



# UBC REPORTS



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## Passion, pure research and happy accidents

BY CATHERINE LOIACONO

**Public universities** are often recognized as a central hub for research – both pure and applied. Although much has been said about applied research in recent years, what does pure research really mean today? Why is it still such a fundamental cornerstone of universities?



This year's Celebrate Research Week is an important part of UBC's 2008 Centenary. See page 5 for events and visit: [www.celebrateresearch.ubc.ca](http://www.celebrateresearch.ubc.ca)

As we celebrate UBC's eighth Annual Research Week, we explore the importance of the most basic form of research, its value and implications.

"Pure," "basic," "curiosity-driven," or "fundamental" are all terms used to describe research that is done for the sole purpose of following one's passion and curiosity in the search for new knowledge – without a direct

practical application in mind.

UBC Vice President, Research John Hepburn says, "We have attracted some of the top researchers in the world whose work is driven by discovery. UBC takes pride in creating an environment where researchers can pursue their curiosity and access the best facilities, because we recognize the importance it has in contributing to a greater global understanding."

Pure research is entirely exploratory, advancing knowledge and theoretical understanding among variables. It is found in all faculties and

can often lead to a significant discovery – or "happy accident" – which contributes to advancements in fields such as medicine and biotechnology.

For instance, Dr. Hugh Brock, Director of the UBC Genetics Graduate Program, discovered a protein that helped address untreatable childhood leukemias

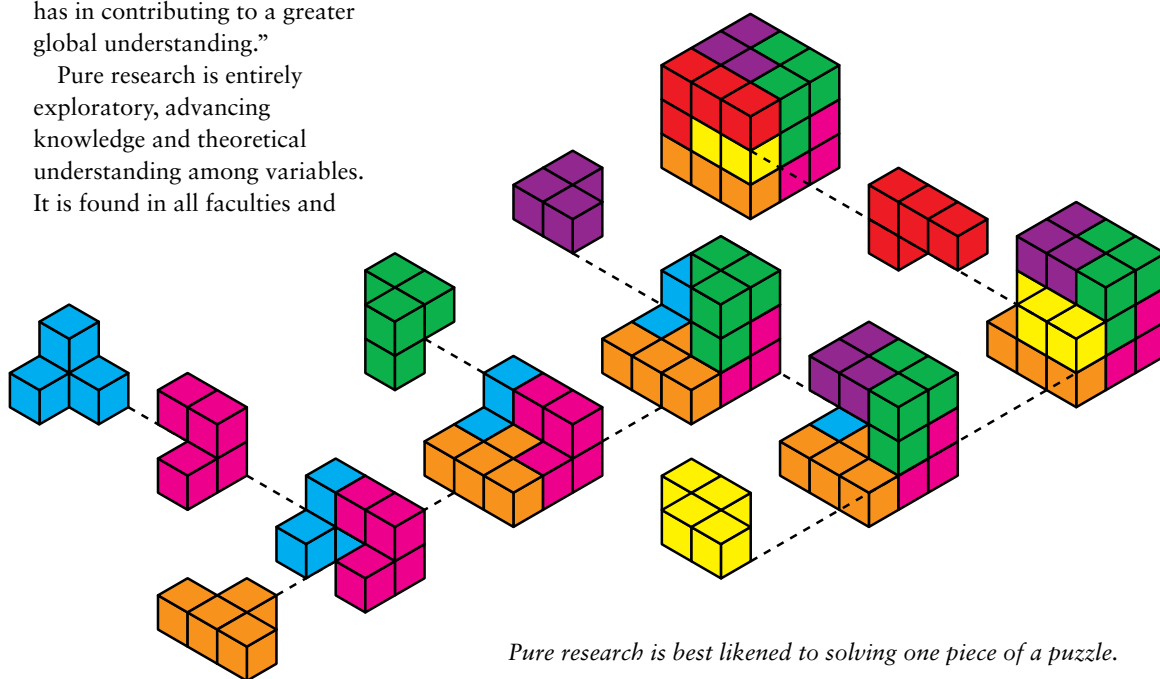
while studying the three-dimensional pattern formation of fruit fly wings. His research shows that the fly protein has a key role in promoting the activity of the leukemia protein, and provides unexpected insight into its function.

"One of the wonderful complexities of nature is our

inability to predict what will turn out to be an important discovery," says Brock. "That's why curiosity driven research is so fruitful."

Director of the Brain Research Centre, Dr. Max Cynader, works with many scientists who have made major scientific discoveries purely by accident. Says Cynader, "What I do know is to expect something revolutionary in the next five years in brain research, but I can't tell you what it is going to be."

Dr. Anthony Phillips and Dr. Yu Tian Wang, university professors and members of the Brain Research Centre, wanted to understand how the brain learns new things, specifically what molecular mechanisms underlie how we learn and make memories. The tools and drugs they developed for their study led them to discover a way to block the communication between brain cells that triggers drug cravings, a finding that could lead to new therapies to treat addiction and relapse as



Pure research is best likened to solving one piece of a puzzle.

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## Watch for broken rungs on the job ladder

BY LORRAINE CHAN

**The grass often looks greener** when we're browsing through job ads, but UBC sociology research cautions against frequent changes in employment since it can create a loss rather than a gain in wages.

