OFFICE FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Annual Report on
Aboriginal
Strategic Initiatives
at Simon Fraser University for 2015

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This Annual Report concerns Aboriginal strategic initiatives that took place at Simon Fraser University over the course of 2015. Much of this work has been based on the Aboriginal Strategic Plan for the University, which can be viewed on the Office for Aboriginal Peoples website. The successes recorded in this Annual Report have very much been a team effort. This office gives a big "thank you" to the community for this collective endeavor.

Please note that this report is shorter and more concise than those provided in recent years. Recent Annual Reports from this office, with contributions from many, have become so large – which is good news, really – that it took months to prepare and much time and effort to read. In response to comments about this, we are thus creating a newsworthy report that will be less onerous to prepare and peruse. The report is thus not meant to be exhaustive, providing extensive details regarding “all things Aboriginal” happening at SFU. Rather, it is now meant to be more of a snapshot document, detailing sets of ongoing and new activities as these happen from year to year. This kind of concise report is in conjunction with what other units are doing around the University and in the community.

Hence, in no particular order of importance or relevance, please enjoy reading the Annual Report on Aboriginal Strategic Initiatives at Simon Fraser University for 2015.

William G. Lindsay
Director
Office for Aboriginal Peoples

January 2016
Aboriginal student numbers continue to show steady and stable progress at SFU. The most recent and complete statistics (for 2013-14) show 618 Aboriginal students attending our university as of that year. Included in this number are 132 graduate students of Aboriginal heritage.

Regarding new admissions for the Fall of 2015 - as of mid-August - there were 78 new Aboriginal undergraduate admissions and 10 new Aboriginal graduate student admissions. Of the 78 new undergraduate admissions, 34 were admitted under the Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy. Regarding the Spring 2015 convocation, there were a total of 67 self-identified Aboriginal graduates: two doctoral, twenty-four master’s, and forty-one undergraduates.

The first cohort of the EMBA in Aboriginal Business and Leadership graduated in 2015. A second cohort is now underway.

News from the SFU Men’s Lacrosse coach, Brent Hoskins: “I am happy to let you know...that we have continued to make recruiting Aboriginal student-athletes a priority. This past season (2014-2015) we had two freshmen of Aboriginal heritage, and a third student who participated with us as a redshirt while he was enrolled in SFU’s Aboriginal Bridge Program. We have recruited an additional three Aboriginal student-athletes that will start at SFU this September so we expect to have a total of six Aboriginal players on our roster this season.”

Recipients of the 2015-16 Graduate Aboriginal Entrance Scholarships sponsored by the Office of the Vice President, Academic are: (1) Valerie Bob for $54,000 over three years. She is in the Special Arrangements program. Her award began in Summer 2015, when she began her doctoral program. (2) Monique Auger for $30,000 over two years. She is in the Faculty of Health Sciences MSc program. Her award began in Fall 2015, when she began her MSc program.

The Office of the Vice President, Academic continues plans to increase Aboriginal faculty numbers at SFU (currently at 14). In the long term, the VPA supports two Graduate Aboriginal Entrance Scholarships designed to attract “star” Aboriginal graduate students to SFU. In the short term, VPA has recently developed a process whereby Faculty deans can apply for funding to add positions intended to attract Aboriginal faculty members, as part of the university’s Faculty Renewal Plan process. VPA has agreed to provide funding for Faculty positions for three years, after which the Faculty will pick up the position costs. All deans were offered the opportunity to develop these positions. For the first rounds VPA selected proposals from the Beedie School of Business, Faculty of Health Sciences, and Faculty of Education.

In 2015, representatives of SFU, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), and St. Paul’s Hospital Foundation announced the establishment of the First Nations Health Authority Chair in Heart Health and Wellness. Part of the funds for this new Chair are coming from the Office of the Vice President, Academic as a result of the plans to increase Aboriginal faculty numbers at SFU. We welcome new Chair, Dr. Jeffrey Reading, to this role.

