Introduction and Highlights

The year 2012 has been a very exciting one at Simon Fraser University for Aboriginal strategic initiatives. The Office for Aboriginal Peoples (OAP) continues to work with on and off-campus partners in the implementation of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan. In fact, SFU has completed a revision of the current Aboriginal Strategic Plan that will update it and take its new implementation date to 2018. This new plan is now available for perusal on the OAP website.

The Office for Aboriginal Peoples, its partners, and Aboriginal strategic initiatives continues to get tremendous support from many areas of the university including from President Andrew Petter; Vice President-Academic and Provost, Dr. Jon Driver; Vice President-External, Dr. Philip Steenkamp; and the Associate Vice President-Students, Dr. Tim Rahilly, to name some. We wish to thank these ones and many others who have helped us to engage and transform the university.

Highlights from the past year include the following: the First Nations Studies Program is now a Department; the Indigenous Research Institute has been established (with over 50 members); the Executive MBA Program in Aboriginal Business and Leadership began its first cohort; the university committed to a new and larger Aboriginal Gathering Space in the Academic Quadrangle; and the Elders Program has doubled in one year, regarding the number of elders, “elder time” on campus, and resources dedicated to the program.

We are also happy that Aboriginal greetings and recognition of traditional Coast Salish territories now occurs at Convocation and other university events; that Simon Fraser University’s new strategic vision identifies “respect for Aboriginal peoples and cultures” as one of its six underlying principles; and that ceremonies took place involving (1) Heiltsuk ancestor’s remains returning home (2) a gift offering of Haida argillite carvings from the McLean Family, and (3) a dedication of the Frog Constellation in the Saywell Hall Atrium.

As well, the following all continued on with their good work: the Hakai Network for Coastal People, Ecosystems, and Management; the Training of Aboriginal Youth in Biomedical Labs Program; and the Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage (IPinCH) Project.

These are just some of the exciting things that have happened at SFU over the past year. Please see the Office for Aboriginal Peoples website at http://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/ for a
comprehensive listing of the Aboriginal programs, services, and contact people currently at Simon Fraser University.

The Aboriginal Strategic Plan

Simon Fraser University continues to make progress regarding the implementation of its Aboriginal Strategic Plan. The Office for Aboriginal Peoples was created to work with partners in the on and off-campus communities in this purpose. The resulting teamwork approach has resulted in significant progress being made in many areas. The following is a report compilation of campus-wide, multi-unit Aboriginal initiatives occurring at SFU over the course of the past year.

The Aboriginal Strategic Plan is currently undergoing a process of revision that is just about complete. Under this process, two new major components have been added to the original eight that were the pillars of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan for 2007-12. These new components are: (1) Government and NGO Relationships, and (2) Communication Strategies.

The ten major components of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan for 2013-18 are thus as follows:

1. Academic Program Development
2. Research Development
3. Student Recruitment, Retention, and Support
4. Liaison and Engagement with the Aboriginal Community
5. Aboriginal Knowledge Development
6. International Engagement
7. Infrastructure and Facilities Development
8. Aboriginal Integration and Leadership Development
9. Government and NGO Relationships
10. Communication Strategies

For easy analysis, this Annual Report – and future ones – will thus be divided into the ten categories listed above. Hence, please consider the Annual Report from the Office for Aboriginal Peoples for 2012:

1. Academic Program Development

- Mr. Ron Johnston, the new Director, Office of Indigenous Education in the Faculty of Education began his tenure in the Fall of 2012. He will be responsible for many issues in the Faculty including program development, building relations with community, etc.
- The Executive MBA in Aboriginal Business and Leadership in the Faculty of Business began its first semester in the Fall of 2012. There are twenty-seven students in the program from across BC and Canada.
- The First Nations Studies Program was granted “Department” status in 2012. Dr. Eldon Yellowhorn is the first Chair of the new department.
- A list of SFU courses with “recognized” and/or “significant” Aboriginal content in them continues to be updated and expanded. These courses, from various Faculties/units, now number 120. This list - with course credit and Writing, Quantitative, and Breadth (WQB) designations also listed - is updated annually and is available for perusal on the Office for Aboriginal Peoples website at http://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/files/Aboriginal-Indigenous-Courses.pdf
• A Centre for First Nations Languages and its concomitant First Nations language programming continues to offer and expand programming and work with expertise in the Aboriginal community.
• Lifelong Learning, Community Education Programs, and the Aboriginal Pre-University Bridging Programs have the following to report:
  • Lifelong Learning received the second year of University Priority Fund support for 2012-13 in the amount of $200,000 for the two Aboriginal Pre-University Bridge Programs under the strategic initiative "Support for Aboriginal students" with a target initiative being "To help recruit and retain Aboriginal students."
  • Community Education Programs in Lifelong Learning is pleased to report that fifteen Aboriginal Bridge Program graduates received offers of admission to SFU for the Summer/Fall 2012 term. Fourteen of the graduates have now embarked on their first year of undergrad studies in the Faculty of Health Science and in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. This is a significant accomplishment that speaks to the value of a pre-university transitional experience for Aboriginal students.
  • A relationship with Mitsubishi Corporation is being fostered in collaboration with Advancement. With funds from Mitsubishi Corporation, we are fortunate to be able to provide a limited number of study grants to students in both the Aboriginal University Prep and the Aboriginal Pre-Health Program that covers full tuition. The value of these study grants cannot be underestimated as it is well documented that Aboriginal students face significant financial hardships in their pursuit of higher education. The funds have provided an opportunity for five Bridge students to pursue their educational goals.
  • We have also recently launched the Aboriginal Health Mentorship Project. Supported by funds from the Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative (Health Canada), the project will match current Aboriginal Pre-Health students with Aboriginal professionals working in the health sector. The project will culminate in a public forum in March, 2013 and the hope is to build on the project and develop an online e-mentorship resource next year.
  • The Stepping Stones Community Capacity Building Certificate Program (non-credit) is a holistic, essential skills program designed to help First Nations living in remote communities access a university program while staying in their communities. The combined online and face-to-face program was offered as a pilot from January - June 2012 to adults living in four rural and remote First Nations: N'Quatqua, Samahquam, Sts'ailes and Soowahlie. The program was very successful with twenty-seven learners completing the part-time, six month program having learned how to identify, plan, implement and evaluate a project that aligns with a longer term community-identified goal. Community Education Program is continuing to network with First Nations in the hopes of keeping the program going through a co-delivery, partnership model.
  • The TAYBL (Training of Aboriginal Youth in Biomedical Labs) Program was re-funded by Merck Canada for $50,000 a year for the next two years. The program is designed to give Aboriginal students interested in biomedical science and health science careers an entry level research position in a biomedical lab, and the mentorship that accompanies being in a lab community. In addition, Merck Canada has promised approximately $100,000 to fund a Merck Canada Aboriginal Youth in Health Sciences Fund at SFU. The details regarding this are currently being worked out but the money will go towards funding various programs such as stipends for students in the Aboriginal Pre-Health Bridging Program (through Lifelong Learning) and undergraduate and graduate research
stipends for Aboriginal students in the Faculties of Science and Health Sciences, including students interested in population health sciences.

2. Research Development

- Research projects in many areas, with an Aboriginal focus, continue to be done all over the university.
- The Indigenous Research Institute for SFU continues to be developed. As of November 2012, there are fifty-two (52) members of the Institute. A steering committee for the Institute meets regularly to plan Institute activities and meetings. Dr. Eldon Yellowhorn has been appointed Acting Director and Dr. Tom Perry has been appointed Acting Associate Director for the Institute, respectively.
- A well-attended inaugural meeting/opening of the Institute took place on National Aboriginal Day (June 21, 2012).
- A list of Institute members and their research interests was published on the Office for Aboriginal Peoples website in January 2013. This gives readers a chance to see the kinds of Indigenous research initiatives being done at SFU by faculty and graduate students.
- Some key Institute initiatives being discussed for the year ahead include: co-sponsoring a February Residential School Education Week at SFU (being planned for February 2013); having an IRI logo contest; creating some IRI letterhead and a banner; discussing a potential IRI colloquia; creating an IRI speaker series; arranging for Institute member's book launch events; having Research Presentation Days where faculty and students can present papers being published or papers with publication "potential"; and ongoing work to develop research relations with the off-campus Aboriginal community.
- In Fall 2011, an external review of SFU’s Research Ethics Board (REB) and Office of Research Ethics (ORE) was undertaken. The External Reviewers submitted a final report in January 2012 with the Director, ORE (DORE) and REB Chair submitting responses in February and March 2012, respectively. After reviewing the report, the REB, DORE, and the Office of the Vice President, Research undertook a Senate-mandated review of R20.01 (Ethics Review of Research Involving Human Subjects), starting in the Spring of 2012. Together, with the recommendations received from the external review of SFU’s ethics policies and processes, the DORE, VPR, and REB drafted a revised R20.01 policy. Seeking input in the area of Aboriginal research, an ad hoc committee has been established which is working to develop some specific Indigenous research protocol recommendations which can in included in the final documents and which can be used as a basis for ethical research projects involving SFU and the Aboriginal community.
- In 2012, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples created a stipend fund for Aboriginal graduate students at SFU who would like to attend and present at conferences. The fund for this is currently set at $10,000 annually. Applicants may apply for up to $1500. This is being done on the recommendation of an ad hoc committee which was created to examine ways to increase Aboriginal student opportunities at the Graduate Studies level. The committee sees this particular opportunity as a way for graduate students of Aboriginal heritage to present their research in formal conference settings and as a way for them to increase their career development as researchers. The first award was handed out in the summer of 2012 to a student presenting at a conference in Ethiopia, Africa.
- Dr. Malcolm King and the CIHR Institute of Aboriginal People’s Health have moved to SFU/FHS as of July 1, 2012. Dr. King has an academic appointment in the Faculty of Health Sciences and he will be available for teaching, mentoring students, and advising on CIHR-related “research” issues.
- The Hakai Network for Coastal People, Ecosystems, and Management, based at Simon Fraser University, is an innovative, interdisciplinary team that conducts research,
training, and education to support sustainability and conservation in Coastal British Columbia, with a focus on the Central Coast. The theme of the Hakai Network’s research is “Science in a Social Context”. It aims to conduct research that is transformative in its ability to make a difference in coastal British Columbia. The network works collaboratively with First Nations and other partners and is committed to community-based research. The Hakai Network receives its core funding from the Tula Foundation and works in close partnership with the Hakai Beach Institute, a research station on the Central Coast of B.C. operated by the Tula Foundation. The primary First Nations partners are the Heiltsuk Nation (in Bella Bella) and the Wuikinuxv Nation (in Rivers Inlet).