This is especially true for women with children and families, says Sylvia Fuller, an assistant professor in the Dept. of Sociology.

market. She looked at the cohort entering the work force during the late 1970s to early 1990s.

"This is a generation of U.S. workers who started their careers during major economic upheaval and corporate restructuring," says Fuller, whose findings were recently published in the *American Sociological Review*.

Fuller's research shows a strong correlation between a drop in earnings and the number



Sociologist Sylvia Fuller says every job change can reduce your pay cheque by more than one per cent.

**"In a way the ideal is the old story. You can afford a divorce from employers a few times, but after a while, it diminishes your attractiveness."**

In the first detailed study of its kind, Fuller probed the consequences of frequent job changes on men and women's wages. Using nationally representative data from the United States National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, Fuller analyzed the pattern of wage growth of workers during their first 12 years in the labour

of times someone changes employers, especially due to layoffs or firings.

"On average, every job change reduces a worker's wage by a little over one per cent. So if someone changes jobs 10 times, they'd be earning about 11 per cent less."

The statistics paint a sobering picture of wage penalties for

women who leave a job for family reasons, almost on par with getting fired. For example, female employees who quit for reasons such as taking care of children or following a husband to another city would see a 2.6 per cent drop in wages compared to 2.7 per cent less if they were fired.

"It seems that leaving a job for a family-related reason results in significant wage disadvantages, even beyond what we would expect given the time out of the labour force that such quits often entail."

Fuller says reasons for this may be that women who leave jobs for family-related reasons

may be seen as less committed to their careers, making employers more hesitant to hire them for jobs with good wages.

Her research shows that men and women enjoy a brief window when they first enter the job market to look around and

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## IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC media coverage in February 2008. COMPILED BY BASIL WAUGH

### No skyscrapers required for urban density, prof says

Lawrence Frank, a professor of sustainable transportation at UBC, commented in an article on urban density in *The New York Times*.

Frank said even moderate increases in density can help significantly in curbing carbon emissions.

“You don’t have to live in a skyscraper,” he said. “You can have relatively low density and still maintain a more environmentally responsible lifestyle.”

### Empathy lessons: School program uses babies to reduce bullying

UBC developmental psychologist Kimberly Schonert-Reichl was quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*.

The article was on *Roots of Empathy*, a non-profit organization that uses babies to teach grade schoolers empathy.

Schonert-Reichl’s research has found a drop in aggressive behavior among students who were in classrooms with the so-called “empathy babies.”

### Autopsies forecast surge in U.S. heart disease

Heart disease may be on the upswing, according to a UBC study that looked at autopsy data from Minnesota residents who died from unnatural causes.

Researchers from UBC and Minnesota’s Mayo Clinic found that many of those who died from incidents such as motor vehicle crashes already had clogged arteries.

The study, published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, was reported by *Reuters*,

*Canada.com*, *Vancouver Sun*, and *Calgary Herald*.

### Sleep apnea doubles car crash risk

People with sleep apnea, a breathing disorder that disrupts sleep, are more likely to be in a severe car crash involving injury, UBC researchers have found.

In a study of almost 1,600 people, respirologists at UBC and the Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute determined that sufferers of sleep apnea were at double the risk of being in a collision.

“Even those patients with fairly mild sleep apnea had an increased risk of serious crashes,” said lead author Dr. Najib Ayas, a professor of medicine at UBC.

The study, published in the journal *Thorax*, was covered by the *National Post*, *Calgary Herald* and *Canada.com*.

### RESEARCH

continued from page 1

well as compulsive behaviours associated with schizophrenia.

Often times, the findings from basic research will be used by another group of researchers as a missing link to a significant discovery. Dr. Ann Marie Craig, UBC professor and member of the Brain Research Centre, and her team, demonstrated that neurexins induce formation of neurotransmitter receptor sites. This finding was used by another group of experts to discover that mutations in neurexins and neuroligins appear to cause autism in a small number of cases.

“Although, the number of cases was small, the results give us a cellular and molecular link to study how the disorder occurs,” says, Craig. “Research from our late colleague, Dr. Alaa El-Husseini contributed further by showing how neuroligins control the balance of synaptic connections. These studies continue to inform ongoing research on potential treatments for Autism.”

Dr. Julia Levy, an immunologist at UBC, noticed that her children would sometimes develop lesions on their legs and torso after playing in a field of

cow parsley. Curious as to what was causing this, Levy consulted with a colleague in the botany department at UBC who explained how cow parsley contains a photosensitizer chemical activated by light. This started Levy’s interest in photodynamic therapies, which she incorporated into her work on cancer immunology. Levy’s work, alongside that of David Dolphin led to the formation of QLT and the development of Visudyne™, a treatment for age-related blindness that has been used to treat more than half a million people and is now available in more than 70 countries.

UBC Professor of Music Theory William Benjamin, says his current research is purely curiosity driven. He is exploring the behaviour of hearing music.

“The impulse to re-hear music in our heads is close to universal,” says Benjamin. “One of the reasons we seek out music is to remember it vividly. My focus is to understand why we replay music in our heads whether or not it affects us deeply in an emotional sense.”

