

The NEWS and VIEWS Letter about
people and happenings at
Vancouver Community College
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VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

INTERCOM

CEO Looks Back and Forward

INTERCOM: Mr. Manera you've been at Vancouver Community College nearly seven years and you've been a community college CEO nearly 13 years. Before we talk about your move out of education, can you tell us how and why you came to VCC in 1978?

MANERA: Well, Vancouver Community College was much larger and more diverse in terms of its programs than Niagara College, where I'd been. Basically, this was a greater challenge.

INTERCOM: What were the particular challenges that confronted you at the time?

MANERA: The college had gone through some difficulties with the previous administration. There had been a breakdown in communications, I guess. And there had also been a government inquiry commission to examine the college's finances. The board too had undertaken a major review of the college's objectives and the general organization. Clearly, the major problem was to try to have everyone pull in the same direction. In other words, get the various constituencies of the college working toward common goals.

Specifically there was a major problem with the building program, or really the lack of a building program. Everyone agreed the college needed space, but there was great difficulty in getting that recognized by the provincial government. That had a high priority. There was a feeling, too, that the college needed to get its mes-

Nov. 2, President Tony Manera announced that he would become vice-president, human resources, for the CBC, March 1, 1985. He had formally tendered his resignation to the board the previous week.

InterCom recently talked with the president about his tenure at the college, what he sees as the college's future and the challenges of his new position, where he will assume corporate responsibility for personnel planning, organizational development, compensation and employee benefits, and industrial relations for the crown corporation.



sage to the community more effectively, perhaps, than had been the case.

INTERCOM: You say one of the prime challenges was to get everyone pulling in the same direction. What direction was that?

MANERA: There was a tendency for each of the units of the college to see themselves as not really part of a total service. There was a need to bring together the various units in a complementary role and to ensure that that role would be pursued in the context of a total mission.

INTERCOM: Certainly a great deal has been achieved in many of these areas. Apart from meeting these initial challenges, what other progress, or accomplishments, have been gained over the last seven years?

MANERA: We've had a number of new programs initiated by our faculty and administrators. They've taken the initiative to recognize changing needs in the community. A typical example would be Pacific Rim Studies and computer assisted drafting.

I think our relationship, particularly with the business community, is one of our strengths. We make good use of our advisory committees. I wouldn't want to suggest, however, that in terms of our relationship with the community there isn't a lot more that could be done. But I do feel we are getting our message out more clearly and

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VCC signs accord with Beijing

Signing the accord between Vancouver Community College and the Beijing Institute are: Max Fleming, bursar and chairman of the International Education Committee; VCC President Tony Manera; President Qui Chunlin, of Beijing Institute; and VCC Board Vice-Chairman Elizabeth Jarvis.



On Tuesday evening, Nov. 13, officials of the college and the Beijing Metallurgical Institute of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, in the People's Republic of China, signed an agreement, whereby the two institutions agree to future exchanges of students and faculty.

According to Norm Henderson, co-ordinator of International Education at the college, groundwork for the accord was laid during President Tony Manera's visit to the Far East earlier this year.

Beijing Institute, Henderson says, is a polytechnic with about 5,000 students. He anticipates the first exchange will take place late in 1985 and could involve faculty or students from all three VCC campuses.

Signing on behalf of the college were President Tony Manera; Max Fleming, bursar and chairman of the International Education Committee; and VCC Board Vice-Chairman Elizabeth Jarvis. Signing for the Beijing Institute was President Qui Chunlin.

President Qui, along with Meng Xianduo, an associate professor of mechanical engineering, Lang Jishuang, a deputy director, and Duan Sui, a teacher at the institute and the group's translator, were entertained at dinner at the VVI, following the signing ceremony. The group is on a tour of Canada and the United States. After leaving Vancouver they go on to Waterloo, Ottawa, New York and Washington.



