

THE OPEN STANDARD

The Newsletter of the Open Learning Division of Thompson Rivers University

Fall Convocation Issue

October 2008

Installation of a new TRU President marks celebrations for Open Learning Grads


Suffused by sounds of orchestral splendour, a regal procession of Thompson Rivers University (TRU) faculty, administrators, staff and students commemorated this fall's convocation ceremonies.

On October 2, approximately 10 Open Learning graduates marched alongside 100 on-campus graduates to the traditional drumming of First Nations TRU students Vernie Clement, Dallas Edwards and Noel Froste.

This fall's convocation held special significance as it featured the formal installation of TRU's second President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Kathleen Scherf (see photo on page 7).

During the presidential installation, which followed the traditional ceremony, Scherf told the hundreds of well-wishers, convoking students and dignitaries in attendance she was honoured to lead the institution and would not let them down.

In her address, Scherf praised Past President Dr. Roger Barnsley saying, "Thank you to you and your team for building such an incredible university for me to lead and to carry on your superb work."

Chancellor Nancy Green Raine administered the oath of office while Ron Olynyk, Chair of the Board of Governors, along with Past President Dr. Roger Barnsley, performed the official robing of the new President and the presentation of the newly commissioned TRU Presidential Chain of Office. Representing the President's authority as head of the university, the Chain of Office features a medal of the university seal suspended from a chain that will be engraved to chronicle TRU's appointed Presidents. 



THE OPEN STANDARD

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THOMPSON RIVERS
UNIVERSITY
OPEN LEARNING

TRU-ly Inspiring *Open Learning graduates share their stories of success*

Laura Moskaluk, Clinton, B.C., Diploma in Management Studies



"After that I was taking courses for Insurance to get my licenses along with my regular TRU-OL courses."

Despite shaky nerves at jumping back into the education scene in January 2006, three years since her last classroom experience, Moskaluk found herself adapting to the open learning form of education.

"It was hard engaging in an open style of learning at first because you have to create your own schedule and prioritize tasks," Moskaluk said. "After I had been doing it for a while it got easier... I took lower level courses at first to get used to the process and... as I progressed I took higher level courses. Doing it this way, made me feel more prepared for the harder classes."

Through trial and error, she was able to determine not only how to restructure her OL education to work for her, but also how to better adjust her own schedule and develop ways to balance her work and personal time with her school activities.

"I definitely think it is more efficient to do course work through this kind of distance learning," Moskaluk said. "You set your own schedule, do things as fast or as slow as you want and in most cases you don't have to worry about deadlines."

The flexibility inherent in an open learning style of education allowed Moskaluk to hold a part-time job as she could complete her coursework at any time of the day and set her own deadlines.

"I liked the online courses the best, they are fast and efficient," Moskaluk said. "It was easy to contact my tutor plus I got to interact with other students on the discussion board and email them."

TRU-OL's open and online form of education fit into Moskaluk's lifestyle and allowed her to complete her Diploma in just two and a half years, a faster pace than other forms of post-secondary education may have allowed.

Now, after graduating with a Diploma in Management Studies, she has great expectations for herself and her future. TRU-OL may even see Moskaluk again in the near future as she plans to continue to evolve her education and perhaps extend her goals to a Bachelor's degree. ☘

"I liked the online courses the best, they are fast and efficient. It was easy to contact my tutor plus I got to interact with other students on the discussion board and email them."

- Laura Moskaluk

Focus, determination and a whole lot of organization can take you far even if you never leave your small home town of about 800. So is the story of Clinton, BC resident and OL graduate Laura Moskaluk, who progressed from working as a cashier at Save On Foods to working as an Insurance Representative and graduating with a Diploma in Management Studies just a few years later. "Before I enrolled (in TRU-OL) I hadn't gone to school or had any other education since high school... since 2003," Moskaluk said explaining that once enrolled in a program with TRU-OL she dedicated most of her time to school and her familial responsibilities as well as her job as an Insurance representative.