Acclaimed scholar Dr. John Borrows - who is Anishinabe/Ojibway and a member of the Chippewa of the Nawash First Nation in Ontario - is now a Visiting Professor in the SFU Beedie School of Business. Dr. Borrows also was a presenter at the Spring 2015 President’s Dream Colloquium on Obedience and Disobedience: Taking Action on Climate Change.

Dr. Amy Parent – who is from the Nisga’a Nation – joined the Faculty of Education from UBC in 2015. She joins SFU in a tenure track role as an Assistant Professor.

The CIHR-Institute of Aboriginal Peoples’ Health continues to grow, with two new Project Officers joining the team in 2015. We welcome Maya Nakajima and Joanne Nelson to these roles.
The following offices and staff all continue on with their good work at SFU: Office for Aboriginal Peoples; Bill Reid Centre; Bill Reid Gallery; First Nations Studies Department; First Nations Language Program/Centre; EMBA Program in Aboriginal Business and Leadership; CIHR-Institute of Aboriginal People's Health; Hakai Network for Coastal People, Ecosystems, and Management; Office of Indigenous Education in the Faculty of Education; Indigenous Student Centre; Indigenous Research Institute; Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology; Aboriginal Bridge Programs; Coordinator for Indigenous Graduate Students; Indigenous Initiatives Librarian; First Nations Student Association; Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) Program; and the Aboriginal Co-Op Coordinator.

Since moving to the new ISC, the Indigenous Student Centre (ISC) has enhanced and increased support services to Indigenous students. The ISC offers holistic student support services to First Nations, Métis and Inuit students at SFU. The Indigenous Student Center has experienced a significant increase in Indigenous student engagement over the past year. We continue to collaborate with our partners across campus, including FNSA, the Student Success and Strategic Support Division, Student Affairs, Athletics and Recreation, and The Learning Commons to build holistic programming and services to support the academic success and well-being of Indigenous students. The ISC continues to offer Peer Mentorship support, tutoring services, student welcome events, community gatherings in the ISC, the annual Indigenous Honouring Feast, and the Elder’s Program.

Three SFU First Nations faculty/elder/administrative leaders received a special honor from the University of British Columbia in 2015. As part of UBC’s 100 Anniversary celebrations, the Faculty of Education recognized the achievements of 100 outstanding alumni from the Faculty’s long list of graduates. *Education’s 100*, as they were called, were selected for their dedication, impact, and expertise as community leaders in their professional area. Dr. Amy Parent (Faculty of Education), Dr. Ethel Gardner (Elder), and William Lindsay (Director, Office for Aboriginal Peoples) from SFU were chosen as members of the *Education 100* group.

Mr. Chris Lewis, Band Council Member for the Squamish Nation and SFU alumnus, has accepted an extension of his Board of Governor (SFU) appointment until the end of 2018.

Ms. Jessie Williams, Post Secondary Counsellor for the Squamish Nation, accepted an appointment in 2015 to the Aboriginal Steering Committee (SFU) as a community representative, representing the Squamish people.

The Coast Salish Drumming and Singing Workshops, sponsored and organized by SFU’s Vancity Office for Community Engagement, continues at SFU Woodwards.

SFU Woodwards continues to host performances associated with the annual Talking Stick Festival, with SFU Woodwards Cultural Programs co-hosting.

The Indigenous Research Institute continues to provide a forum for special events, guest speakers, and communication amongst SFU researchers. A list of these initiatives is prepared by the IRI Chair, Dr. Eldon
Yellowhorn, in an annual report to the Vice President, Research. These annual reports can be seen on the Office for Aboriginal Peoples website.

- A SFU-SSHRC partnership grant on First Nations language documentation and revitalization - approved for funding by SSHRC in 2013 for $2.495 million over seven years - continues its work. SFU researchers, led by Dr. Marianne Ignace, work with more than twenty First Nations community organizations and more than twenty academic co-applicants and collaborators to document First Nations languages, develop digital media and storage, and to support learners. As part of this project, the first of a series of First Nations language apps will be ready for testing in 2016.