Benjamin says his research will contribute to understanding the nature of our culture. He adds that most pure research driven by passion can eventually be applied to have a positive impact on the world. **R**

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Lauren Weatherdon: First year physics course helps see the world through a new lens.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

# Nothing too theoretical about this physics class

BY BRIAN LIN

Lauren Weatherdon had never taken physics until last fall. She didn't expect to like it either.

"The people I had spoken with didn't enjoy first-year physics courses, and didn't find the knowledge helpful in real life," says the English-biology double major. "I was pleasantly surprised. I'm even considering switching from biology to physics."

Weatherdon's reaction is what a group of instructors and teaching assistants had hoped to achieve when they got together last summer to redesign PHYS 100, an introductory course offered by the Dept. of Physics.

More than 700 students studied basic physics concepts by dissecting and analyzing real-world situations such as energy consumption and the greenhouse effect, the first time such an approach has been taken in a mandatory undergraduate physics course.

"The conventional approach to teaching first-year physics involves a lot of esoteric problems that are good intellectual exercises if you're interested in physics," says instructor Andrzej Kotlicki, who has taught physics for 40 years. "But in a course like PHYS 100, you simply can't assume that."

The bulk of the students are from arts and life sciences, where only minimal physics courses are required. Half of the students have never taken physics and more than half never take physics again.

"This may be the only formal exposure to physics for these students, and their impression here may last a lifetime," says Sandy Martinuk, a PhD student and teaching assistant who helped redesign the course.

Kotlicki and fellow instructors Fei Zhou and Georg Rieger drew

inspiration from the hottest topic on earth and devised lectures, lab experiments and assignments to not only show students how physics lives in everyday situations but also to empower them to apply scientific problem-solving skills in other contexts.

For example, students in class are led step by step to examine and calculate the amount of energy it takes to fly a commercial jetliner, taking into account factors such as altitude, acceleration, drag, fuel and engine type and passenger load.

Other scenarios include comparing the energy efficiency of an SUV to a Prius hybrid vehicle and extrapolating global greenhouse effects based on data from a real greenhouse.

## Redesigned first year course teaches concepts with real world problems

In parallel with these changes to the course, the new crop of teaching assistants has been put through a TA training program. This training gives them the tools to help students learn to flex their own critical muscles.

"We're encouraging TAs to examine their own 'expert-like' thinking – which often involves skipping certain steps that have become second nature – so that they can impart this flow of logic to their students," says Mya Warren, a TA who spearheaded the program that also includes mentoring by senior TAs and regular discussions with instructors.

"I've come to realize that teaching is so much more than just answering questions. The process has made me a better teacher and a better physicist," says Warren. "I may be a physics professor one day and this is a very important part of the job."

All 45 incoming graduate students in the Dept. of Physics completed the mandatory program last fall. It will be offered to current TAs starting next term.

For the first time, students are asked to team up and present a project where they use real data to prove or debunk myths about energy consumption. "I've never seen such enthusiasm in this class," says Kotlicki, adding that it makes the extra time and energy he devoted to revamping the course well worth it.

Martinuk is documenting that enthusiasm as part of his PhD thesis. The first doctoral student in the department to focus on physics education, Martinuk joins a growing number of

physicists who are looking into the unique traits that makes good physics teaching stick.

He's been working with the Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative (CWSEI) to implement surveys that measure students' attitude and beliefs towards Physics. His study, along with the TA training program, is now part of a five-year project funded by the CWSEI to systematically improve learning in the department.

"There's already been a significant improvement in how confident students feel about their ability to assess a situation and problem-solve," says Martinuk. "This is important because educational research has shown that positive beliefs help bridge the connection between knowledge – what you have – and process – what you do with that knowledge." R

### UBC science students crème de la crème

Incoming UBC Science students might as well have ivy on their acceptance letters.

A recent review of admissions standards indicates first-year science students here are comparable to students at prestigious Ivy League schools and superior to those at any U.S. public university.

Researchers from the UBC's Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative (CWSEI) and Planning And Institutional Research (PAIR) compared first-year students at UBC with those from a number of major U.S. universities by examining their ranking among their high school cohorts and how those cohorts rated in international comparisons.

"We found that when it comes to science students in Canada and the U.S., UBC is slightly less selective than the most elite Ivy League schools such as Yale University. However, it is more selective than the next tier of Ivy's such as Columbia and well ahead of the leading U.S. public Universities," says CWSEI director and Nobel laureate Carl Wieman.

The "average" first-year science student at UBC ranked at the 94th percentile in their high school class. The corresponding class ranking for all first-year students at SFU and UVic are 82 and 85.5, respectively.

Statistics Canada's 2006 Performance for International Student Assessment shows that B.C. high school students score on average 50 points higher than U.S. students in science. This means that the 94th percentile science student in a B.C. high school is equivalent to the 96th percentile student in a U.S. high school. This 96th percentile equivalent can be compared with leading U.S. universities such as Yale at 97.5, Columbia at 95.5, University of Virginia at 95, and the other most prominent and selective U.S. public universities in the 91-93 percentile range.