Karen Andrews, Fort Nelson, B.C., Certificate in Management Studies



For those who can juggle 12 years of managerial work, a position on the School Board, raising a family and running their own business, how difficult can it be to add a post-secondary Certificate program to the mix? Not too difficult if you are a focused and determined individual like recent graduate Karen Andrews; that is until the institution you were enrolled with cancels the program you were geared to complete.

"I started my Certificate (in Management Studies) in Quesnel, with the College of New Caledonia (CNC) eight years ago," Andrews recalls. "Then, with two courses left to finish the certificate, CNC cancelled the program."

Back to the grind, Andrews returned to work in the managerial field until, at the age of 55, she pondered "If I don't finish this (Certificate) now, then when?"

"I enrolled in TRU-OL and quit my job in order to successfully obtain my Certificate," Andrews said, explaining that registering into an open learning format of education was a matter of convenience.

"I had friends and family in Fort Nelson where I was working, along

with a home that I loved so Open Learning was the only option."

So, eight years after she had begun her Certificate program and with eight credits already gained, in just eight months Andrews completed four TRU-OL courses which met the requirements she needed to graduate with her Certificate in Management Studies. Andrews was able to fast track her education with TRU-OL by utilizing the transfer credit options available to her through Open Learning.

"I was very pleased that TRU-OL accepted all the courses that I had completed... this encouraged me to continue," Andrews said.

Also encouraging was her experience with her Program Advisor. "Gary Bunney went above and beyond to help me with each situation that arose," Andrews said. "He always helped when he could."

Now, spurred by her success in Open Learning, Andrews made a leap and moved to TRU's Kamloops campus where she is dedicating all of her time towards the completion of her Diploma in Management Studies. ☘

Colleen Delany, Delta, B.C., Bachelor of Commerce Degree



Credit is given where credit is due and Colleen Delany deserves a lot of credit.

Through its mandate, the Open Learning (OL) Division of Thompson Rivers University (TRU) acknowledges past education and training through transfer credit, a policy which served as a great advantage for Delany who recently graduated from TRU-OL's Bachelor of Commerce Degree program.

When she enrolled, Delany was able to utilize the transfer credit option and receive block credit for her Diploma in Financial Management from the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). In addition, she received credit for individual courses she completed at BCIT, Langara College and Kwantlen University-College.

"I really appreciated this since it meant that I did not have to take third- and fourth-year electives over again simply because of a transfer limit," Delany reflects. "For me, this option was one of the best things about TRU-OL."

The online format offered through TRU-OL was also of great benefit to Delany who was able to fit two classes at a time and a full-time job at the Vancouver Public Library into her daily schedule.

"The online format made it easier for me to schedule my class work around my other responsibilities," Delany, who finished her Bachelor's degree in about two years, said. "My goal now is to earn a Masters of Library and Information Science so that I can move ahead in the field. Now that I have earned my degree I can apply to graduate school and achieve my goal." ☘

Joanne Baron, Kamloops, B.C., Bachelor of Commerce Degree



Despite her neighbourly proximity to the bricks and mortar University she was destined to enrol in, recent graduate Joanne Baron chose instead to utilize the distance education option through Thompson Rivers University (TRU)'s Open Learning (OL) Division.

Considering the complications associated with physically attending university including the drive and exorbitant costs of gas and parking, Baron decided to enrol into the Open Learning Bachelor of Commerce program and invite education into her home.

"I have always wanted to finish my degree and this gave me the perfect avenue to do it," Baron said. "Being a 'mature' student working full time, I just didn't want the hassle of trying to work around other's schedules."

The flexibility of the open learning format not only allowed Baron to continue working and maintain responsibilities as a mother, it also helped her to expedite her post-secondary education. By transferring credits gained from her previous Certified Management Accounting Designation and Administrative Management Diploma, Baron was able to complete her Bachelor of Commerce degree in just one and a half years.

Completing her Bachelor's Degree through TRU-OL was in sync with the stage of life Baron was in.

"As an adult you tend to better know what you want and are more disciplined," Baron said expanding on how her past experience in management accounting, human resources, work safety and sales, translated to course content. "Some of the courses were easier because of my work experience but I learned something from all of them and am really glad I did them."