- Canada Research Chair and Faculty of Education Professor, Nathalie Sinclair, has also been working with the Ojibwe and Nuu-chah-nulth peoples to translate her early-numbers math app into their languages. Called TouchCounts, the free app lets children use their fingers, ears, and eyes to count, add, and subtract and use/learn their traditional language while doing so. To see it action google “TouchCounts” on YouTube.

- The Pacific Institute for Mathematical Sciences, IRMACS, SFU Recreation, and the Office for Aboriginal Peoples partnered up to offer the second annual Academic Math Camp for Aboriginal Youth in July 2015. Math/Science and English academics, lab experience, peer mentoring, and cultural and recreational activities took place during this camp, which involved twenty-six Aboriginal youth from around southern British Columbia. For the second consecutive year, 100% of the participants completed the camp.

- A one week summer camp involving Aboriginal youth from the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre took place on the Burnaby campus during July 2015. A big “thank you” to SFU Recreation for organizing and hosting this camp which has taken place for three consecutive years.

- Fraser International College continues to offer First Nations Studies 101 as part of its general course offerings to the international student body attending FIC. The course has proven so popular that FIC now offers it every semester i.e. three times annually.

- A Lecture Series on Aboriginal Issues once again took place at SFU Woodwards and SFU Harbour Centre in early 2015. Co-hosted and co-organized by the Indigenous Research Institute, Office for Aboriginal Peoples, and SFU’s Vancity Office for Community Engagement, it usually features 4-5 SFU researchers from the Indigenous Research Institute who present their latest research projects/findings.

- Fundraising efforts continue with regards to the First Peoples House project. This capital building project is not an easy sell in today’s economic environment and at a time when corporations do not generally support “bricks and mortar” initiatives. But we continue on with the effort.

- A tutoring program, involving SFU graduate student volunteers, continues on at the Native Education College in Vancouver. Through this program, free tutoring is provided in math and some of the sciences to Aboriginal adult learners (ABE students) at the college. Veselin Jungic, from the SFU Department of Mathematics, arranges for the tutors.

- Science Alive is a not-for-profit science and technology education program housed at SFU. The communities in which Science Alive works include Haida Gwaii communities Sandspit, Queen Charlotte, Skidegate, and Masset; other Northern BC communities include Blueberry River, McLeod Lake, Saulteau Moberly Lake, West Moberly, and Halfway River. These communities all have large Aboriginal populations.

- The SFU News, Aboriginal Peoples’ Edition for 2014 was once again published and distributed throughout the course of 2015. We thank the Vice President, Academic for his continued financial support of this annual issue, which is a great marketing/PR and recruitment tool.
Aboriginal people and activities were certainly a part of the University’s 50th Anniversary celebrations over the course of 2015-16. Some examples include, the acquisition of a First Nations Big Drum for use at the University, the opening of SFU Harbour Centre’s First Peoples Gathering Place, the Black Eagle Canoe installation at SFU Burnaby, the Aboriginal-oriented tour app for the Burnaby campus, approval for a First Peoples Gathering Place (official name to be decided) at the SFU Surrey campus, the SFU Public Square Indigenous City Gathering event at SFU Woodwards, and the upcoming SFU-Native Education College Native Basketball Festival/Tournament to be held on the Burnaby campus in May 2016. Details concerning these initiatives are found below.

A First Peoples Gathering Place has been created at the SFU Vancouver Harbour Centre campus. It is an Aboriginal cultural space for the whole community. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit art, historic photos, maps, flags, and signage have been added to an existing lounge area to “Indigenize” a part of the downtown campus that has needed such for twenty years and which will point out the presence and influence of Aboriginal peoples on the campus.

An Aboriginal People’s Gathering Place – official name to be decided - is also being prepared at the SFU Surrey campus. It will also have Aboriginal signage, recognition of traditional territory, art and cultural artifacts, and educational signage regarding the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples of Canada.