Director of College Resources Ross Carter presents a Radio Shack TRS 80 computer to John Cheung. He was the prize winner in the Telecollege fall contest.

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may or may not choose to use. I think we've really got to guard against pigeon holing them. But at the same time we have to make sure access is there if they want it."

VVI and Langara both have student services assistants that can offer special help to the handicapped, with funding coming from a special Ministry of Education grant. Both campuses will pre-register special needs students, provide tours and give orientations that map out the person's access routes, elevators and washrooms.

"Our student services assistant is a graduate of the KEC para-professional program," Armstrong says. "She has really helped by brailleing a lot of our public areas and she can act as back up if a student needs assistance and none is available through ASE at KEC. Our additions and renovations at VVI have made the building much more accessible to a person in, say, a wheel chair than was the case in the old facility."

Special needs students at VVI and Langara are in mainstream academic, career or vocational programs. While many cope on their own, a substantial number used the services of the adult special education assistants to act as interpreters or to braille notes. Counsellors assist in making arrangements for special equipment or for services such as taped books.

"If, for instance, we have some blind students who want to go into the junior computer program, we'll make arrangements with the CNIB to rent the equipment," Armstrong explains.

Both Armstrong and her counterpart at Langara, Janet Currie, work with instructors, helping them to integrate the handicapped person into the class comfortably.

"There are techniques instructors can use that let people with handicaps participate more fully in the class," Currie explains. "It is simply a matter of educating them."

Both counsellors network extensively with associations and community organizations that deal with the special needs population.

"I think VCC has a good reputation in this field," Currie says. "Our campuses are relatively small and I think this lets us focus on people as individuals. We approach students and their particular needs with this in mind. I see a lot of special needs people come to Langara as a result of word of mouth — what they hear from friends and associates."

This fall for the first time all the various individuals at the college who work with special needs students met to share information. "With education facing a hard line on restraint, I think it is important to all our future endeavours that we try to appear as a consolidated effort," explains Don Oakes, one of the primary organizers. "We have to see what we can do to support one another and we have to ensure we're not needlessly duplicating our efforts."

Second Annual UNITED WAY 24-hour relay

This year it was even bigger and better. From 12:30 p.m. Thurs. Oct. 25, to 12:30 p.m., Fri. Oct. 26, some 334 staff, instructors, administrators, students, their friends and families sprinted, puffed and limped their way around the running track at China Creek Park in support of the United Way. There were representatives from all three campuses, CE and Central Administration. Even in the dead of night the track was never deserted.

These runners totalled 748 miles, 180 of these with baton, bringing about \$3,500 to the United Way. They were backed up by dozens of people who acted as pit crew — counting laps, drying out jackets and generally shouting encouragement.

Domco again provided a hot tub where the weary could soothe their strained muscles and there was a recreational vehicle where runners and crew could warm up and get a cup of coffee.

President Tony Manera, Principals Panktatz, Denholm (on crutches) and Rerup (a few moments late), along with CE Director Richard Pearce, who is the College's United Way chairman, helped get the relay underway, as fireworks marked the start and the music department band offered lively accompaniment.

Thursday evening a beer garden and food fair at KEC attracted a good crowd and brought in more than \$464 to the United Way. Again, the music department provided entertainment.

Friday morning's pancake breakfast fortified both runners and those headed for the desk or classroom and brought in a further \$96 to the United Way.

At "The Turkey of the Year" social, rally organizer Dave Greenall handed out awards from the event.

Challenge trophies, awarded each year went to:

- the team with the most members running between midnight and 5 a.m. — The Music Department, KEC
- the individual raising the most money — Bob Malone, Hairdressing, VVI
- the campus raising the most money — VVI, with \$1,764!