"This gives us a benchmark for comparing student achievement," says Wieman. "It also helps us set educational standards and expectations for success that are appropriate to the quality of the students."

There are currently no common measures of student quality across Canada and the U.S. The CWSEI comparison is based on publicly available data, which precludes high school scores from other Canadian provinces. The B.C. stats were made available through Ministry of Education's Student Transitions Project.

The full report is available at: [www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/files/selectivity\\_report.pdf](http://www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/files/selectivity_report.pdf)

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Georgia Pomaki: when a person's goals are positive, they will spiral up.

# Goals up, burnout down

*Study of Dutch healthcare workers  
links wellbeing to goal setting*

BY LORRAINE CHAN

**People working in jobs** with a high burnout rate share one thing in common. If they feel supported and see opportunities to grow and improve, they'll likely thrive.

But the moment workers believe their best hope is to keep their heads above water, they put themselves at increased risk for depression, exhaustion, burnout and absenteeism, according to UBC psychology research.

"Goals play a key role in predicting physical and psychological wellbeing," says Georgia Pomaki, a postdoctoral fellow in the Dept. of Psychology. She is among a handful of scholars worldwide

In spiraling downward, explains Pomaki, individuals increase their risk of depression and physical symptoms such as back pain and headaches.

She recently explored the pursuit and attainment of goals among nurses and doctors in Leiden, Holland, conducting studies at a major teaching hospital that employs 3,500 healthcare workers.

Her research included 175 doctors, half of whom had been working at the hospital for more than five years. Pomaki found that 68 per cent of the doctors described their goals in positive terms. These included better care for patients, securing a raise, publishing more papers and maintaining a balance between

unsurprising outcome, says Pomaki, given the links between chronic stress and irregular production of cortisol, a stress hormone.

"Too much or too little cortisol can result in a compromised immune functioning."

Pomaki's study at the Dutch hospital included 1,400 nurses. Her findings show that two-thirds of the nurses were fairly optimistic, setting their sights on future promotions or taking courses to upgrade their skills and performance.

However, 17 per cent of the nurses focused on "avoidance goals," namely the desire to work fewer hours and to protect themselves from utter physical

**Pomaki says because these doctors were able to look forward to new opportunities, they experienced higher rates of well-being and were at lower risk for depression and physical ailments.**

looking at the mobilizing power of a person's desires and dreams on work life.

Pomaki studies how people cope when working in the toughest jobs – those with high demand, but low control and low support. She has found that goals are a key indicator whether a person will flourish or fade under pressure.

"When a person's goals are positive they will spiral up, but when they're focusing on just surviving, they will spiral down," says Pomaki, who's also an investigator at the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research.

their professional and home life.

Pomaki says because these doctors were able to look forward to new opportunities, they experienced higher rates of well-being and were at lower risk for depression and physical ailments.

More pessimistic were 32 per cent of the doctors who framed their goals in avoidance terms. "For them, it was much more about minimizing harm to themselves because of perceived time pressures and responsibilities."

These doctors reported more health complaints – an

and mental exhaustion. For the most part, these nurses had poorer health than their peers with the more positive goals.

Pomaki says that while hospital administrators may feel heartened that greater than fewer numbers of nurses and doctors are optimists, her findings point to systemic issues that need to be addressed to increase employee health.

"But unfortunately," she acknowledges, "the usual practice is for management not to deal with processes until there's a major problem."

# Meet the Chancellor candidates

**Elections are now under way** for the position of Chancellor of The University of British Columbia. The Chancellor presides over all major university ceremonies and is an ex officio member of the Board of Governors, the Senates and the Council of Senates.

The position of Chancellor is prescribed in the University Act – the Centenary of which UBC is celebrating this year – which requires an election every three years by members of the Convocation. The Convocation include all graduates of UBC degree programs (including graduates of many degree programs offered by the former Okanagan University

College), all members of either UBC Senate, all UBC professional librarians, and all UBC faculty members with the ranks of Professor (any grade), Instructor (any grade), or Lecturer. Emeritus, clinical, adjunct, and honorary professors are not eligible.

More than 250,000 people are eligible to vote.

Nominations closed Nov. 12, 2007, and voting for the two candidates closes April 4, 2008. Online voting is at: <http://students.ubc.ca/elections>

UBC Reports asked the candidates to write about their qualifications and vision.



Dr. Bikkar S. Lalli, PhD 1966

I believe the role of UBC is to challenge, stimulate, and stretch the minds of its students so that they become agents of leadership, creativity and change in a multicultural society. In this global economy, higher learning is the key to achieving success for individuals and for nations. It is essential that we provide equitable access, attract quality students and encourage more young people to pursue higher learning. We must support research since it strengthens teaching and leads to innovation. My experience as a visiting scholar in institutions worldwide has provided me with a strong conviction that international collaboration among institutions of higher learning is critical to developing innovative solutions for common social problems.

My passion for education has shaped my commitment to assist others in attaining their educational dreams. I am

a proud alumnus of UBC (PhD, 1966), with a successful academic career at the University of Saskatchewan, as Professor and Department Head, with over 150 research publications. Since 1999 I have served as a Convocation Senator for UBC, where I worked closely with other Senators to enable UBC to fulfill its role in the areas of teaching, research and community outreach.