Progress continues to be made regarding the creation of an Indigenous Gathering Space in the Faculty of Education. This is being done in conjunction with an overall renovation of the Faculty wing/buildings.


Phil Fontaine - former Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations – was a guest speaker at the SFU Beedie School of Business in September 2015. His presentation concerned Resource Development and Aboriginal People - A Viable Option.
In September 2015, the SFU Faculty of Health Sciences Research Seminar Series presented a special seminar by Dr. Hung-Yu Ru and Dr. Awi Mona from Taiwan. The title of the seminar was *Constructing Guidelines for Research Ethics Involving Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan*. FHS staff and faculty from SFU were able to present to the Taiwanese guests what is happening in Canada in this regard. As part of this seminar presentation, some cultural ceremony and gift-giving took place between attending Indigenous peoples from both countries.

An Aboriginal Cultural and Research Protocols Document has been prepared by members of the SFU Aboriginal Steering Committee. The SFU Vice Presidents provided input into this set of protocols, which are designed to provide guidance to members of the University community regarding acknowledgement of traditional peoples, names and territory, research issues, and specific Aboriginal cultural traditions. This document is now posted on the Office for Aboriginal People’s website.

Protocol documents concerning the SFU Elder’s Program and the SFU Big Drum have been prepared/updated and are available for perusal on the Office for Aboriginal People’s website.

The Bill Reid Gallery in Vancouver presented an interesting array of shows and presentations over the course of 2015. These included presentations from First Nations artists like Beau Dick, numerous exhibitions – including The Box of Treasures, Godanxewawt: Stone Ribs, and Gwaii Haanas: Land Sea People – along with the hosting of numerous special events/announcements, field trips, and special education programming.

The Bill Reid Centre, now located on the Burnaby campus, and holder of what may be the world’s broadest set of historical First Nations images, decorated its hallway alcove with a dazzling and eye-catching array of historic West Coast First Peoples photographs in 2015. The BRC also provided sets of historic First Peoples photographs for the new Aboriginal Gathering Places at the SFU Harbour Centre and SFU Surrey campuses. BRC staff was also instrumental in the installation of Bill Reid’s Black Eagle Canoe on the Burnaby campus in 2015.

SFU hosted its first National Aboriginal Day celebration in June 2015 in the Indigenous Student Centre. Aboriginal food, drumming, music, entertainment, cultural activities, and films made up the festivities.

The Office for Aboriginal Peoples and the Indigenous Graduate Student Coordinator worked together to arrange for the creation and purchase of a Big Drum for the University. Housed in the Indigenous Student Centre and overseen by an unofficial Big Drum Keeper, Rupert Richardson, the Big Drum is for use by the University’s Aboriginal community. The drum was made by Mr. John Sam, member of the Wolf Clan of the Tutshone people, and member of the local First Nations art scene. A Big Drum Protocols Workshop was also hosted by the SFU Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in the summer of 2015. Rupert Richardson, in consultation with cultural experts and the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, has also composed a set of protocols surrounding the use of the Big Drum for the University.

A weekly drumming group and talking circle for Aboriginal students began on the Burnaby campus in November 2015. Organizer and facilitator, Rupert Richardson (Graduate Studies), notes: “The growth and confidence [in the group] has skyrocketed in such a short time and it’s been very inspiring to be a part of this.”

SFU is once again partnering with the Native Education College (NEC) in playing host to a Native Basketball Tournament/Festival to be held in May 2016. Teams will be attending from BC and Alberta. Games will take place in the gymnasiums on the Burnaby campus. Funding and support from the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, SFU Recreation, First Nations Student Association, the Native Education College and dual organization involving NEC and the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, is allowing this tournament to take place for the second time.