- the individual running the most miles — Edith Ferguson, Central Administration, 20 miles
- the individual coming out in the most original costume — Dr. J. J. Denholm — who did his laps on crutches

- the team or group with the most original costumes — auto body, in their white coveralls
- the campus fielding the most runners — KEC, with 263

- the campus providing the most volunteers — KEC
- Special Awards for Outstanding Effort went to:

- the woman who ran the most miles — Edith Ferguson
- the man who ran the most miles — this was a tie, with auto body students Allan Cheng and Wilson Yip both totalling nineteen and two-thirds miles; Dalton Kremer, head of VVI's counselling department, came second with fourteen and a half miles

- the departments with the most faculty, staff and student involvement were: music, auto body, ELT

- half-time, diesel mechanics, and dental technicians.

UNITED WAY 1984...



VVI executive chefs cooking the United Way: (left to right) Dr. Marvin Lamoureux, dean of instruction; Keith Dunbar, associate director, CE; Sid Hartley, division chairman, business and health; Roy Wren, division chairman, industrial; John Vandenakker, dean of administrative and student services; Dr. Richard Pearce, director of CE; Tom McComb, office manager; VCC President Tony Manera; and Art Griffiths, division chairman, technical.

United Way Pancake Breakfast

It was the best deal in town. At one point hungry patrons were lined up all the way down the main staircase of the mall from the cafeteria's second floor entrance. Thurs. morning, Nov. 8, VVI's deans, division chairmen and administrators, aided by the College President Tony Manera, put aside their budget headaches, program evaluations, long range planning and all other manner of decision-making, to cook breakfast for the United Way.

Attired in chef's hats, white jackets and aprons, and with red bandanas around their necks, they toiled over hot stoves from 7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., cooking pancakes, sausage and bacon for 575 people.

Their efforts brought in \$1,155 to the United Way.

And, as anyone who sampled their fare could attest, all have second career options as short-order cooks.

A particular tip of the chef's hat to Fred Naso, head of food trades, who rounded up the food. Donations come from Neptune Food Suppliers, C. S. Ruby Distributor, Intercity Papers, Fraser Valley Milk Producers Association, Dickson's Coffee, Westside Meats and Russell Food Equipment Ltd.

KEC's casino night brought more than \$1,700 into the United Way November 17. Several hundred people crammed into the cafeteria to try their skills or luck at blackjack, roulette, wheels of fortune and bingo. CKWX supplied "good country" music and the old west theme was complete with saloon girls, stetsons and cowboy boots.



United Way '84...

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| King Edward Campus | \$ 8,062.94 |
| Langara Campus | \$ 3,717.79 |
| Vancouver Vocational Institute | \$ 6,130.51 |
| Continuing Education | |
| Central Administration | \$ 2,158.04 |
| TOTAL | \$20,069.28 |

The college's goal for the United Way Campaign this year was \$16,000. The hard work, generosity and compassion of many people throughout the college took VCC over the top by more than \$4,000.

Thanks from the Chairman

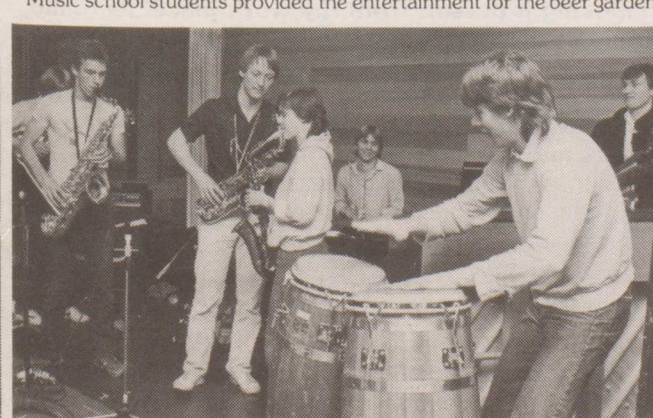
VCC's United Way Committee has received overwhelming support from all campuses. There has been a significant increase in the number of individuals participating in this year's campaign. Inter-campus rivalry and co-operation have been characteristic in such joint ventures as the 24-Hour Relay and VVI Pancake Breakfast.

