

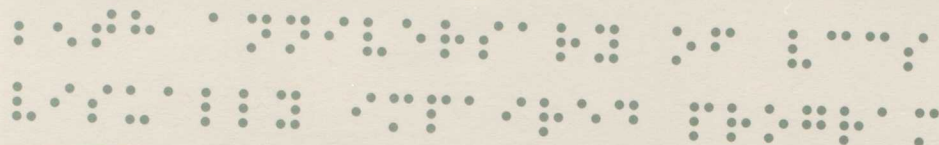
Connections

Vancouver Community College's Employee Newsletter - November 2006

Vancouver
Community
College



www.vcc.ca



Top of the class – distinguished VCC alumnae awarded

As the youngest of five children, Nancy Argenta's mother always said she had to develop her vocal capacity from an early age to be heard above the din. And develop it she did. Argenta, who changed her name from Herbison at the beginning of her vocal career, was recently awarded a 2006 distinguished alumni award from VCC for outstanding achievement.



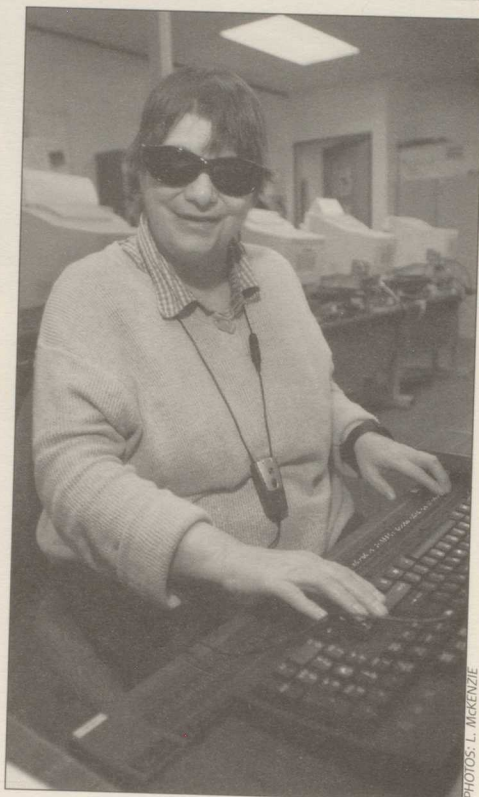
Nancy Argenta - Photo courtesy of scena.org

Argenta, a soprano, trained at VCC between 1973-1975 and went on to continue her education in England, Germany and France. She has performed in concert halls around the world and is an international authority on singing Baroque music. Her recordings have won international acclaim and are broadcast in virtually every country.

SEE ALUMNI AWARD ON PAGE 2



Above left: Betty Nobel (centre) poses at the Visually Impaired program reception with Vince Tomassetti and Amber Inglis of Assistive Technology - B.C. Right: student Angie Swain tests out some of the technology.



PHOTOS: L. MCKENZIE

25th anniversary of VCC's Visually Impaired program

Living, learning and working is easier for the blind and visually impaired thanks to VCC's special program that celebrated its 25th anniversary recently.

Students, staff, friends and family attended an open house and technology showcase in October to celebrate the milestone. Instructors and students demonstrated the traditional and high-tech equipment used in their classes.

"It was a great opportunity to see how advanced technology and quality education work together – giving graduates virtually the same work, education and life opportunities as sighted people," says department head Betty Noble, who is blind.

Over the years more than 750 graduates have come through the program, which these days supplements braille writers and talking calculators – around for about the last 10 years – with the latest high-tech gear.

Among some of today's tools are scanning systems that convert printed materials to speech, specialized screen magnification software and JAWS for Windows, a text-to-speech computer program that opens up the world of the Internet and electronic communications.

Recent graduate Laila Cappellini, 40, plans to further her education in computer studies and hopes to find work in government.

SEE 25 YEARS ON PAGE 2

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News Briefs

Appointments

Kate Gates has been appointed as the assistant department head of counselling. Her six years of counselling experience and extensive knowledge of the college will be of great benefit in her new role. Her primary location will be at the downtown campus.