Members of the Hakai Network are researchers who support the vision and objectives of the Network and are actively involved in its research. The 123 members represent nine universities from Canada and the United States, three levels of government (Federal, Provincial/State and First Nations), several ENGO’s, and individuals. Research priorities for the Hakai Network are developed collaboratively with its partners. About twenty graduate students and post-doctoral researchers are supported directly by the Network with a number of others being associated with the Hakai Network’s activities. Over the last year, core Hakai Network members (a smaller subset of the 123 mentioned above) generated thirty-two scientific publications and gave sixty-five presentations to public, community, or academic audiences. The Hakai Network hosted a series of seminars, workshops, and research fora at SFU, and participated in a variety of meetings in communities focusing on research priorities and strategy, community engagement, and field classes. We are working to broaden our primary engagement with communities to the four Central Coast First Nations through the Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance (CCIRA) and have developed working relationships with a variety of coastal communities beyond the Central Coast.

Primary research programs that the Hakai Network focuses on include:

- Kelp forest ecosystem dynamics and coastal food webs.
- Implementation of Ecosystem-Based Management in the Great Bear Rainforest.
- The herring school: ecology, management, and the culture of herring.
- Interactions between bog forests and near-shore marine ecosystems.
- Fate and the role of marine derived nutrients in riparian forests and streams.
- Ethnobiology of cultural landscapes.

The Hakai Network also works closely with the Hakai Beach Institute on the design and implementation of their programs in environmental monitoring, landscape change, and long-term ecological research.

- The Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage (IPinCH) Project, based at Simon Fraser University, is a seven year international research initiative exploring the rights, values, and responsibilities associated with material culture, cultural knowledge and the practice of heritage research, with a particular focus on Indigenous peoples. IPinCH is a collaboration among scholars and professionals from diverse fields, Indigenous groups, students, and policy makers, focused on improving understanding of the relationship between intellectual property and cultural heritage, and with identifying and addressing issues of access and control in research and non-research settings.

This was a year of significant achievement for the IPinCH Project. In January 2012, IPinCH hosted the workshop *Transforming Colonial Categories? Customary Law, Legal Pluralism and the Cultural Heritage of Indigenous Peoples* at York University in
Toronto. The workshop challenged participants to consider the meaning of customary law and its relationship, both in theory and in practice, to legal pluralism, cultural heritage and intellectual property rights. In March, the Traditional Knowledge Licensing and Labeling Website 1.0, created by IPinCH team members Jane Anderson and Kim Christen, was launched. This accessible digital platform will contain a set of standardized licenses and fair-use labels that can be applied to already existing and future generated content that contains community recognized traditional and Indigenous knowledge. In May, the Inuvialuit Pitquisit Inuuniarutait: Inuvialuit Living History website, a product of the IPinCH case study, A Case of Access: Inuvialuit Engagement with the Smithsonian’s MacFarlane Collection, was inaugurated. The website provides on-line access to an important but little-known collection of over 300 cultural objects and nearly 5,000 natural history specimens at the Smithsonian Institute which were collected by Hudson’s Bay trader Roderick MacFarlane from Inuvialuit living in the Anderson River area in the 1860s. In late 2012, a new IPinCH case study was approved, to investigate how the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office manages Hopi cultural knowledge resources, given the differences between Hopi notions of navoti (traditional knowledge) and Euro-American understandings of intellectual property.

