenous perspectives by including the work of Aboriginal thinkers in the learning community.

I hope that once we establish the historical facts, we can more easily listen to Indigenous perspectives with open minds and hearts.

Teaching stories is a way to facilitate this listening. A favorite of mine is "Joe the Painter and the Deer Island Massacre" by Thomas King. It is about a comically earnest townspeople who competes for the town pageant prize by staging a reenactment of the founding of his town. It's about the past but also about the way we represent the past. Joe is hilariously incapable of dishonesty and produces a pageant like no one expects. The townspeople in the story are not ready for the spectacle that unfolds, but the students in the classroom, equipped with facts, do seem ready for it and more ready, I hope, to think about the future too.

I still have a lot of work to do and many questions to ask, but this is where I am right now.

Nicole Kilburn

Anthropology Department

BIOGRAPHY

I am an anthropologist, specializing in archaeology, and have taught at Camosun for 15 years. I have worked in the Indigenous Studies Program for over a decade, where I have had the opportunity to build important relationships with my indigenous colleagues and the elders that support the students and the work we do at the college. I appreciate the support that I have received from Eyē? Sqā'lewen over the years to make introductions in community so that I could create my own connections to elders and knowledge keepers that are my guides and teachers. These connections are critical to building partnerships in local communities to model indigenous collaboration in field projects for students in the Archaeology Field Assistant Program.

What do indigenization and reconciliation mean, and what do they look like in practice? Working with indigenous colleagues both on campus and in local communities is helping me answer these questions. What I have learned is that indigenization is about more than curriculum, it's a philosophy. It reminds me that teachers are learners too, and knowledge keepers are generous in coaching us in how to bring indigenous content and ways of learning into the classroom in respectful ways. At its heart, I believe indigenization is about relationship building, which takes time and effort to nurture but is incredibly rewarding. I am honoured to teach archaeology students how to do good work in partnership with local indigenous communities; our annual applied project in the Archaeology Field Assistant Program models the value of building rapport and trust throughout collaboration. Students gain a rich appreciation for the deep heritage of Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ territories by combining scientific inquiry and cultural knowledge, and recognize that working together and supporting the interests and needs of communities creates opportunities for meaningful work to be



done. If reconciliation is about building a new relationship and walking our shared path in a good way, we can practice it by engaging students in these activities and exploring what this can look like. It's impossible to describe the feeling I get every year when, in the dark (and sometimes in the rain), I help to light a fire on the lawn of the Young Building for the annual pit cook. As colleagues, students and elders gather for a day of land-based learning led by local knowledge keepers, I know I am participating in acts of reconciliation.

Brenda Petays

Visual Arts Department

BIOGRAPHY

Brenda Petays recently earned a PhD in Performance Art from the Akademy of Human & Performance Art Aktions, Berlin, Germany & Victoria BC. Brenda teaches Drawing, Painting and Printmaking at Camosun College. Her recent exhibitions and performances include: International Mokuhanga Print Exhibition & Conference, Donkey Mill Art Center Hawaii, 2017. Shide, Performance, Suwa Shrine, Lake Kawaguchiko, Japan 2017. Just Like a Braid, 1000 Braids installation, Batey Library, Camosun College, 2017. Bearing Witness, Media Art and Performance, 2017 MediaNet, Victoria, BC.



Just like a Braid

Paper, Cotton, Wool, Acrylic, Magnetic Tape, braided, on driftwood, 2016-2107, Brenda Petays

I give thanks that Camosun Collage is taking seriously this opportunity to work toward reconciliation.

I recognize the spirit of this Place, the Land and the Water and the Plants and the Animals and the Ancestors. I recognize and am grateful for the Indigenous scholarship I have received from Peter Morin, Corrine Michel, Judy Elk, Nadia Myre, Elyse and Emilio Portal and Martin Brokenleg. Working with indigenous elders and teachers has asked of me to decolonize my classroom and create a curriculum based in ecological, restorative and nonviolence practices.