A great deal of hard work has gone into making these events such outstanding successes. Hats off to the many people who make a difference for VCC and the United Way!

—Dr. Richard Pearce

KEC Principal Harry Pankratz offers congratulations at the finish line to relay organizer Dave Greenall.

Music school students provided the entertainment for the beer garden.



VCC home to service for "Print Impaired"

A blind student in word processing, or a dental technician student with dyslexia, both print impaired, face a number of hurdles in their pursuit of education, primary among them, getting access to texts and supplementary materials in a medium other than conventional print.

Early this year, Langara Campus became home to the newly-created B.C. Colleges and Institutes Library Services Clearinghouse for the Print Impaired, a service geared to finding learning resources for these students.

As Mary Ann Epp, co-ordinator for the project explains, in its first seven months of operation, from February through August, CILS assisted 57 students, in 20 programs at 12 B.C. colleges and institutes. The service searched for 342 tapes of braille books.

Until the fall of 1983 this service was provided through the Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired. Its resources were focused on meeting the needs of primary and secondary students and somewhat secondarily looking after students at colleges and institutes. When funding for this service was discontinued these post-secondary students were left out in the cold.

"Here we were without any comprehensive service," Epp says. "At the same time the trend was growing to integrate special needs students into mainstream classes and programs."

"Now for students in academic programs the situation wasn't as bad. They had access to the long-established resources at UBC's Crane Library. But for adults in basic education or in vocational programs there was nothing."

Epp met with other librarians and counsellors to look at possible remedies and out of these meetings came recommendations to the Ministry of Education that laid the foundation for CILS, which started early in 1984.

"I think VCC was the logical place for this service," Epp explains. "We have the largest number of print impaired students in the province, so it was most cost effective to put it here. And we have a strong, ongoing commitment to special needs students."

Colleges and institutes throughout the province turn to CILS when they can't locate materials for their print impaired students need. The first step the library assistant, Phyllis Mason, who is the service's one full time employee, takes is to search among the 24 catalogues from agencies across North America that provide tape and braille materials. This takes about three hours.

"Unfortunately, there is not a union catalogue, or comprehensive list, of all these materials," Epp explains. "The National Library of Canada is planning to put one on-line. When that happens it will be a tremendous help to us."

If a brailled text or tape is located, arrangements are made for the loan. This is usually done through the college that is requesting the material, though in some instances agencies will deal only through the clearinghouse.

"If we can't get the material the student needs we try to provide alternatives," Epp explains. "Let's say the individual is looking for a particular basic typing text. In this case, we may not be able to come up with the same text, but we can likely locate one on tape or in braille that will do just as well."

As a last resort, the service will arrange tape production of learning resources that are unavailable elsewhere. "We make a very thorough search before we do this," Epp says, "because tape production is extremely expensive. A minimum of about \$1,500 a book. Of the approximately 350 searches we've undertaken we've only gone to production on 15 titles."

The first step here, undertaken again by the library assistant, is to get copyright permission from the publisher to produce the tape. Actual production is then undertaken by Instructional Media Services, who have established a production studio at King Edward Campus. IMS screens readers, who are paid professionals, and monitors quality. In some instances, such as with computer science texts or material covering technical data, extensive work on interpretation must be done to take the material from print to sound.

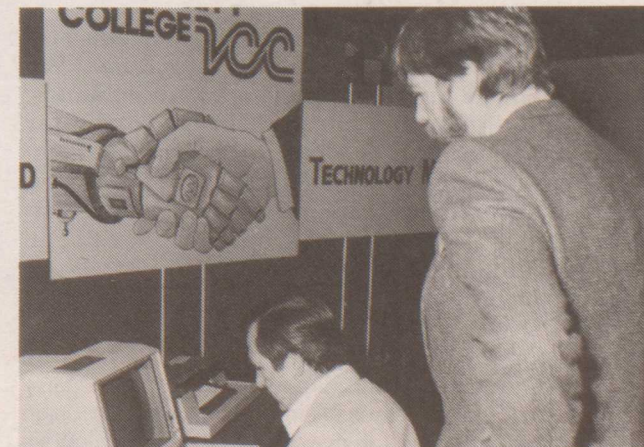
"Obviously, the technical fields, where systems and equipment change so rapidly, are our biggest demands areas," Epp says.