3. Student Recruitment, Retention, and Support

- The latest complete record (which includes the latest provincial government data) indicates that there were 547 self-identified Aboriginal students attending SFU in 2010-11. These include 463 undergraduate students and 84 graduate students. Complete numbers for 2011-12 will be available in 2013.
- It can be confirmed that for the Fall of 2013, seventy-seven (77) self-identified Aboriginal students began their studies at SFU. Of these, fifteen (15) students applied under the SFU Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy.
- The Indigenous Recruitment Coordinator and supervisory staff continue to work successfully with the community to encourage Aboriginal people to attend SFU. Their specific plans for Indigenous recruitment in the near future include building stronger relationships with Lower Mainland high schools and school districts, colleges, and Indigenous communities.
- In 2012, SFU recruitment materials designed specifically for the Aboriginal community were updated and were well used by the Indigenous Recruitment Coordinator.
- A draft Institutional Research and Planning document which highlights Aboriginal student recruitment and retention statistics has been completed by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. It has been presented to the Aboriginal Steering Committee for perusal. This document will be updated and released annually. The information in this document can be used for multi-fold purposes regarding Aboriginal recruitment and retention initiatives at SFU.
- For a second consecutive year, Student Services received University Priority Funds totaling $150,000 for support for Indigenous students. Specific details are as follows:
  1. Student Services has allocated $100,000 for Indigenous student awards. These funds are allotted for entrance scholarships to support recruitment of new students, for academic awards to encourage success, and for bursaries to support students in high financial need.
  2. Student Services has also designated $50,000 for “success” programming. These funds have been assigned to various projects to enhance support and develop resources for Indigenous students. For example:
     - Enhance advising and transition support
     - Facilitate peer mentorship programming
• Develop career resources
• Support learning difficulties
• Improve access to disabilities services
• Assist residence enrolment
• Provide Indigenous Cultural Competency Training for staff

This target initiative is to support recruitment and retention of Indigenous students. The long term goal is to incorporate these developed project resources into regular program objectives.

• The BC Ministry of Advanced Education has provided SFU with $52,200 in funding for Aboriginal Emergency Assistance. This funding is for 2012-13 with carry-over of unused funds permitted. The fund is for Aboriginal post secondary students who require short term assistance to deal with personal emergencies. The SFU Terms of Reference for the fund have been established, and the dispensing of fund monies is being looked after by Awards and Financial Aid and the Indigenous Student Centre.

• The Indigenous Student Centre (ISC) continues to work for and with Indigenous students — First Nations, Métis, and Inuit — to offer information and support services to enhance academic success in culturally respectful, relevant, reciprocal, and responsible ways. These include Peer Educator, Peer Mentor, and Peer Advising Programs; an expanded tutoring program that offers assistance in a wide range of subject areas; a Welcoming BBQ for new and returning students; and the Indigenous Honoring Feast for graduates. The ISC partners with Student Services units, the First Nations Student Association, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, the SFU Library and Student Learning Commons, and local First Nations to build a strong ISC foundation that provides learning opportunities for all SFU students. The ISC works closely with the SFU Indigenous Recruitment Coordinator to ensure a smooth transition from the admissions process to successful semesters and, eventually, graduation.

• Progress continues regarding the establishment of the new Indigenous Student Centre/First Nations Student Association/Elders space in AQ 2002/03. It is hoped that the space will be available for occupation in 2013-14.

• Established “contact people” in Academic Advising, Career Services, Graduate Studies, Awards and Financial Aid, and in the Community Education Program (Lifelong Learning) continue to work for and with Aboriginal people at SFU.

• SFU continues to have a well-organized, well-funded, and well-supported First Nations Student Association (FNSA) to assist in Aboriginal student activities and other initiatives. For example, FNSA works in partnership with many units around the university to organize student events, to support student retention initiatives, and to partner up on university presentations e.g. Aboriginal speaker series. Two members of FNSA are also invited to sit on the SFU Aboriginal Steering Committee.

• SFU is establishing measures to strengthen and increase services for Aboriginal graduate students. This includes better information regarding specific services, more support for the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement Programs (SAGE), workshops to assist students in their graduate studies work, and more scholarships specific to Aboriginal graduate students. For 2012, a part-time Indigenous Graduate Student Support Coordinator was hired to assist Aboriginal graduate students in some of the above initiatives.