The focus of some of my other volunteer work with community groups in the Lower Mainland has been the welfare of vulnerable societal groups, including seniors, women and young people. In addition to serving on the UBC Senate, I have served on the Boards of The Kwantlen Foundation and The College of Dental Technicians, and lectured on behalf of BC Coalition to Eliminate Abuse of Seniors. This work has provided me with an opportunity to contribute for all the benefits that I have derived from having received a higher education.

I believe that a Chancellor can be an active ambassador between the university and the communities it serves. After spending a lifetime in institutions of higher learning in different cultural settings, combined with a thorough understanding of the problems faced by communities at the grassroots level, I believe that I can make an important contribution as an ambassador for UBC. If elected Chancellor, it would be an honour to serve and represent this prestigious institution.



Sarah Morgan-Silvester, BCom 1982

My parents came to Canada with good educations, a great deal of energy and truly nothing else. My mother was a teacher and my father was an engineer, and I was fortunate to grow up in a family that valued education. My sister and I both went to UBC, not because we knew it was a great university, but because it was far enough away from home to loosen up our social lives!

But what a great decision it turned out to be. A large part of who I am can be traced back to the time I spent as a student at UBC. During those years I developed an immense respect for the institution and for the individuals – faculty, staff and students – who made the university what it is today. That time also provided exceptional training for my career and helped me develop a sense of responsibility about my own community.

My background in business and community service is quite varied. I have taken on leadership roles in the transportation, financial service and energy sectors, and I have been a senior volunteer in organizations focussed on health, the environment and the economy. I am currently chair of the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, chair of the BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre Foundation, and a member of the Sauder School of Business Faculty Advisory Board.

The common thread in all my business and community involvements is people: people working together in collaboration to spark a level of creativity that individuals are rarely able to achieve.

UBC is a great university, with a quarter of a million alumni who have made their mark on our society. UBC invests in and develops human capital which, to my mind, is the most important element of a successful enterprise. As Chancellor, I will focus on engaging UBC's wider community in the success of the university.

I am honoured to be nominated by the Alumni Association for the Chancellor's position, and offer my thanks to them for giving me the opportunity to be a part of UBC's future.

## it's yours

### SATURDAY MARCH 8

#### Diabetes – Genes or Lifestyle?

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#### Sleep: A Window on Infant and Young Children's Development

2:00PM – 3:00PM  
The area of sleep deprivation for infants and children is a sometimes controversial topic. Dr. Hall, who has assisted many families with their infants' and pre-schoolers' sleep problems, will provide answers to a number of questions. Contact: Merrilee Hughes, 604.822.1409, [ONRTS@nursing.ubc.ca](mailto:ONRTS@nursing.ubc.ca)  
IRC – Lecture Theatre 6 (Woodward Building)

### MONDAY MARCH 10

#### Action on Seafood Sustainability: Consumer Impact on Dwindling Marine Resources

7:30PM – 9:30PM  
Join us for an interactive discussion to highlight issues around seafood sustainability. Representatives of diverse interest groups will explore ecological, social and economic concerns that should influence our decisions. Contact: Amanda Vincent, [a.vincent@fisheries.ubc.ca](mailto:a.vincent@fisheries.ubc.ca)  
Robson Square – 800 Robson Street

#### Solving Complex Real-world Problems: An Issue-based Interdisciplinary Approach

March 10 to March 14  
12:00PM – 2:00PM  
In this series of lunch-time talks and videos, faculty and students discuss the collaborative



## A LEGACY OF RESEARCH EXCELLENCE CELEBRATE RESEARCH WEEK | 4–15 MARCH 2008

and interdisciplinary approaches used to address complex societal and environmental issues. Contact: John Corry, 604.822.4131 or visit [www.cfis.ubc.ca/crw](http://www.cfis.ubc.ca/crw)  
Rm 120 CK Choi Building – 1855 West Mall

### TUESDAY MARCH 11

#### Celebrating Women's Health Research Discoveries

8:00AM – 4:00PM  
Women's Health Research Day features keynote speaker Dr. Joy Johnson. Presentations on topics such as Women's Heart Health, Reproductive Health and Infection will be spotlighted. Contact: Christina Schmidt, 604.875.3459, [cschmidt@cw.bc.ca](mailto:cschmidt@cw.bc.ca)  
UBC Life Sciences Centre, LSC1 – 2350 Health Sciences Mall

#### Trees: The Building Blocks of a Global Bio-economy

4:00 pm to 8:30 pm  
Dr. Ian de la Roche, President and CEO of FPInnovations, will be the guest speaker at the Annual Forestry Lecture in Sustainability sponsored by the Koerner Foundation. All are welcome to view research poster displays prior

to the lecture and to join us at a reception immediately following. Admission is free. For more information, visit [www.forestry.ubc.ca](http://www.forestry.ubc.ca) or contact 604-822-6784  
Forest Sciences Centre, 2424 Main Mall