"The key to the service's success has been the incredible co-operation among the internal network at the colleges and institutes. Our success in meeting students needs is directly proportional to the lead time we have and the accuracy of the information counsellors provide to us. For instance, we need to know if the material has to be in tape or braille, whether it matters, what kind of equipment the students have access to, and, of course, when the student needs the material. So far we've found the system has worked really well. I think that's a tribute to all who've made it work."

VCC moves to B.C. Place show

The College was among the 135 exhibitors at the first Pacific Automated Office Show in B.C. Place Stadium Nov. 28 and 29. This was the largest show of its kind in Vancouver and we kept company with the likes of Xerox Canada, Apple Canada, Wang Canada, Sperry Computer, Mitel Corporation and Teleglobe Canada.

Among the offerings that the College featured in its area were the computer information systems program, the computer systems technologist program, the computer aided drafting program, word processing and junior computer programmer offerings in business education, and Continuing Education's computer skills for the workplace.



SPECIAL NEEDS — THE HIDDEN COMMUNITY

Special needs — this is a catch-all phrase used in education to describe people who, for any number of reasons, don't have the same physical or mental resources as the majority.

At Vancouver Community College there are more than 200 special needs students on all three campuses, taking academic, career, vocational, basic education, English language training and Continuing Education programs. The Career Awareness program, run by CE at VVI, is one geared to the particular needs of mentally handicapped adults, giving them lifeskills training and work experience in the community. Hearing impaired or visually impaired students are in any number of programs, from arts and science to welding, using student aides to interpret or take braille notes. Still others cope entirely on their own in regular classrooms.

In true community college spirit, the move to provide for these students came from the grass roots. Where needs have come to the fore, concerned individuals — usually working with community agencies — developed programs and found the resources.

Ad Hoc

"Over the years our efforts have been pretty ad hoc," explains Don Oakes, Continuing Education's programmer for the mentally handicapped. "We simply tried to stay in tune with the community and respond to their needs."

The college's pioneer effort in this field came through the adult special education department at King Edward Campus. It was founded in 1972 at the urging of the Western Institute for the Deaf, Jericho Hill School and the provincial government's Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

"At that time there was absolutely nothing by way of training for deaf adults," explains Wayne Bottlinger, ASE department head. "Deaf people were entirely on their own if they wanted more education or any vocational preparation."

The department started out with a program for hearing impaired adults and, over the years, a program for visually impaired adults was added, along with a program to train para-professional workers for the visually impaired and the hearing impaired and classes in sign language.

Today the 18 full time equivalent students in the hearing impaired program and the 10 in the visually impaired program can take individual or classroom instruction, from basic education through to advanced studies, including communications, lifeskills, English, math and general science. Students above the grade ten level, Bottlinger says, are encouraged to go into mainstream classes.

"We try to bring our students to a point where they can either go out and find jobs or go onto further training," Bottlinger says. "In either case, they are ready to cope in the larger community."

Most Doors Open

ASE provides assistance to special needs students registering in regular college programs. "We have students in diesel mechanics, auto mechanics, baking, cook training and welding," Bottlinger explains. "There is a student in Langara's educational assistant program who is both hearing impaired and visually impaired. With some assistance, there is any number of program options open to those students."

Assistance can come in a number of forms. First and foremost are ASE's three full time para-professional workers for the visually impaired and the hearing impaired. Graduates of the department's own intensive 10 month program, these aides know braille, sign language and they are familiar with the technical aides used by special needs students.