4. Liaison and Engagement with the Aboriginal Community

• An Aboriginal Steering Committee continues to provide direction to the Office for Aboriginal Peoples regarding priorities in the Aboriginal Strategic Plan. The committee is
composed of university students, staff, faculty, and senior administration, including the President, Vice President-Academic and Provost, Vice President-External, Associate Vice President-Students, and invited members of the public i.e. Aboriginal leadership or those in positions of authority in Aboriginal organizations.

- Continuing regular discussions and partnership initiatives continue with the Native Education College and the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. These involve approving transfer credit for courses and programs and ongoing tutoring initiatives – in math, science, and writing - involving SFU graduate students at these institutions.

- A partnership has been established between SFU and the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre involving the establishment of a one week summer camp for Aboriginal youth set to begin at SFU in the summer of 2013. Participating youth will be involved in existing SFU summer camp activities involving sport, academics, tours and hikes, and to-be-established Aboriginal cultural activities.

- Initiatives are ongoing in the Downtown Vancouver community i.e. the NEC initiatives, Aboriginal speaker events/series at the downtown SFU campuses, and Coast Salish Drumming and Singing Workshops at SFU Woodwards.

- Work continues to be done on many fronts regarding ongoing and potential program and research initiatives involving specific First Nation and Métis communities in BC. Some of these are mentioned in past Annual Reports. As others of these come to fruition, they will be reported on in future Annual Reports.

- The SFU Elders Program continues to make a positive difference on the SFU campuses. The program expanded in 2012 with three elders (up from two) now working on the SFU Burnaby campus — in the Indigenous Student Centre and in the Office for Aboriginal Peoples — with another elder working with the Aboriginal Pre-University Bridging Programs at SFU Surrey. These elders work with students, staff, faculty, and community in many capacities. They appear on the Burnaby campus to assist students twice a week (up from once a week last year) and are being asked to appear at more university events.

- Regarding Aboriginal alumni initiatives at SFU: (1) An Aboriginal alumni e-mail list is maintained at the university. Information about SFU events and news is supplied to these alumni through the Tuz e-mail newsletter sent from the Indigenous Student Centre. (2) A copy of the Simon Fraser University News, Aboriginal Peoples Supplement is also sent to Aboriginal alumni through the established list serve in the ISC. (3) A new feature of this year’s Simon Fraser University News, Aboriginal Peoples Supplement is a section highlighting some Aboriginal alumni of SFU i.e. when they graduated, their program, and what they are doing now. It is planned that this will be a regular feature of future inserts. We are trusting that the above initiatives are building interest among SFU Aboriginal alumni in their alma mater and will eventually stoke interest in the formation of an Aboriginal alumni group at the university.

- The Third Annual “Aboriginal Students in Math and Science” workshop was hosted on the Burnaby campus in October 2012 by SFU’s Department of Mathematics, IRMACS, and the Office for Aboriginal Peoples. Approximately ninety Aboriginal students and their teachers attended from across the province. Expressions of thanks and requests that such a fun and knowledgeable event should continue to be an annual happening at SFU were received from students and teachers alike.

- Continuing on is the The Math Catcher: Mathematics Through Aboriginal Storytelling Project, being headed by the Department of Mathematics’ Dr. Veselin Jungic. The project has included the creation of a series of short animated films that accompany picture books, as well as, the development of related activities that introduce math topics and techniques through stories. These stories follow Aboriginal storytelling formats and contain elements of Aboriginal traditions and cultures. Stories have so far been translated
into Squamish, Sliammon, Halq'eméylem, Nisga'a, Helitsuk, and Huu-ay-aht languages and have been introduced to Aboriginal communities around the province.

- An Indigenous Peoples Career Stories event took place once again on the Burnaby campus in the Spring of 2012. The well attended event was hosted by SFU Career Services, the Indigenous Student Centre, and the First Nations Student Association. Aboriginal people on the panel with interesting career stories to tell included Bruce Dumont, Evelyn Locker, Jordan Wapass, Audrey Tooshkenig, Brandon Gabriel, and Cynthia George Taha. The panel members, all from various walks of life, introduced themselves and discussed their background, education, and obstacles overcome as they pursued their various professional paths.