### WEDNESDAY MARCH 12

#### Obesity: The Skinny on Weight Loss: Dieting and Physical Activity in a Weight Conscious Society

7:30PM – 9:30PM  
Join the Heart and Stroke Foundation of B.C. & Yukon for an evening with leading experts in weight loss, eating, and physical activity who will answer the age old question: Is dieting safe and do any diets really work? If not, what is the alternative? Please RSVP to 604.736.4404 Ext.270 or [research@hsf.bc.ca](mailto:research@hsf.bc.ca)  
Robson Square – 800 Robson Street

#### Wine Library Open House

10:00AM – 4:00PM  
Free 30 minute tours throughout the day. Tour the UBC Wine Library, one of the most exclusive wine libraries in the world. To register contact: [wine@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:wine@interchange.ubc.ca), [www.landfood.ubc.ca/wine](http://www.landfood.ubc.ca/wine)  
Nutrition and Health Building – 2205 East Mall

### THURSDAY MARCH 13

#### Sustainability and Social Enterprise – James Tansey

5:00PM – 7:30PM  
This presentation focuses on the findings of a survey of social enterprises across North America and Europe and includes presentations by MBA students who have developed business plans in this domain. Reception from 5:00PM to 6:00PM Contact: Jessie Lam, [jessie.lam@sauder.ubc.ca](mailto:jessie.lam@sauder.ubc.ca), or visit: [www.sauder.ubc.ca](http://www.sauder.ubc.ca)  
Robson Square Theatre – 800 Robson Street

### FRIDAY MARCH 14

#### Celebrate Hearing Health – Day 2

10:00am – 4:00pm  
Interested in Audiology or Speech-Language Pathology? Are you a student exploring career options in health care and technology? Are you wondering if you're listening to your iPod at a dangerous level? Discover the career opportunities available to you! Contact: Valter Ciocca director@audiospeech@ubc.ca  
IRC – B27-28 (Woodward Building)

#### All Celebrate Research Events: [www.celebrateresearch.ubc.ca](http://www.celebrateresearch.ubc.ca)

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Check out all the Centenary events at:  
[www.100.ubc.ca](http://www.100.ubc.ca)



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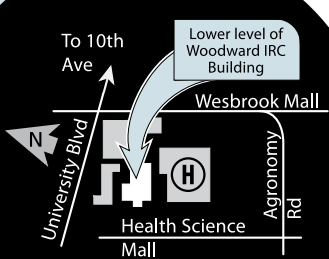
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# UBC fields a team of Olympic sports doctors

BY BASIL WAUGH

It is every Olympic athlete's nightmare. After years of training and sacrifice, an injury or failed blood test suddenly disqualifies you from competition.

It is something Dr. Bob McCormack, Canada's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for the 2008 Olympic Summer Games in Beijing, knows a little about. Set to represent Canada at the 1980 games in Moscow, the former track star's Olympic dreams were dashed when the Western world boycotted the games due to Cold War tensions.

"It was pretty unlucky," says McCormack, a UBC orthopedic surgeon who watched the boycotted games on TV while holding two national middle distance track records at the time. "But it is huge honour to now be able to help others to try to achieve their own dreams. I live a little vicariously through them, I guess."



Dr. Bob McCormack.

In Beijing, McCormack will lead a small army of sports physicians, physiotherapists and nutritionists, overseeing everything from medical care to banned-substance testing, to ensure Canada's athletes are in peak condition.

McCormack's team will also be involved in two research projects: One will investigate how the Beijing's notoriously bad air quality will impact athletes; the other is a national study on the athletic benefits of food supplements.



McCormack will not be the only UBC sports physician helping athletes to achieve the Olympic motto of "faster, higher, stronger" this summer. Each of the 29 sports has a sport federation (NSF) physician responsible for assisting with medical care and doping controls for international athletes during competition. Two will be from UBC: Dr. Don McKenzie (canoeing) and Dr. Babak Shadgan (wrestling).

"UBC is really well represented in Beijing," says McCormack. "UBC has been a hub for cutting edge research in sports medicine for some time. There are excellent people here, many who are working with national and professional teams."

As CMOs and NSF doctors work under the leadership of a head physician appointed by the host country, UBC will play an even more prominent role in 2010: the Vancouver Olympic Committee (VANOC) has named UBC sports doctor Dr. Jack Taunton to the Vancouver Winter Games' top medical position.



As a NSF doctor for a combat sport, Shadgan will be a busy man in Beijing.

When wrestlers suffer sprains, dislocations or cuts, the PhD student will be responsible for overseeing medical care. If an athlete is too wounded to safely continue, Shadgan – who researches muscle injuries at

UBC's new Muscle Biophysics Laboratory – has the difficult task of disqualifying the athlete from the match.

In the early 1990s, Shadgan became Iran's first accredited sports physician; he has since devoted his career to injury prevention. For the past four years has been tracking and analyzing wrestling injuries in international competitions, including the Athens Olympics. After collecting more data in Beijing, he will present to the International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles a series of suggested rule and technique changes to reduce the rate and severity of injuries.



With three medals in 2004, flatwater canoeing is one of Canada's most successful Olympic events. McKenzie, Director of Sports Medicine at UBC, attributes some of this success to pioneering research at UBC that used science to improve athletic training.