"Our para-professional workers have to have tremendous stamina," Bottlinger says. "One may spend the morning in the diesel mechanics shop interpreting for a deaf student, then be off in the afternoon doing braille notes from a psychology class."

Balancing the schedules of the para-professional workers with student needs is not unlike the task of an air traffic controller. "We rely on counsellors to let us know when there are students with special needs registering or on wait lists," he says. "This way we can anticipate what needs are. It can be a tremendous organizational headache trying to schedule everyone, but we usually manage."

Technology is the other form of assistance open to special needs students. For instance, FM loopless hearing equipment enables a person with minimal hearing to pick up a radio signal from the instructor, who wears a special microphone. This can eliminate the need for an interpreter in class.

Computer equipment, Bottlinger notes, is a tremendous boon to visually impaired and hearing impaired students. "Joyce Lydiard, who is head of the programs for the visually impaired, recently presented the college with an Apple IIe computer and an Echo II modified voice synthesizer," he says.

"Computers can be a great help in drill work. The voice synthesizer lets the computer talk to the individual, obviously, a terrific plus to an unsighted person. Computer graphics too, can help teach speech to a hearing impaired person, showing that person how to position the tongue."

Bottlinger goes on to say, that he sees the day computers will be able to act as interpreters for the hearing impaired. "Technology is really a liberating force for these people. Each year as advances are made, more doors open up to them."

The Mystery of Learning Disabilities

King Edward Campus is home, too, to Individualized Education Programs for Adults, the first program of its kind in Canada and the model for other such programs across the country. IEPA provides diagnosis and individually tailored remedial programs for KEC students with learning disabilities.

As program director Malcolm Cant explains, there is an infinite variety or combination of learning disabilities. "You can't peg them in a few easy categories," he says. "Each person is different. All you can say is that there is some breakdown in the way these individuals process and use information."

"In some instances, they can sit down and read material and then not know any of what they've read. In other cases they may know something today and forget it all tomorrow. Perhaps you give them directions and then they get them all mixed up. Or they lose their place when reading or doing math."

The program was born when former counsellor Greta Nelson and former head for Training and Development Colin Casey saw too many students dropping out or failing, students who didn't seem to lack ability or motivation. That was in 1978. When funding came through from the Ministry of Education they hired Malcolm Cant to head the program.

"The way we work is, if an instructor has a student in class who can't seem to progress beyond a certain point or who takes a very long time to progress, the instructor can refer that student to the IEPA committee. It has representatives from each department. Most have been on the committee over a number of years and they have come to have a pretty good understanding of what kinds of behaviour learning disabled people exhibit. If, from the instructors description, it looks like the individual could be learning disabled, rather than, for instance, someone with psychological problems, the committee refers the student on to me."

Cant then does what he calls a complete psycho-educational evaluation. This entails a battery of tests that show how the person takes in information and uses it — through eyes, ears, and combinations of the two.

Back to Basics

"This lets us know a person's strengths and weaknesses. Once that is done we — there's another diagnostician and a volunteer as well as me — start work at the grass roots. For instance, if a person has trouble remembering what they see we'll go right back to the beginning and work with shapes. We try to teach them skills that are transferable — ones that they can turn around and use in the classroom."

Cant and his staff usually work with a student two or three times a week. "I caution people at the start," he says, "that they won't see any real progress in the classroom for about three months. It is wonderful when we see them come in and say, 'The instructor read a story and I remembered it all.'"

"We had one fellow from BTSD who was convinced he couldn't spell. He came in every day, rather than the usual couple of times a week. He went on to graduate from grade 12."

Cant notes that there are some people so severely learning disabled that they need ongoing help. "But those with mild and moderate disabilities can go on. We've had people go to the programs at Langara and on to SFU and UBC. I think there are a number of people we have literally taken off the welfare rolls. We've given them a chance at a productive life."