A notable honor was presented to Dr. Veselin Jungic, Department of Mathematics, when he was named as a 2015 3M National Teaching Fellow in recognition of his efforts as an instructor and educational leader. Only ten Canadian university educators receive the award each year. This recognition to Dr. Jungic is partially based on his work with the Aboriginal community, including his Math Catcher community workshops, Small Number math resource materials – now available in many First Nations languages - and the organization of the annual Academic Math Camp for Aboriginal Youth at SFU.
course of 2015, the Math Catcher Program was presented at the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer Aboriginal Articulation Meeting and at a NWT teacher’s event. The Math Catcher Program thus continues to receive national attention.

- Dr. Felix Breden from the Faculty of Science reports that seven SFU Aboriginal students are working in the Merck-funded Aboriginal Youth in Health Sciences initiative. From Nancy Hawkins lab in MBB, to Kelly Lee’s lab in FHS, students are participating in research projects dealing with smoking policy and CHIWOS, a program evaluating all-women’s clinics for treatment and support of HIV+ women on the DTES.

- First Nations representatives from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (Government of Canada) came to SFU on September 28, 2015 and offered their Aboriginal Awareness 101 workshop to SFU staff and faculty. This half day workshop introduced attendees to Aboriginal peoples i.e. their history/culture and issues concerning terminology, education, stereotypes, and issues of cultural sensitivity. The workshop was a hit, as the workshop completely and quickly filled up.

- The direction of the Aboriginal Steering Committee, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples (OAP) is working with the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) on an “Indigenizing the Curriculum” project for SFU. This project will be composed of two main components. First, we are looking to create some materials – workshop style, online, etc. – that will be designed to assist faculty who would like to “Indigenize” their courses and/or programs here at SFU. The OAP has been working with the TLC on some initial steps in this regard i.e. information gathering. We have been able to glean some excellent materials in this regard and look forward to seeing this initiative develop in the year ahead. The TLC will be taking the lead in this regard, with input from the OAP and others as it proceeds. The TLC is currently in consultation with SFU Aboriginal faculty members about this project. The second part of the project is something the OAP is taking the lead on. It has to do with creating an “Aboriginal Awareness and Cultural Sensitivity” workshop. This concentrated course in Aboriginal history, cultural awareness, and stereotypes will be designed to introduce SFU staff and faculty to these issues/topics in a workshop format. It is planned that such a workshop will be three hours long and will be offered university-wide. This workshop is the planned first step in a project that could eventually include on-line resources.

- Aboriginal alumnus, Justina Di Stasio, is a three-time All-American wrestling champion and member of Canada’s national senior women’s wrestling team. She competed at the 2015 Pan Am Games in Toronto, winning a silver medal. Justina graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English, receiving sponsorship to pursue wrestling at SFU from her band, the Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba.

- In February 2015, Rupert Richardson, Coordinator for Indigenous Graduate Students, took a delegation of SFU students to witness the tear down of the residential school in Alert Bay. They also provided a panel presentation about the trip in the SFU Library.

- A Memorial Potlatch for late School of Criminology faculty member, Dr. Liz Elliot, was held in SFU’s Saywell Hall Atrium in September 2015. A traditional witnessing ceremony, songs, and gift-giving were aspects of the event, done in front of family, First Nations witnesses/participants and passersby. The event was organized and co-hosted by many, including School of Criminology staff and faculty, led by Dr. Brenda Morrison.

- The first SFU-UBC Indigenous Graduate Student Symposium took place at SFU Harbour Centre on March 7, 2015. The IGS Symposium had been hosted and sponsored for twelve years prior by the University of British Columbia. However, this 13th annual symposium was a first time partnership between Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia. The two universities will be co-hosting and co-sponsoring this event for four years in total (2015-2018), as a pilot initiative. Partnering Faculties/offices at SFU include Graduate Studies, the Faculty of Education/Office of Indigenous Education, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, the Indigenous Research Institute, and the First Nations Studies Department. Each of these SFU units contributed funds and some organizational skills to the endeavor. The symposium day mixed academia and culture, which was very symbolic considering the conference theme was Indigenizing the Academy. The keynote speaker was David Newhouse, Chair of the Department of Indigenous Studies
New Initiatives and Activities

at Trent University. He was followed by two keynote respondents, Dr. Ethel Gardner from SFU and Dr. Amy Parent from UBC. SFU and UBC will take turns co-hosting the IGS Symposium in the years ahead.