- In October 2012 and January 2013, administrators, support workers and educators with a focus on Aboriginal education met for the first two meetings of the new Regional Student Transitions Consortium (RSTC) Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee. This new committee brings together senior Aboriginal staff representatives from BCIT, Douglas College, and SFU and Aboriginal District Principals and support workers from Burnaby, Coquitlam, and New Westminster school districts to work collaboratively on generating strategies for improving the educational experiences of Aboriginal students. The goal of this committee is to bolster the individual student support efforts of each partner institution and school district in order to enhance the transition of Aboriginal students, from grade-to-grade and from secondary to post secondary. Thus far, the RSTC Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee has made significant strides in improving the flow of information between each partner school district and post secondary institution. The group has also begun to work on a project that will match Aboriginal secondary students from Burnaby, Coquitlam, and New Westminster school districts with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students at the post secondary level for a “student-for-a-day” experience. Other goals of the RSTC Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee involve bringing together Aboriginal secondary and post secondary students for meaningful mentoring and tutoring opportunities, and to increase the exposure of secondary Aboriginal students to positive experiences in post secondary settings. The committee’s work is on-going.

- A committee involving members from the Surrey school district and SFU meet regularly to discuss and pursue initiatives. The Aboriginal District Principal for Surrey and Aboriginal staff members from SFU sit on this committee and thus have the chance to network in various ways.

- During the course of 2012, the following very special ceremonies took place on the SFU Burnaby campus: a Heiltsuk ancestor’s remains repatriation ceremony, a dedication ceremony for the Saywell Hall Atrium’s Frog Constellation (James Hart, Haida) carving, and an event to honor a generous gift of Haida argillite carvings from the McLean Family. Esteemed guests from around the university and from the local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities were present at all these events.

5. Aboriginal Knowledge Development

- SFU’s new overall Strategic Vision identifies “ Respect for Aboriginal Peoples and Cultures” as one of its six underlying principles.

- Approval was granted in November 2012 by the university to establish a First Nations sweat lodge on the SFU Burnaby campus. This as a tremendous opportunity to establish a strong cultural connection between the university and the Aboriginal community and others interested in learning firsthand about this important First Nations cultural tradition.
• Coast Salish Drumming and Singing Workshops now take place for a second year on the SFU Burnaby campus in an effort to bring more Aboriginal culture/knowledge to the university. Held every week this year (expanding from being done every two weeks last year), it is open to beginners and experts, men and women, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. The program expanded this Fall (2012) and is now also being offered on select evenings at the Downtown Vancouver SFU Woodward’s campus and is open to the local community.

• A First Nations “welcome” and an acknowledgement of the traditional Coast Salish territories upon which the SFU campuses reside is now being done at many university events, including as a regular part of Convocation ceremonies.

• A well attended Honoring Feast for Aboriginal graduates of SFU was once again held in the Spring of 2012. It was hosted/sponsored by the Indigenous Student Centre, the First Nations Student Association, and the Office for Aboriginal Peoples. Local Squamish First Nation ceremonial traditions were observed as part of the event.

• The SFU Library was pleased to announce that Jenna Walsh was the successful candidate for the position of Indigenous Initiatives Librarian. Beginning December 1, 2012 Jenna will provide liaison librarian services for the Departments of First Nations Studies, Archaeology, and Political Science, as well as a spectrum of Indigenous units and initiatives across the university, including the Indigenous Students Centre, the Indigenous Research Institute, and the Office for Aboriginal Peoples. She will be working closely with liaison librarians and others to focus and enhance the Library's support for Indigenous initiatives throughout the university.

• Laughing "Irregardless": Multimedia Aboriginal Humour, a series of public programs for the exhibition, Carrying on “Irregardless”: Humour in Contemporary Northwest Coast Art is occurring at the Bill Reid Gallery from September 12, 2012 - March 17, 2013. This series of public programs, featuring well-known Aboriginal artists from all over North America, is part of the SFU Public Square events.

• The SFU Department of English was pleased to announce that Marie Clements, award-winning Métis-Dene playwright, screenwriter, performer, director, and producer, would be Simon Fraser University's Ellen and Warren Tallman Writer-in-Residence for 2012-13. Ms. Clements will focus on her own writing and engage in a series of activities and events with students and faculty.

6. International Engagement

• In the Fall of 2011, SFU hosted a delegation of Aboriginal/Indigenous students from Queensland, Australia who visited and toured BC Aboriginal communities and institutions. Some of these students were from Griffith University in Brisbane.

• In early 2013, SFU and Griffith University were signatories to an Indigenous student/elder/staff/faculty exchange agreement.