"Back in the 1980s, we started measuring performance and using science to determine how to improve performance," said McKenzie, who fits athletes with heart monitors Global Positioning Systems (GPS) to monitor their training. "Combining science and training was something UBC was instrumental in and still is."

McKenzie, for whom Beijing will be his seventh Olympics, says the thought of helping athletes defy the limits of physical performance keeps him coming back to international event. "It is pretty exciting to watch evolution happen right before your eyes."

McKenzie is known internationally as founder of the Abreast in a Boat non-profit organization that promotes dragon boating to raise awareness about breast cancer and to encourage those living with breast cancer to live full and active lives. ■

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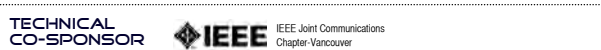
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JOB continued from page 1

find a good fit.

"Early voluntary mobility can improve wages, but after five years of working you start to lose ground if haven't found your place in the labour market. Even if you're not fired or laid off, changing jobs later in your career doesn't tend to bring any monetary benefits."

In fact, frequent changes may start to stigmatize one's career, says Fuller, and workers who change jobs too frequently also lose out on the wage premiums associated with accumulating some tenure with an employer.

"It brings diminishing returns. Employers may start wondering why aren't you aren't able to stay in one place."

What really surprised her, says Fuller, is how these findings contradict what many young people accept as sound career advice, "that success no longer comes from staying in one place, that this is an old fashioned model not relevant for today's workplace."

She observes that this "new norm" came about during a period of corporate downsizing and outsourcing, giving rise to rhetoric that painted job mobility as a glamorous means to higher pay and better status.

"During the '90s, the New York Times ran a series on 'the end of the job.' There was the idea of the migrant professional and the understanding that companies no longer expect

lifetime loyalty from their employees, who in turn wouldn't expect any job security."

Fuller says her findings provide a cautionary tale that the labour market hasn't fundamentally changed, and that the work model our parents and grandparents enjoyed may be the best way to get ahead in life after all.

"In a way the ideal is the old story. You can afford a divorce from employers a few times, but after a while, it diminishes your attractiveness."

Fuller is currently researching the earning outcomes for Canadian workers who get caught in cycles of temporary work compared to permanent positions. ■

# Heavy medal: UBC's Olympic history

As UBC this year celebrates the Centenary of the University Act, we look back at our Olympic history. In 1928, Harry Warren became UBC's first Olympian, running track at the Summer Games in Amsterdam. Since then, 213 UBC athletes, coaches and managers have competed for Canada at the Olympics.



1932 LOS ANGELES	Ned Pratt	Doubles Rowing	Bronze
1936 BERLIN	Bob Osborne	Basketball	Silver
1956 MELBOURNE	Wayne Pretty	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Bill McKerlich	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Doug McDonald	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Bob Wilson	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Phil Kueber	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Laurie West	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Dick McClure	Eights Rowing	Silver
	David Helliwell	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Carl Ogawa	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Walter d'Hondt	Four Rowing	Gold
	Archie McKinnon	Four Rowing	Gold
Don Arnold	Four Rowing	Gold	
Lorne Loomer	Four Rowing	Gold	
1960 ROME	Bill McKerlich	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Walter d'Hondt	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Archie McKinnon	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Don Arnold	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Glen Mervyn	Eights Rowing	Silver
	John Lecky	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Nelson Kuhn	Eights Rowing	Silver
	David Anderson	Eights Rowing	Silver
	Sohen Biln	Eights Rowing	Silver
1964 TOKYO	George Hungerford	Pair Rowing	Gold
	Roger Jackson	Pair Rowing	Gold
1968 GRENOBLE	Roger Bourbonnais	Ice Hockey	Bronze
	Ken Broderick	Ice Hockey	Bronze
	Gary Dineen	Ice Hockey	Bronze
	Barry McKenzie	Ice Hockey	Bronze
	Terry O'Malley	Ice Hockey	Bronze
1972 MUNICH	David Miller	Yachting	Bronze
	Paul Cote	Yachting	Bronze
	John Ekels	Yachting	Bronze
	Bill Mahony	Swimming	Bronze
1984 LOS ANGELES	Tricia Smith	Pair Rowing	Silver
	Bruce Ford	Quad Skulls	Bronze
	Pat Turner	Eights Rowing	Gold
	Paul Steele	Eights Rowing	Gold
	Sue Holloway	Pairs Kayaking	Silver
		Fours Kayaking	Bronze
1992 BARCELONA	Megan Delehanty	Eights Rowing	Gold
	Brenda Taylor	Fours Rowing	Gold
		Eights Rowing	Gold
	Mike Rascher	Eights Rowing	Gold
	Kathleen Heddle	Pairs Rowing	Gold
		Eights Rowing	Gold
1996 ATLANTA	Kathleen Heddle	Pairs Rowing	Gold
		Fours Rowing	Bronze
2000 SYDNEY	Laurysa Biesenthal	Fours Rowing	Bronze
	Laurysa Biesenthal	Eights Rowing	Bronze
	Emma Robinson	Eights Rowing	Bronze
	Heather Davis	Eights Rowing	Bronze

For more on UBC and the Olympics, visit: [www.gothunderbirds.ca/ubc\\_the\\_olympics](http://www.gothunderbirds.ca/ubc_the_olympics).



