Recent Research News

Major Grant Success Rates
In the latest NSERC Discovery Grants competition, SFU researchers obtained a success rate of 63% (57/90). The total national success rate for this competition, including Subatomic Physics Individual and Team grants, was 62%. In the SSHRC Insight Grants competition, SFU researchers obtained a success rate of 40% (18/45) versus the national average of 27%.

Automotive Partnership Canada grant: Low Platinum PEM Fuel Cells
On March 20th, Minister Gary Goodyear announced that SFU “received over $5 million to work on a new generation of fuel cells that hold great potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.” Steven Holdcroft of Chemistry will lead 17 scientists and engineers from nine universities across Canada on this project, to reduce the production costs of this new technology. Partners include the Automotive Fuel Cell Cooperation, Ballard Power Systems Inc., BIC Inc., General Motors of Canada Limited, Hydrogenetics and Hyteon Inc.

NSERC Discovery Grant, Accelerator Supplements
Three SFU researchers have been selected to receive $120,000 over three years through the NSERC Discovery Accelerator Supplement program, to assist with research that has a very high potential for impact relative to other applicants:

- Tony Williams, Biological Sciences, “Physiological Adaptations for Breeding in Birds”
- Dipankar Sen, MBB, “Ribozymes and DNAzymes: Ancient Catalytic Activities for Modern Biomedical and Other Utility.”

They join a dozen SFU researchers with active DAS grants in their second or third year.

SSHRC Partnership Grant
Thecla Schiphorst of SIAT is leading a $2.2M SSHRC Partnership Grant for “Moving stories: Digital tools for movement, meaning, and interaction.”

CIHR Major Projects
Bob Young of Chemistry has received a $2.5 million CIHR team grant on “New Mechanisms, Therapeutic Targets and Technologies for Bone Health” with UBC colleagues. Marlene Moretti of Psychology is leading a $1.4 million CIHR team grant to examine how sex and gender interact with social, psychological, genetic, and biological factors to determine intervention outcomes. Steven Jones of MBB is leading $1.1 million CIHR grant with the BC Cancer Agency’s Genome Sciences Centre to establish an Epigenomic Data Coordination Centre to store and disseminate epigenetic data.

Furthering HIV Vaccine Development Research
SFU biomedical researchers Jamie Scott and Ralph Pantophlet are part of an international research team led by McGill called the Botswana-Canada AIDS Vaccine Discovery Partnership.
Funded by a CIHR Team Grant through the Canadian HIV Vaccine Initiative, the Canadian and African partners aim to discover and characterize antibodies that target the HIV virus with the ultimate goal of the design of an effective HIV vaccine for the global community.

**Interactive Komagata Maru Website Launched**

On March 23rd, the Komagata Maru: Continuing the Journey website was launched at SFU Vancouver. The website contains a wealth of digitized material, including documents, reports, books, poetry, and photographs that document the 1914 incident. It also contains videos and other educational resources to explore how the incident has affected, and continues to impact, the development of multiculturalism and human rights in Canada. The project is headed by Brian Owen of the SFU Library and funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

**Climate Change Impacts Research Consortium (CCIRC) Student Research Day**

On April 2nd, the CCIRC and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) at SFU hosted a Student Research Day. Nineteen graduate students presented their research and obtained feedback from fellow students and faculty members to help them refine their methodology and research goals, and strengthen their communication ability. CCIRC is funded from the SFU Community Trust Endowment Fund.

**SFU Hosts BCreative Event to Showcase and Stimulate BC’s Creative Sector**

The inaugural “BCreative” conference at SFU Vancouver May 10-12 will showcase and stimulate BC’s creative economy through collaboration between government, business, the creative sector and researchers. SFU communication professor Richard Smith and Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology Dean Cheryl Geisler are among the presenters. Smith is the Director of the Centre for Digital Media at the Great Northern Way campus, one of the event’s co-sponsors.

**Unlocking Opportunity of Big Data Age for British Columbia**

On June 5th, leading thinkers will converge on Vancouver to explore opportunities and issues with using BC’s digital health data to inform cutting-edge research and health decisions that will ultimately improve health outcomes. SFU professor Diane Finegood, the President of the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, is part of the closing panel. SFU has considerable expertise in this area, with its full-context approach to health research and expertise in data mining, visual analytics, bioinformatics, and secure data.

**Recent Accomplishments: Awards & Honours**

**Computing Scientist Pavol Hell Named 2012 SIAM Fellow**

Pavol Hell of Computing Science is among a distinguished group of 35 members of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) who were selected by their peers for the 2012 Class of Fellows. Dr. Hell is recognized for his leading contributions to graph theory.