Baron found her sociology courses particularly interesting and through helpful interaction with her tutor, discovered what type of work in sociology would be relevant to her educational background. Tutors provided Baron with great feedback and support. "My human resources tutor was very encouraging, suggesting that I'd make a great HR manager, which was really great to hear."

"I finally have my Bachelor's Degree after wanting it for so many years," Baron said. "It gave me more confidence and I will one day do my Masters." ☺

BCCOL Fall 2008

Convocation Reception



On October 2, Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (TRU-OL) staff and faculty welcomed its most recent OL graduates to a Convocation Reception at the BC Centre for Open Learning (BCCOL) on TRU's Kamloops campus. OL graduates Karen Andrews (Certificate in Management Studies), Colleen Delany (Bachelor of Commerce Degree), May Hung (Associate of Science Degree) and Andy Mendel (Bachelor of General Studies Degree) mingled and munched with OL team members including Vice-President Judith Murray, Associate Vice-President Gordon Tarzwell, Associate Registrar Kristine Smalcel Pederson and their personal Program Advisors including Tony Kuczma and Gary Bunney, before receiving a special graduation gift from VP Judith Murray and engaging in a tour of the BCCOL guided by Student Recruitment Coordinator Angela Ferguson. TRU-OL congratulates all of its Fall Graduates on their hard work and achievements. ☺

Outstanding Achievement Awards

Three ACES

A career in the realm of post-secondary education is not the only thing that an Adult Basic Education English tutor, Enrolment Services and Advising Assistant and Supervisor of Exams have in common. They also share the traits of integrity, professionalism and positive thinking. These common qualities were among the



readiness to literally go so far as to travel from Kamloops to Burnaby to assist in the invigilation of exams.

"During the transition (of OL from the Burnaby campus to Kamloops) Tod volunteered to come in on the weekend and 'put the exam room in order,'" Tarzwell said, further exemplifying Denham's task-oriented work ethic. "He is personable and works in the best interest of the learner. This is demonstrated in the relationships that he has built with the IDRG Exams Liaison Officer, the tutor support Clerks and their supervisor, and those on the registration side of the operation."

Fostering healthy work relations is a valuable quality perpetuated by Enrolment Services and Advising Assistant Sheryl Aselstyne, the most recent recipient of the Open Learning Peer-to-Peer Award.

many personal and professional characteristics guiding the decision to nominate Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (TRU-OL)'s most recent recipients of the quarterly OL Outstanding Achievement Awards. Once again on September 25, 2008, to encourage continued excellence in the Open Learning work environment, Vice-President Judith Murray presented three worthy recipients with OL Outstanding Achievements Awards.

With his familiar grin fixed in place, Supervisor of Exams Tod Denham enthusiastically accepted his Open Learning Staff/Faculty Award for which he was nominated by Associate Vice-President Gordon Tarzwell.

From day one, Tarzwell explained that Denham, a "friendly, approachable" individual who "almost always wears a smile," was always ready to adjust his own schedule to ensure "the job got done." One of many examples Tarzwell references was Denham's



Described by nominator and Enrolment Services Advisor Rachel Champagne as the "go-to person for many of Open Learning's stakeholders," Aselstyne deals on a daily basis, with an "enormous" number and variety of inquiries made by students and OL staff. With an always "happy-to-help" attitude, Aselstyne constantly provides outstanding service that benefits OL

staff and tutors as well as the overall reputation of TRU-OL, Champagne said.

"Sheryl provides an unsurpassed quality of response to our community, in both consistency and depth," Champagne said. "That means that once she states that a job has been 'taken care of' it has been completed with excellence."

Professional conduct is a trait inherent to all OL Award recipients, including the second ever recipient of the Open Learning Tutor Award, John Harris.