• A Gathering of the Salmon People event and Education for Reconciliation – TRC Call to Action symposium was hosted by the SFU Faculty of Education at nearby University Highland Elementary School in September 2015. SFU faculty, staff, and elders participated in a forum and associated activities which was witnessed by members of the Highland School community and SFU PDP students/teachers-in-training.

• Career Services and the First Nations Student Association worked in partnership to host the annual Indigenous Peoples Career Stories event at SFU in February 2015. Emcee Dr. Ethel Gardner introduced Aboriginal storytellers, Michelle Corfield (consultant), Deborah Jeffry (FNESC/education), Barry Vickers (BC Hydro), Michelle Nahane (communications/graphic design), and Betsy Bruyere (education/consultant).

• A traditional sweatlodge is being built on the Burnaby campus this academic year (2015-16). It will be located on the west side of campus, near the student residences. Apologies on the delay on this project as numerous safety/legal issues had to be taken care of first. The Coordinator for Indigenous Graduate Students, Rupert Richardson, is now looking after this initiative.

• The Director of the Office for Aboriginal Peoples – amongst other media savvy Aboriginal staff and faculty at SFU - continues to deal with media on various Aboriginal issues. Included in the OAP Director’s work in 2015 were separate interviews with The Peak and Vancouver Sun newspapers on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Final Report; The Peak, again, concerning plans to recruit more Aboriginal faculty to SFU; The Globe and Mail newspaper concerning the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women; Bitch magazine concerning the use of images of Indigenous people in the media; and two interviews with The Source newspaper, first, regarding the March 2015 SFU-UBC Indigenous Graduate Student Symposium and then a separate interview about the history and cultural significance of “the potlatch”.

• CareerTrackers is an Australian national non-profit organization that creates private sector internship opportunities for Indigenous university students from Australia (http://www.careertrackers.org.au). CareerTrackers representatives visited and met with Aboriginal staff from Simon Fraser University on August 19, 2015 to discuss Aboriginal students, Indigenous recruitment and retention, and success stories. This was a great networking opportunity regarding International opportunities for students or staff. Trina Setah, Aboriginal Co-op Coordinator at SFU, organized the visitor’s day on campus.

• To assist in marketing endeavors, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples has arranged for the creation of some stand up (display) banners. These are for promotion of the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, National Aboriginal Day, and the SFU Indigenous Research Institute.

• Faculty and students at Simon Fraser University’s School of Interactive Arts and Technology collaborated with Museum of Anthropology curators and the Musqueam community to develop an interactive tangible tabletop as a component of the MOA exhibition c̓əsnaʔəm: the city before the city, which will be on display until December 2015. tələw̓kʷ – Belongings is a table-top digital display that uses tangible replicas of Musqueam belongings excavated from c̓əsnaʔəm, as well as contemporary objects that are a part of everyday Musqueam life to represent the long history of salmon fishing and the continuity of related knowledge at c̓əsnaʔəm. Highlighting the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ language, each replica has its own story to tell, which is accessed when placed on the tabletop. The table invites visitors to learn about the many cultural and historical meanings of belongings from c̓əsnaʔəm.