• As a result of the above, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples (SFU) will be chaperoning an SFU delegation on a one week trip to Griffith University in January 2013. The Director of the OAP will be visiting Griffith University with four SFU Aboriginal undergraduate students and one elder from the SFU Elders Program. The group will be doing tours of the various Griffith campuses, will be visiting specific Faculties, will spend time with Griffith University’s Indigenous students/staff/elders/faculty, will visit local sacred sites, and will partake of some Indigenous-specific programming. The four SFU students were chosen from many applicants on the basis of their stated desire and potential to attend a semester-long exchange at Griffith University in 2013 or 2014.
• In 2012, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples created an Aboriginal Student International Travel/Mobility Award for SFU students who would like to pursue a semester-long international study opportunity. Three awards of $3,500 are available annually for students who would like to pursue an international study opportunity, with preference given to students who will do an international exchange at Griffith University in Australia. The first award was offered in the summer of 2012 to an Aboriginal applicant who will be doing a term of study at a university in the United Kingdom.

• The Office for Aboriginal Peoples works with the First Nations Studies Department to educate international students at Fraser International College about Aboriginal culture, history, and contemporary issues. This is done through regular guest lectures. The rationale is to educate future international leaders in government and business on First Nations issues in Canada, as they may one day be doing business together. Update: In the Fall of 2012, Fraser International College introduced a foundation-level course entitled “University Life 101”. Recent SFU graduate and sessional lecturer Simon Solomon was invited to create Aboriginal curriculum modules for this new course. He has now delivered the first of these modules to very positive feedback from FIC students and staff. This new curriculum gives new international students some insight into the First Nations narrative and has created a wonderful opportunity to expose students to an area of study they might never have considered.

7. Infrastructure and Facilities development

• A feasibility study for the proposed First Peoples House Project on the SFU Burnaby campus is still in development. The business part of the plan is nearing completion.

• After being provided with direction from the university President and Vice President’s concerning the First Peoples House Project, a proposed Aboriginal economic incubator and/or potential/proposed Centre for Indigenous Governance and Socio-Economic Development is being re-inserted into the feasibility study. Exact wording regarding these potential initiatives are still in development.

• Many see the First Peoples House as a permanent home for the Indigenous Research Institute, as the Institute develops and grows.

• Community consultation/discussion concerning the First Peoples House Project has been done to a large degree but more is planned among the local First Nations and Métis rural and urban communities.

• The Port of Vancouver Authority continues to display ongoing interest in the First Peoples House endeavor (they provided the money for the feasibility study). For example, they have discussed drawing in some of their corporate partners in the Vancouver Port area into the discussion concerning the project.

• A university steering committee continues to oversee the First Peoples House project. The Associate Vice President, Academic chairs the committee, which includes members from University Advancement, Facilities, Student Services, and the Office for Aboriginal Peoples.

8. Aboriginal Integration and Leadership Development

• Simon Fraser University currently has fourteen self-identified Aboriginal faculty members. They are located in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science’s First Nations Studies Department (five), the Faculty of Education (five), the Department of Mathematics (one), and the Faculty of Health Sciences (one). The other two faculty
members are on two year term appointments, in the Faculty of Education (one) and the Department of Linguistics (one).

- In 2012, the Vice President, Academic created and will be sponsoring two ongoing Aboriginal Entrance Awards for Aboriginal graduate students. A new set of awards will be presented each year to high achieving Aboriginal candidates on the recommendation of the Faculties. Each master’s scholarship, worth $30,000 in total, will be awarded over two years. Each doctoral scholarship, worth $54,000 in total, will be awarded over three years. One of the purposes of these scholarships is for SFU to attract high quality graduate students of Aboriginal heritage, who can perhaps be eventually mentored into faculty positions. This year’s award winners were admitted to the School of Contemporary Arts (master’s level award) and the Department of English in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (doctoral level award).

9. Government and NGO Relationships

- The Office for Aboriginal Peoples deals with ongoing annual requests from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). These are typically requests for updated information on Aboriginal programs, services, students, and Aboriginal staff and faculty at Simon Fraser University. The OAP works with others around the campus to supply reports to the AUCC in a timely manner.

- The Research Universities Council of BC also has annual requests for updated information concerning Aboriginal-oriented Program Inventory at SFU. The OAP is happy to work with others from around the university in providing this requested information.

- The Office for Aboriginal Peoples deals with regular questions or information from the BC Ministry of Advanced Education. Such usually concerns programs, service information, or questions or information concerning old/new/ongoing initiatives.

- The Office for Aboriginal Peoples continues to work with others around the university regarding meeting with government officials when circumstances allow or dictate. For example, a meeting was held in 2012 with Mary Polack, the BC Minister for Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, to discuss the SFU First Peoples House Project and other Aboriginal initiatives occurring at SFU.

- The Office for Aboriginal Peoples and many others around the university, continue to deal with off-campus NGO’s (or NGO-type organizations) in different capacities. The BC Red Cross and the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre are examples of such. Such dealings usually involve official initiatives between organizations, exchange of advice, requests for letters of support, and information sharing.