IEPA works with about 40 students and there are another seven or eight on the waiting list. Cant acknowledges that the burden is particularly heavy at this time. "In a bad economy these people are, for obvious reasons, among the first to be laid off."

CE Pioneers Programs for Mentally Handicapped

Continuing Education was approached by the Vancouver-Richmond Association for the Mentally Handicapped in 1978 to provide lifeskills programs. "We've been working with adults who have mental handicaps ever since," explains CE programmer Don Oakes. Adding, "I don't like to call them mentally handicapped students. I think we have a tendency when dealing with the disabled to focus on the disability rather than the individual. I see them as students first. Then as disabled."

From this beginning, CE has gone on to develop 118 courses in the Alternative Route curriculum. There are eight areas that these courses fall into: communications, personal management, personal health care, interpersonal skills, home management, leisure, consumer awareness and career awareness. All courses are aimed at giving the adult with a mental handicap confidence to participate more fully in the life of the community.

"Our courses are used not only throughout B.C., but right across Canada and, in some cases, in other countries," Oakes says.

Typical of the courses offered are "Who's to Blame" or "Shopping in a Department Store." The former, aimed at students who want to live more independently in day-to-day life, explores personal responsibility in daily events. Through role play and discussion students learn when to assume responsibility and when not to. In the latter case, students look at the various items found in department stores, store layouts and the process of purchasing.

"Before we started doing this," Oakes says, "there was very little by way of comprehensive help available to adults with mental handicaps. It depended on what they had had at school, or in a sheltered workshop or at home. It was rather hit and miss."

"We don't have much hard data, but it is obvious more doors to employment in the community have opened to these people and it is certainly the view of most professionals in the field that people who've had these courses are happier and more confident going out into the community."

Community Integration

The Career Awareness program, part of Alternative Route, operates from classrooms and offices at VVI. Co-ordinator John Chinack says the initiative came in 1982 from a number of community groups, along with the provincial government's Vocational Rehabilitation Service.

"It was part of a larger move to get people with mental handicaps out of sheltered workshops and make them part of the community," he explains.

Under the program, students get two or three weeks in the classroom, brushing up on lifeskills. This could mean some remedial reading and writing, tips on handling money, managing interviews, grooming, and assertiveness. This is really our assessment phase," Chinack says. "In the classroom we can evaluate whether an individual is likely to cope in the larger community or not. If we think, on the basis of the classroom experience, the person could manage a job then we place that individual for a two or three week period."

One of the greatest challenges staff have faced, Chinack says, is overcoming some of the common myths about the mentally handicapped. "Initially some people were hesitant about providing work experience to these people," he explains. "But we provide a good deal of support for the individual and if there are problems we have no hesitation in removing a person from the work place. Actually, after the first experience, most employers are very supportive. Our students have done a variety of entry level jobs in food service, restaurants, on the housekeeping staff at hotels, in gardening centres, stores and in government offices and agencies."

Counselling staff on all three campuses are prepared to give the special needs student as much or as little assistance as that individual wants.

Look at Individual not Handicaps

"I think it is important that we see special needs students as individuals," notes VVI counsellor Laurel Armstrong. "We're here to provide them with a pool of resources and services, which they

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CEO LOOKS BACK cont. from front page

widely. It's been a total effort on the part of many people.

The International Education activities are still in their early stages, but they have a lot of potential.

Fund raising too, has a good deal of potential. I think the foundation is greatly valuable. Not just in terms of raising funds — which is certainly useful enough — but in terms of building bridges to the community.

INTERCOM: In British Columbia education has been going through some tough times. VCC certainly hasn't been isolated from this. What do you see in the future for the college?

MANERA: All the indications are that we're going to turn the corner, so to speak, in '86, that '85 will be the worst year. Then the situation will start to improve. This parallels the experience in some American colleges, where reductions hit very hard. But after two or three years governments saw that they had to reverse some of those reductions.