Identity questions are questions that every person has the right to know. Who are my people, where did my people come from to get here? Where are my people now? What happened to my people? When and how? What are my people like culturally? What have my people contributed? I have a responsibility in understanding how lives and privileges emerge from colonialism and how I might live in conciliation.

In Japan, traditionally, it was believed that if one folded 1000 origami cranes, one's wish would come true. The origami cranes have become a symbol of hope and healing during challenging times. As a result, it has become popular to fold 1000 cranes (in Japanese, called "senbazuru")

In the spirit of this land I choose to braid 1000 braids, with a wish for reconciliation

I have come to understand the value in knowing my heritage and other cultural traditions and how these are intertwined in daily life, just like a braid

There are 3 strands
One strand is for culture – ancestors, land and language
One strand is for education – healing, spirit and energy
One strand is for community – relationship and respect with each other and nature
Each strand is as important as the next

I come from a settler background. My Finish ancestors homesteaded in Treaty 4, the traditional territory of the Cree and Saulteaux First Nations in southeast Saskatchewan. Treaty 4 was established between Queen Victoria, and the Cree and Saulteaux First Nations band governments in 1874. Thereafter the traditional ways of using and attending to the land were sacrificed to capitalization, racism and inequality.

Is this what did my ancestors invited me to continue? Or did they want me to imagine a different relationship, in which the people and the land are good medicine for each other.

Steve Walker-Duncan

Culinary Arts Department

BIOGRAPHY

Born & raised on the Lower Mainland and began cooking professionally in Victoria. Travelled to Europe in 1986 where an award winning cooking style created opportunities to work in the UK, Spain and The Netherlands before returning to Canada in 2003 to join the faculty at Camosun College Culinary Arts Department. Owned and operated a number of culinary businesses in Victoria as well as presenting the popular television series Flavours of the West Coast and co-authored an accompanying book.

Master's Degree in Education, BC Professional Instructor Diploma, ITA Cook Assessor, Certified Chef de Cuisine (CCC), Red Seal Cook, National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)

- Program Chair, Camosun College Culinary Arts Program
- Canadian Culinary Federation (CCFCC) Victoria branch - vice-president
- Growing Young Farmers Society - board member
- Growing Chefs – chef educator
- Go2 Cook Program Advisory Committee - Province of B.C. - advisory board member
- Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012)
- Paul Harris Fellow - Rotary Foundation of Rotary International, Victoria Harbourside Club (2011)
- Chef of the Year - CCFCC Victoria (2009 & 2010)



that landscape through culture, sustainable practice, and respect for all forms of life.

This perspective guides me through the variety initiatives I am currently working on, both within the college and beyond, by allowing me to contemplate the complexities of each situation. The predominant culture in many areas of society as we know it tends to focus on specific components of a challenge or project, without broader consideration for how that might impact other parts of the situation. By adopting an indigenous attitude, I believe that reflection of those considerations are more likely to occur and therefore result in a better outcome for all involved. When we think about the bigger picture from the outset, as is my very basic understanding of indigenous learning, then we can avoid making the mistakes that require considerable time and energy to rectify later on. Whether they be environmental, cultural, political, or even psychological issues, we need to open our eyes and see the world in all its complexity, joy and pain, in order that we are able to live happy and harmonious lives.

Over the past two or three years, my understanding of indigenization has greatly evolved from participation in a variety of interactions across the college community. From these encounters, I have developed a certain sense of sadness due to the forfeiture of my own culture and family connections because of my parent's immigration to Canada in the sixties. Where multiple generations of knowledge keepers and active participants exist in the learning milieu, students young and old are continuously absorbing and gaining a deeper understanding of the world around them through that wealth of information. In my opinion, indigenization is less about specific groups of people, and more about the awareness of one's environment and interaction with

Joan Humphries

Nursing Department

BIOGRAPHY

Joan Humphries' family background, as a settler woman, is of Scottish and Irish heritage, with ancestral roots in northern Alberta and the Maritimes. Joan recently completed doctoral education (Nursing) at the University of Victoria. Joan's clinical career in nursing includes a special interest in perinatal care for Canadian women, including Indigenous women, whose experiences are currently the topic of an academic systemic review that Joan is undertaking. For many years Joan practiced nursing in a number of rural communities in British Columbia, which heightened her interest in supporting the health of Indigenous peoples. As Associate Chair of the Nursing Department at Camosun College, Joan is honoured to support Indigenous students in their pursuit of a nursing career.