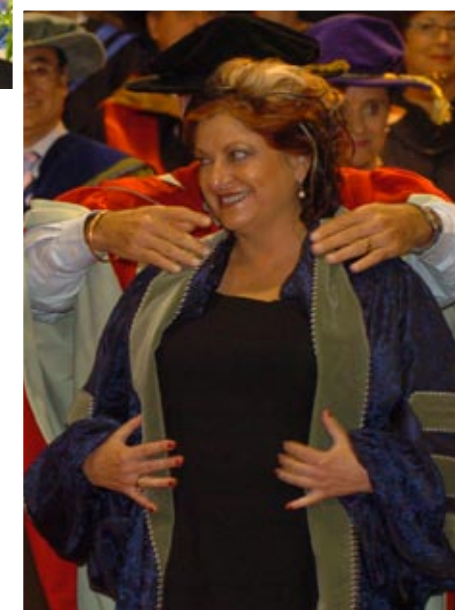
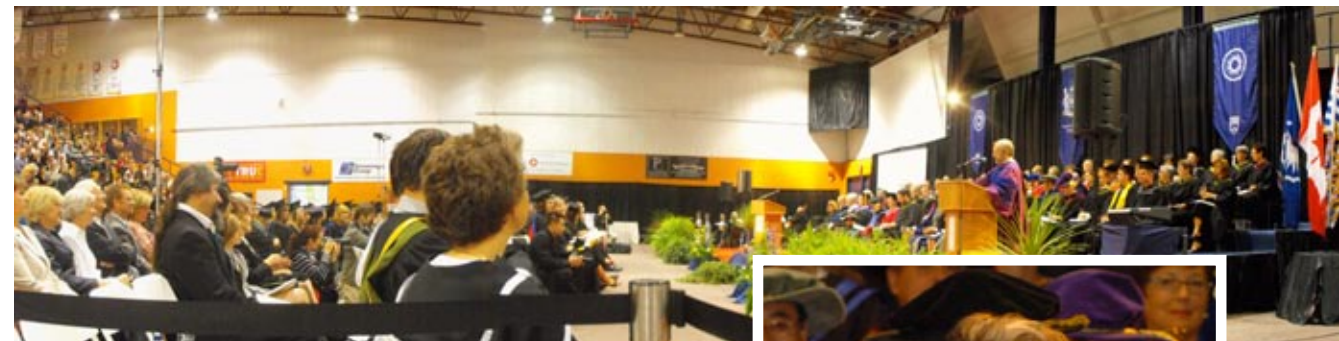
"He (Harris) cares for his students and has always shown a high degree of integrity at meetings," nominator and OL Adult Basic Education tutor John Patterson said of Harris. "His professional manner is also commendable."

Currently a tutor of Adult Basic Education English, Harris has played an integral part in the progression of TRU-OL by assisting in course revisions and evaluations and by simply caring for his students.



After serving a long tenure with TRU-OL, including its past life as the BC Open University, and being the sole senior tutor of Open Learning, Harris will soon retire. In light of his imminent departure from TRU-OL and his impressive history with the institution, Harris is "most deserving of the Tutor Award," Patterson said.

For those who could not attend, the celebration was recorded by the Media Team in the Instructional Development and Research Group and is posted for viewing on the Open Learning website at http://barabus.tru.ca/bccol_awards.



ENROBED WITH ACADEMIC REGALIA, DR. KATHLEEN SCHERF IS FORMALLY INSTALLED AS TRU'S SECOND PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR.

A hoot in the horticulture gardens



Dennis Oldridge, School of Advanced Technologies and Mathematics, presents Past President Dr. Roger Barnsley (right) with a framed photograph of one of the great horned owls that nested on campus earlier this year. Guests gathered in the Horticulture Gardens on September 10, to celebrate Dr. Barnsley's retirement at a reception hosted by the Board of Governors. ☞

What's NEWS in Open Learning

Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning celebrates what Vice-President Judith Murray describes as *"our best single month ever."*

Enrolment numbers grew this September to increase 24.6% over enrolments in the same month of last year.

"Thanks for the contributions each and every one of you (in OL) has made to help us reach this achievement," Murray said. "A special thanks goes out to Cameron Beddome (Chief Recruitment Officer, OL) and all the folks in Marketing, Enrolment Services and Strategic Partnerships, for all of your hard work this past month." ☞

OL Graduate recognized for outstanding achievements

Attaining a Masters of Law from Harvard University is a great accomplishment which for Craig Jones, grew from a general beginning. In 1995, Jones graduated from Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning (formerly the British Columbia Open University) with a Bachelor of General Studies Degree.