INTERCOM: What marks have these years of restraint left on the college?

MANERA: Any experience like this forces you to rethink your mission and how you go about fulfilling that mission. While it is a very painful process, it provides opportunities that can make you more effective.

Now, there are clearly areas where the cuts have been too deep and have hurt. But there are other areas that, perhaps, can still accept some reductions. This major review we are undertaking for '85-'86 will help us identify both.

INTERCOM: You've talked about the direction the college as a whole has moved over the last seven years. What accomplishments are you, personally, most proud of?

MANERA: No individual can really claim credit for any specific accomplishment. It is always a team effort. Really the role of the CEO is to ensure the climate exists to allow people to do creative things and to give some general direction in terms of broad goals.

I would say the program evaluation system is certainly something that I've taken a great deal of interest in. But clearly the work has been done by others. I encouraged it and assigned some priority to it. I think it's really a good system.

The building program is a source of some satisfaction. At one point, particularly for KEC, it looked pretty hopeless. But there again, all the work required to develop justification was done by many people, under the leadership of Harry Pankratz. Once that work was done, the challenge was to use that background to convince the government building a new campus was worthwhile.

I feel good about that. I think it has, in fact, symbolic value. There was some question as to whether these programs for adults really belonged in a college. I think the point we made was that adults were better taught in a college environment. The construction of the campus was evidence that the government had accepted that point of view.

INTERCOM: Given that the day will come when we have funding to grow, what directions do you see VCC moving?

MANERA: I think it is not so much a matter of moving into new areas, but of adapting the programs we've got two new developments. I see a great proliferation of computer technology. But as far as the objectives of the programs, preparing students for a career or further education, I see that remaining valid.

Another area I have a strong interest in, and where we've made some progress, is co-operative education. In the face of difficult economic circumstances, we have none-the-less,

through a variety of government grants and the efforts of those in the data processing program at Langara, been able to maintain the co-operative feature of this program. I would like to see the college get much more heavily into co-op programs. I think it is a superior form of education and one that has a lot of promise for the student.

Another area I wish I'd been able to make more progress in, but funding has been a limiting factor, is general education for vocational students. We've done a little there by introducing elements of communications skills and job-search skills. But I think it is important to go much further. I think there's been a philosophy that vocational students only need the skills of their particular trades. While that might have been true in the past, clearly the demands of the market place are now such that students need a broader kind of background.

INTERCOM: Can you tell us a bit about your new position and how you have come to leave the field of education?

MANERA: Well I will be responsible for the corporate human resources function at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This includes overseeing the entire organizational development, manpower planning, collective bargaining, benefits, administration, hiring, firing — everything that comes under the general heading of human resources.

The challenge is of interest first of all, because there is a national scope to it. It is a different type of industry than education. I've felt for some time that having spent 20 years in education, 13 of those as president of two different colleges, that I would enjoy the opportunity to move into a somewhat different field. But there had to be some continuity. And there is because the communications industry and education are not completely without common ground.

The specific challenge facing the CBC is one of making adjustments, so it can live with a substantially reduced budget — much more serious, in terms of percentage impact, than we have faced here. That will require a fairly major review of the organization and how it operates. I expect to have a role to play in that exercise. Though I certainly won't be the only player.

INTERCOM: Is there anything in particular you'd like to say about your experience at VCC?

MANERA: I feel very good about my experience at the college. There have certainly been some disappointments and frustrations, but when everything is added I find it has been personally very rewarding, largely because of the tremendous people we have at the college. The board has certainly been very supportive. I feel, too, the faculty and administration have a strong commitment to the college, as do the other employees. This is a real plus. And it is not something I can take credit for. The faculty are really dedicated to maintaining the quality of education. That has helped in keeping a positive relationship, in a climate where we've had to cope with some difficulties. I think that's something other colleges envy. Not too many enjoy the positive relations we have here. I certainly hope they will be maintained.

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