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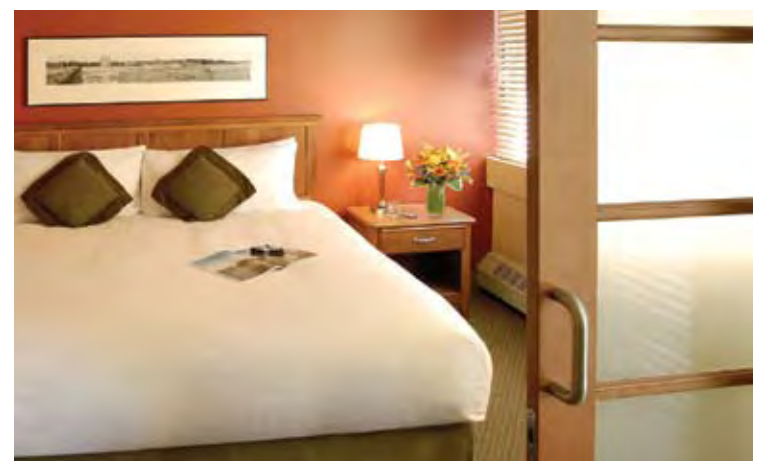
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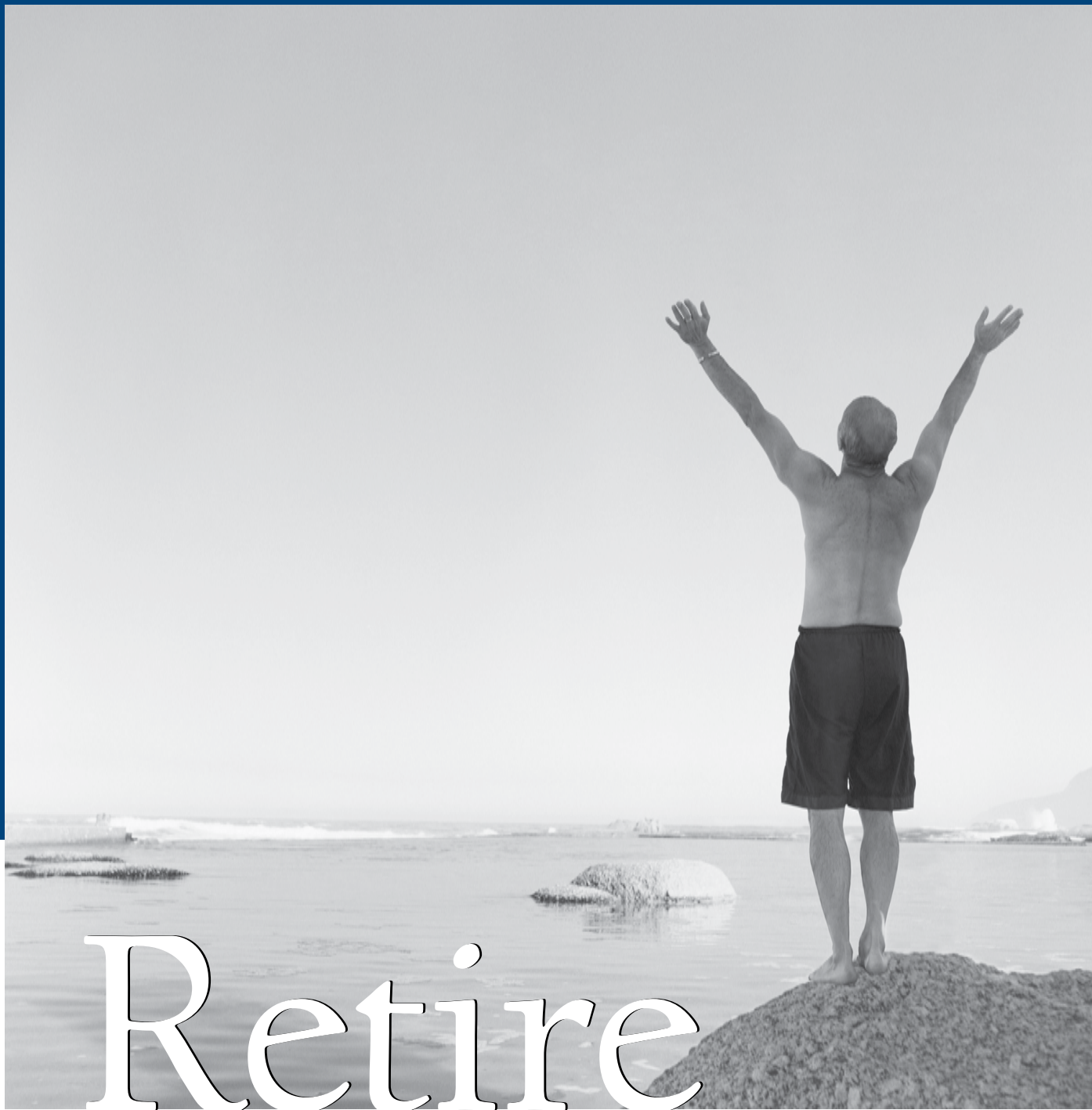
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