In order to promote de-colonizing the curriculum, Joan works with Eyē? Sqā'lewen to support curricular content that helps both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to understand Canadian history, including Euro-centric colonization, residential schools, and other realities that have shaped the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada. In addition, Joan is supporting faculty to indigenize teaching methods in the nursing program by enlisting Indigenous knowledges to foster strength-based approaches to teaching, learning, and nursing practice. Joan participates in various Indigenous initiatives, including committee work with faculty and students at Camosun College and the University of Victoria. Joan is privileged to participate in transformational approaches to history, teaching, and professional nursing practice, in the context of promoting reconciliation during this pivotal time in Canadian history that have shaped the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada. In addition, Joan is supporting faculty to indigenize teaching methods



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Anita Ferriss, Daryl Thomson, Merry Watts

BIOGRAPHY

Anita Ferriss has worked at Camosun for 14 years – 10 as faculty chair of the Community, Family & Child Studies Department and 4 as the Organizational & People Development Specialist. Currently, her key responsibilities are Employee Leadership, Learning & Development - including the Respectful Workplace Education Program, and Organizational Development – most recently leading the development of the Capability Framework, a People Plan Project. Other areas of work include: coaching, consulting, program development and evaluation, strategic planning and culture shift. Anita is passionate about people and is committed to Indigenizing Human Resource programs and practices. She leads from a strengths based, appreciative, approach.

Daryl Thomson is Camosun College's Human Resource Strategist with lead oversight responsibilities for the projects identified in the college's People Plan. Daryl had spent most of his 15 year career designing and developing human resource-related programs in the public sector including stops in Island Health and the BC Public Service.

Merry Watts is the Program and Policy Development Consultant in Human Resources and the Lead on the People Plan Recruitment and Selection Project. Merry has spent over 20 years in the world of Strategic Human Resources and Recruitment and is passionate about helping workplace leaders to lead successful hiring processes and strives for a respectful and inclusive experience for all applicants.

Four of Camosun College's People Plan projects serve as good examples of how the College's Human Resources Department is working towards integrating indigenization principles into its workplace practices.

Camosun's **new employee onboarding** approach was refreshed in 2015 as it began inviting new employees to participate in one of two inclusive, relationship-based New Employee Welcome events that are held each August and February. Each Welcome session occurs within a circle format, opens with a territorial acknowledgement offered by one of Camosun's elders, involves sharing food together, and focuses on building relationships through listening, dialogue, and interaction. At the end of the half-day session, participants are made aware of how they have experienced indigenization throughout their Welcome event and, beginning in February 2018, will be given a New Employee Handbook that is organized around the four quadrants of Dr. Martin Brokenleg's Circle of Courage model: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity.

The **Recruitment and Selection** project focuses on strengthening the College's hiring practices and bringing consistency to processes, tools and templates. A key deliverable is a Hiring Toolkit for Workplace Leaders that focuses on best practices and sound principles that reflect the College's Strategic direction, including the commitment to support Indigenization. Workplace Leaders are encouraged to be intentional and thoughtful throughout their hiring process - and consider and apply other ways of knowing, being, doing and relating as they work through their hiring activities. This includes posting broadly and considering proactive outreach, creating position specific job descriptions and actual and essential qualifications, considering equivalencies and transferrable experience in the screening process, integrating the College's Capabilities and maximizing inclusiveness in their approach to assessments and interviews, and, overall, providing a respectful and positive experience for all applicants.



Capability Framework

The Capability Framework is designed to assist the college to attract, develop, and support employees throughout their journey at Camosun as well as position ourselves as an employer of choice and an academic institution of life changing learning.