**Vice-President, Research Receives Award from Canadian Society for Chemistry**

Vice-President, Research and Professor of Chemistry B. Mario Pinto is the recipient of the 2012 R.U. Lemieux Award for research in organic chemistry, specifically his contributions in synthesis, conformational analysis, NMR and molecular modeling protocols.
Global Health Professor Craig Janes Receives Medal from Mongolian Government

The Minister of Health of Mongolia has presented Craig Janes with a medal for his work to develop the country’s public health system. Dr. Janes researches a variety of public issues in the country, including health reform, maternal health, climate change, and mining development, and is writing a book summarizing his research.

Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal Winner

Charles Krieger of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology is among a select group of 30 Canadians who has received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal from the ALS Society of Canada. Dr. Krieger has spent years on research aimed to better understand and treat ALS, or Lou Gehrig’s disease, and to make a positive difference in the lives of its sufferers.

New Marketing Research Wins Prize

SFU Business professor Leyland Pitt has co-authored an article on luxury wine visibility in social media that was selected by the International Journal of Wine Business Research “as one of the most impressive pieces of work the team has seen throughout 2011.” The article has received both the Outstanding Paper Award and was selected as the best paper of the year in the journal.

Marie Curie Fellowship Recipient

SFU alumna Camilla Speller is currently at the University of Calgary completing a postdoctoral fellowship. In September, Camilla will begin a two-year Marie Curie Fellowship at the University of York, where she will research the ancient DNA of whales.

SFU Beedie School of Business’ World-Class Research

The SFU Beedie School of Business has been ranked #54 out of 1,000 business schools surveyed around the world for its business and management research. The ranking is based on article downloads by institution, and is published by the US-based Social Science Research Network, a leading repository of business academic papers.

Updates: Innovation Activities

International Commercialization Association (ICA)

SFU had a presence at the ICA Forum event in March, with participants from leading innovation and technology commercialization organizations in 22 countries. The SFU Innovation Office is participating in an ICA pilot project leveraging an online global marketplace platform to link university innovations with international researchers and commercialization partners.

Discovery Foundation Program Agreements

SFU’s Innovation Office will deliver two programs supported by the Discovery Foundation Technology Education Program in 2012-2013. These include Venture Connection’s Discovery Foundation Entrepreneur Mentoring Program and the new (Discovery Foundation) Green Tech Exchange Internship Program that provides internship opportunities for graduate students with Green Tech Exchange member companies in the clean and green technology sector.

Startup Canada, National Tour, YVR Town Hall Event

SFU, in collaboration with Startup Canada, BCIC, BCIT, ECUAD and UBC, will host a town hall dialogue event on September 18th. The event will feature speakers from across the local
startup ecosystem and will highlight themes such as mobilizing knowledge and the role of universities, researchers and students in the innovation economy and creative class. Event details will be made available on the SFU website closer to the event date.

**SFU Student Company Wins NASA Contract**

SFU Beedie School of Business grads Ben Sparrow and Joshua Zoshi are having a great year. Not only is the company they founded, Saltworks Technologies, #2 on BC Business Magazine’s list of BC’s 20 Most Innovative Companies, but they have also been contracted by NASA to develop a product that could be used to treat the water onboard the International Space Station. Saltworks develops and delivers solutions for solving complex water treatment challenges.

**Venture Connection Client Hiretheworld Makes BC Business Top 20**

Hiretheworld, a former client of the SFU Venture Connection mentorship program for student entrepreneurs, has made BC Business Magazine’s list of BC’s 20 Most Innovative Companies. The company was co-founded by Beedie School of Business alumnus Terry Beech, his brother Doug, and School of Computing Science alumnus Arash Afrooze. Hiretheworld allows users to access graphic design talent from around the world through a competitive online contest.

**SFU Students Believe that Function Doesn’t Have to Come Before Fashion**

Two students from SFU’s School of Interactive Arts and Technology are receiving attention for their “smart shoes,” adjustable high heels with pressure sensors that prompt the wearer when it is time to adjust heel height to avoid developing foot problems and chronic pain. Nasim Jahangiri and Pantea Shahsavani created the shoe as part of a final project for their undergraduate degrees, and how hope to patent the design.

**Venture Connection client Matias Marquez named ACE 2012 Regional Champ**

Matias Marquez of the online gift card business Buyatab.com is the latest Venture Connection client to achieve success in the annual Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship (ACE) Awards. He has received the $1,000 prize as 2012 regional champion, and was a finalist at the national competition in May. Marquez follows in the footsteps of past Venture Connection clients Jordan Guiterrez of Libreria Leo, the 2010 ACE national runner up, and Milun Tesovic of Metrolyrics who was named the 2009 ACE global champion.

**SFU Students Win BCNET Digital Media Challenge**

Vera Lukman of Computing Science is the 2012 winner of the BCNET Digital Media Challenge, a student competition to recognize technology innovation. Lukman’s winning project, BitNapkin, is a mobile drawing application that enables users to collaborate anywhere, both visually and verbally, in real time. The 3rd place prize was awarded to Winnie Chung of Interactive Arts and Technology, the team leader for INAMOMENT, an interactive and collaborative performance combining dynamic movements with motion tracking and social media.