"It's (his TRU-OL degree) the foundation of everything I've done since," he said.

Everything Jones has done since graduating from TRU-OL is no small feat. Working full-time throughout his Open Learning studies, Jones gathered the necessary credits to gain admission into law school at the University of British Columbia, his stepping stone to a Masters in Law at Harvard.

Currently, Jones is the Supervising Counsel of the Constitutional and Administrative Law Group of the Ministry of the Attorney General, Victoria.

"I supervise 20 lawyers who conduct litigation at all levels of court, and we get to be involved in some of the most interesting issues of the day," Jones said.



In addition to authoring two books and numerous articles, Jones has been involved in litigations surrounding powers of the government and the application of the Charter of Rights.

Craig Jones is the 2008 recipient of TRU's Distinguished Open Learning Alumni award, which recognizes his professional achievement as well as public service through the practice of law and his recognition of the Charter of Rights. ☞



Commonwealth for Open Learning appoints new Chairman

This September the Vancouver-based Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) appointed Burchell Whiteman, the Jamaican High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, to the position of Chairman of the Board. High Commissioner Whiteman is the first non-English or non-Canadian representative to take this position with the intergovernmental organization CoL. Whiteman succeeds Lewis Perinbam in his capacity as Chairman of the Board.

The CoL was created approximately 20 years ago by the Commonwealth Heads of Government in order to encourage the development and sharing of open learning/distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. The CoL is the only official Commonwealth agency solely concerned with the promotion and development of distance education and open learning. CoL helps to increase the capacities of developing nations to meet the demands for improved access to quality education and training. ☞

LIFE in OL

TRU-OL's Instructional Development and Research Group (IDRG) welcomes two new members to the team.

Joanne Moores joins the group as the new Project Assistant for Adult Basic Education, Social Work, Education and Nursing. Moores began her career at TRU in November 2007 and most recently worked in the Human Resources department. Prior to joining TRU she was employed with School District 73. **Nancy Moore** has stepped in as Project Assistant to take over for Lora Sartori, who is away on maternity leave. Moore recently relocated to Kamloops from Campbell River, where she worked as an Administrative Assistant at TimberWest Forest Company providing administrative support to forestry, planning and engineering departments.

OL's Marketing and Communications department welcomes it's new Web Designer **Rozalia Novikova**. An internationally experienced Web Designer and Developer, Novikova has worked in Russia, the U.S. and Canada.

The Enrolment Services department has gained two new faces. After a short stint in TRU Student Affairs, **Shelley Woodrow** has joined Open Learning as the new Divisional II Secretary. Woodrow has held a number of Auxiliary positions around campus in areas including Human Resources, TRU World, Facilities, Switchboard, Counselling and Distance Education. Prior to joining TRU, Woodrow served as a Property Manager Assistant at Columbia Property Management. **Denise Comtois** comes to OL from TRU's Faculty Arts, where she worked for over 10 years as a Divisional II Secretary for the English and Journalism programs. Comtois replaces Scott Walker as an Enrolment Services Admissions and Advising Assistant. In addition to her working knowledge of TRU, Comtois brings to OL an extensive background in communications and administration from both business and academic perspectives.

The OL Admissions and Records department welcomes **Shirley Huculak** and **Katherine Rolston** to their new positions as Admissions and Records Assistants. Huculak previously worked in TRU's IT Client Services as a Divisional II Secretary. Previously, she worked in an administrative capacity for the School Districts of both Kamloops and Prince George. Rolston joins OL from the School of Nursing where she served as a Project Assistant. She has also previously worked for TRU World as a Divisional II Secretary as well as TRU Williams Lake in the Registrar's office.

The OL Exams department welcomes **Penny Jones** to its team. Prior to joining OL, Jones worked with TRU as a Library Clerk, a position which followed her previous job as an Administrative Assistant and Data Clerk with the Kamloops Laubach Literacy Council. ☞