10. Communication Strategies

- As a means of communication, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples continues to expand and update its office webpage at [http://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/](http://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/) This centralized and comprehensive website lists — or connects to existing websites which list — Aboriginal programs, services, and contact people at SFU. This centralized website gets tremendous traffic with thousands of hits/visits annually.

- The Indigenous Student Centre communications strategy continues to include an updated website at [http://students.sfu.ca/indigenous/](http://students.sfu.ca/indigenous/) and a weekly electronic newsletter called Tuz. This newsletter is sent by e-mail to enrolled Indigenous students and alumni, faculty and staff, and to “Friends of ISC” contacts within the SFU system. Tuz “has the buzz” on the latest ISC programming, Indigenous scholarship/bursary/fellowship information, job
opportunities, special event information, special announcements, and items of special interest to the community.

- The Simon Fraser University News continues throughout the year to publish stories to do with Aboriginal people, services, programs, and events. For example, articles were published this past year which featured graduating Aboriginal students and introduced readers to the new Director, Office of Indigenous Education in the Faculty of Education.
- The third annual Simon Fraser University News, Aboriginal Peoples Supplementary Insert was made available in early December 2012. This special insert once again featured Aboriginal people, services, programs, and events of note at SFU for 2012.
- The Office for Aboriginal Peoples deals with numerous requests every year from media seeking news story information and interviews. For example, the Director of the OAP had numerous interviews with Global TV News, Post Media News (Ottawa), the Vancouver Sun newspaper, the Vancouver Province newspaper, the Toronto Sun newspaper, the Ottawa Citizen newspaper, and the National Post this past year. The OAP also tries to involve other qualified Aboriginal people from around the campus when such requests come in.

**Addendum:** Below is a progress report regarding Aboriginal Strategic Plan initiatives that were identified as “priority action items” at the last Aboriginal Steering Committee meeting in May 2012.

1. Action item: Complete a revision of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan for Simon Fraser University.
   
   Update: In November 2012, a draft of a revised Aboriginal Strategic Plan for Simon Fraser University was presented to the Aboriginal Steering Committee for discussion and final revisions. As part of this process, a working group composed of members of the Aboriginal Steering Committee identified key partners from around the university that should be consulted. This was done. After final input from the rest of the Aboriginal Steering Committee, including our off-campus community members, a copy of the revised Aboriginal Strategic Plan for Simon Fraser University for 2013-18 was posted on the Office for Aboriginal Peoples’ website for public perusal.

2. Action item: Continue with community outreach endeavors to local Aboriginal groups and organizations.
   
   Update: (1) Continuing discussions and partnership initiatives continue with the Native Education College and the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. These involve transfer credit for courses and programs and tutoring initiatives involving SFU graduate students. (2) A partnership has been established between SFU and the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre involving the establishment of a summer camp for Aboriginal youth set to begin at SFU in the summer of 2013. (3) Initiatives are ongoing in the Downtown Vancouver community i.e. the NEC initiatives, Aboriginal speaker events/series, and Coast Salish Drumming and Singing Workshops. (4) Current projects involving SFU and Aboriginal communities are ongoing in many capacities, as highlighted in this and past Annual Reports. Other such projects are currently in development and as they come to fruition, they will be reported on in future Annual Reports.

3. Action item: Regarding the current First Peoples House feasibility study, the committee suggests the following: re-insert the component dealing with an “economic” incubator or
include something similar/special that will make this project stand out from other existing and similar projects; as well, further engage the Aboriginal community in this initiative.

Update: The feasibility study for this project is ongoing. The business part of the plan is nearing completion. After being provided with direction from the President and Vice President’s concerning this project, the economic incubator component will be re-inserted into the draft document. Community consultation/discussion has been done to a large degree but more is planned.

4. Action item: Develop an Institutional Research and Planning document for SFU which highlights Aboriginal student recruitment and retention statistics.

Update: A draft Institutional Research and Planning document has been completed by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning for SFU. It has been presented to the Aboriginal Steering Committee for perusal. This document will be updated and released annually. It will be available for perusal on the Office for Aboriginal Peoples’ website in January 2013. The information in this document can be used for multi-fold purposes regarding Aboriginal recruitment and retention initiatives at SFU.

Conclusion:

It is evident that progress continues to be made regarding Aboriginal Strategic Plan initiatives at Simon Fraser University. We thank Aboriginal Steering Committee members, the Simon Fraser University community, and the off-campus Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities for their assistance in this process.

For further information concerning the above initiatives, please visit the Office for Aboriginal Peoples website at http://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/