Storytelling, a narrative visual methodology, employed by traditional indigenous and contemporary organizations, was employed as a research methodology because it is one of the most powerful ways of thinking about information akin to artifacts in an archive. As such, storytelling conveys emotions and builds community with cultural overtones. Employees were invited to participate in the research by telling their stories of high point experiences within the college community through focus groups, one-on-one interviews and anonymous submissions.

The framework identifies core and leadership capabilities unique to Camosun. Definitions and sample descriptors reflect the common culture of the Camosun community and focus on knowing, being, doing, and relating in ways that enable employees to foster an environment that supports students on their path to success as life-long learners.

Leading for Engagement & Performance: Human Resources Foundational Practices for Workplace Leaders (LEAP)

Camosun's **LEAP** program is designed as a dynamic, leadership development program that is grounded in the College's Core and Leadership capabilities with an emphasis on relational and reflective practice, and consideration for the richness and diversity of our college community. The goal of the program is to support all workplace leaders to be successful leading teams by: learning foundational leadership practices; human resource concepts, principles and practices; accessing relevant resources and tools; and, developing effective strategies to engage with, and support employees to be at their best. Several of the learning activities and materials in the LEAP program will be designed and delivered using Dr. Marten Brokenleg's Circle of Courage as a course design and delivery framework.

I acknowledge the traditional territories of the Lekwungen and W SÁNEĆ People and feel privileged to live, work and play here. I have been a visitor to this territory since 2002. My children are first generation Canadians as I came here from England when I was 5. I have Irish, English and Indian heritage. My own journey of Indigenization started when I was a teenager - unbeknownst to me at the time. I grew up in Musqueam Territory in Vancouver and had many friends who lived on the Musqueam reserve. I first participated in a cultural experience when my friend Eugene was killed trying to break up a fight. He was 18. We were invited to a wake at his family home where his body lay for a number of days before burial. I remember it like it was yesterday. My journey has continued over the years during my career working in human services, participating in family reconstructions, healing circles, elders teachings and long house ceremonies. I have worked at Camosun College for 14 years, 10 years as the Chair of the Community, Family and Child Studies Department and 4 years as the Organizational & People Development Specialist in Human Resources. My indigenization journey continues and I am grateful for the many teachings from colleagues and mentors in the college and broader community – Robert Wells, Corrine Michel, Janice Simcoe, Sandee Mitchell, Ruth Lyall, Wendy McDonald, Faye Martin, Dawn Smith, Tanya Kirkland, Dianne Biin and others who are so generous and patient with me. My journey is deeply personal and I am grateful to work with people in an environment that enables me to embrace the discomfort of not knowing as I work to situate myself in the teachings of indigenization.

With deep gratitude
Anita Ferriss

Dianne Biin

Centre for Indigenous Education & Community Connections



BIOGRAPHY

Dianne Biin is of Tsilhqot'in First Nation and Slovenian descent. Born and raised in the southern interior, her traditional territory, she comes from an entrepreneurial background. Dianne holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Simon Fraser University and a Master of Education degree from University of British Columbia. She has taught and worked at Camosun College since 2009 and in 2016, she was seconded to BCcampus to manage and contribute to the provincial Indigenization collaborative project.

Indigenization means I see myself reflected in curricula, that I come from a living peoples who are recognized as self-governing, are active participants in revitalizing culture and practice and acknowledged as contributors to community wellness. It also means that the daily interactions I have with colleagues and peers are meaningful, engaging, and reciprocal. I no longer feel I must justify my history, my experience, and my knowledge to others because it is accepted and valued.

Indigenous peoples are one of the fastest growing populations in the country and we are determined to build and maintain successful communities. Camosun can support this success by ensuring it creates a welcoming atmosphere, acknowledges the cultural and traditional protocols of place, and provides a safe space for values, beliefs, and ways of doing to be learnt and practiced. Indigenization for Camosun is important because it enables the institution, its staff, and learners to build a stronger community, where all people contribute, are heard, and are valued.

My role focuses on sharing experiences and knowledge and coaching ways to better engage, listen, learn, and walk alongside Indigenous students and communities. I work alongside faculty, leaders and staff to explore perspectives and co-create spaces for sharing and discussion. I encourage others by modeling how to walk, share, and listen together.



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