• The 35th Annual Conference of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE 2015) was co-hosted by SFU and UBC on June 16-19, 2015. The conference – held at the Vancouver Westin Bayshore Hotel – was opened and closed with a Squamish Nation traditional witnessing ceremony (Dr. Rudy Reimer). There were also many Aboriginal-oriented presentations at the conference, as a specific call went out beforehand.
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• The DNA and Indigeneity: The Changing Role of Genetics in Indigenous Rights, Tribal Belonging, and Repatriation public symposium took place at SFU’s Harbour Centre campus in October 2015. The symposium brought together an international group of archaeologists, anthropologists, bioethicists, geneticists, and representatives from Indigenous organizations to explore the promise and perils of using biological and genetic information to inform understandings of Indigenous identity. This is an important issue to consider, as scientific pronouncements about identity claims may have profound social, cultural, political, and economic implications for Indigenous peoples. The symposium was free and open to the public.

• A $1.3 million gift from RBC was provided to Simon Fraser University in 2015 to prepare the next generation of Aboriginal leaders in entrepreneurship and innovation. The gift is being used to fund two separate initiatives at SFU designed to further Aboriginal business and social enterprise: the RBC First Peoples Enterprise Accelerator and the RBC Award in Aboriginal Business and Leadership. The RBC Foundation will provide $100,000 a year to establish the RBC First Peoples Enterprise Accelerator at SFU. It will support the development of Aboriginal entrepreneurs and advance early stage businesses and social ventures that contribute to the development of sustainable, healthy economies. The accelerator will deliver leading edge incubation programming and technical assistance for entrepreneurs, coupled with a strong research and evaluation process, all in conjunction with local Aboriginal partners. It is being facilitated by RADIUS, the Beedie School of Business’ social innovation lab and venture incubator, in partnership with the EMBA in Aboriginal Business and Leadership at the Beedie School of Business. As well, the RBC Award in Aboriginal Business and Leadership will see the RBC Foundation provide SFU with $30,000 per year in scholarships for the next ten years to encourage Aboriginal undergraduate and graduate students to consider entrepreneurship as a career option.

• Cindy Graves, Director of Advancement, Special Campaign Initiatives worked with the local community to prepare a comprehensive fundraising brochure featuring the many Aboriginal causes within the University. It is the most complete Advancement Office material ever prepared concerning Aboriginal fundraising opportunities at SFU.

• A traditional Ust’ām (Witnessing) Ceremony was held on October 21, 2015 to welcome the installation on the Burnaby campus of Bill Reid’s Black Eagle Canoe. The Black Eagle is one of two replicas created by Bill Reid of the famed dugout canoe Loo Taas (Wave Eater), for Expo ’86. Black Eagle was created with the intention of making this unique craft accessible to a wider audience, and is symbol of knowledge, community, and cultural regeneration. It is now located on the 4000 level, AQ outdoor area, NE corner. An interpretive plaque was installed as part of the ceremony.

• On November 7, 2015 Karen Joseph from Reconciliation Canada spoke at SFU Public Square’s We The City: Indigenous City Gathering event at SFU Woodwards in Vancouver. The event was part of SFU Public Square’s 2015 Community Summit, a series of imaginative events and activities designed to bring together community members and start meaningful conversations. This year, the summit took shape as a series of events exploring the theme of city building. Attendees to the We The City: Indigenous City Gathering event heard from speakers Cecilia Point, Ginger Gosnell-Myers, Senaqwila Wyss, and experienced a performance by the renowned Git Hayetsk Dancers. Karen Joseph spoke on the work of Reconciliation Canada, and how experiences such as hosting the events during Reconciliation Week in 2013 have given her a new optimism for Canada to achieve reconciliation. Thanks to SFU Public Square for hosting an amazing and well attended gathering.

• In October 2015, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples/SFU submitted a requested and detailed report to the Ministry of Advanced Education (Government of British Columbia) regarding actions taken or planned by SFU re: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action. The University’s plans with regards to the TRC recommendations are ongoing in numerous ways (many listed above; others to be reported on at the end of 2016).
Please note that there are numerous other exciting Aboriginal initiatives that have begun but are, as yet, too early to include in the Annual Report for 2015. These will certainly be included in the report for 2016. Comments or questions about anything in this Annual Report can be directed to the Office for Aboriginal Peoples (http://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples.html) at Simon Fraser University.