Steve Horn has been appointment building services manager for the downtown campus. He is filling in for Angelo Iapalucci during his absence. His responsibilities include managing cleaning, building maintenance, movers, room set-ups and supervising receiving. He is located in room 101A and can be reached at local 8457 or shorn@vcc.ca.

The School of Arts and Sciences announced the appointment of **Jim Peacock** as coordinator of access programs for the college and career access department. Peacock is embarking on his second term as coordinator and his primary location is 440 Cambie Street.

Martha Burnett is the new coordinator, access programs, self-paced for the college and career access department. Her primary location is at the Broadway campus. Burnett writes for the Vancouver Sun's literary section and is currently self-publishing a children's novel online.

Kathy O'Donnell has been appointed to the position of acting department head for community and career education. She will be standing in for Lorna Downie until Feb. 23. O'Donnell's primary location is at the downtown campus.

Andi Martin has been appointed to the position of associate registrar at the Broadway campus. She will be primarily responsible for the operations of the Registrar's Office (admissions, registrations, student records) and will work closely with the Registrar's Office, at the downtown campus and various departments at VCC. Martin will also be a key player in the continuing implementation of our scheduling/timetabling software, Infosilem's TPHi.

ALUMNI AWARD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"I think my biggest inspiration came from what was happening at home," says Argenta, whose mother taught piano during her childhood years in Argenta, a small town just north of Nelson, B.C. "I remember hearing a recording from Joan Sutherland – who is a great Australian soprano – when I was about seven, and that's when I got hooked. I knew I wanted to sing like her."

In a house full of music – her sister, Wendy Herbison, 12 years her senior, plays violin professionally, and her brother sang in choirs – Argenta says music inspired all of them.

"There was always a record on," says Herbison. "By the time Nancy was born, we had quite a large collection, so we almost absorbed music by osmosis."

Argenta took her stage name from her hometown and today lives in Nelson, B.C.

Outstanding young alumni

Laura Sharpe's hands are always moving, and she says it runs in the family. "Whenever my hands come together, the thumbs start moving – just like my grandmother," she laughs. Sharpe, who just finished her final year as an apprentice, has been around VCC a lot lately. As the recipient of VCC's outstanding young alumni award, Sharpe has come a long way very quickly.

Winner of Canada's Next Great Chef and the Skills B.C. champion, Sharpe picked up a taste for competition early in her life and challenges herself at every opportunity. Just 23 years old, Sharpe has been scooped up as the head chef at Dublin Crossing Irish Pub, just gearing up for its grand opening in Surrey.

Visually Impaired program celebrates silver anniversary

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"When I could see better, I worked at a day care," says Cappellini, whose vision gradually deteriorated owing to an eye condition. "By the time most of my vision was gone, I realized that I would need to learn new skills and gain the confidence to live with vision loss. Now that I've completed the program, I know I'll be able to find a new and satisfying career."

Grandparents and parents have played an important part in honing Sharpe's interest in great food. She has worked with some of the city's finest chefs and is looking forward to beginning her career managing staff and overseeing a fine menu.



Above: Laura Sharpe displays dessert from Diva at the Met.

"It was time to move," says Sharpe, of her decision to take on a position as head chef. "I was a bit nervous about being able to handle the management side of things, but I'm working with a great team and they're eager to help me learn. My plan is to keep it fun – it's going to be a learning experience for everyone."

Sharpe has hired one sous chef and may hire another. She says she wants to hire 12 great people to help her in the kitchen.

"My biggest challenge is getting good people and keeping them, but I'm going to rely on my connections – many of which started right here at the college. So.... if you know anyone....," she jokes.

"We're very proud of the accomplishments of both of this year's winners," says Lornell Ridley, associate director of alumni relations. "Each of them has demonstrated excellence, passion, dedication and achievement and has gone on to accomplish wonderful things." ■

VCC's specialized program offers English, math and braille, along with a host of computer courses to prepare graduates for advanced education and employment. Generous support comes from B.C. Hydro community service group HYDRECS and QLT Inc., a Vancouver-based biotech company that specializes in eye disease treatments. ■

News Briefs

Rosko, CDAA president

Michele Rosko was recently named 62nd President of the Canadian Dental Assistants Association in Calgary.

"It is an honour for me to serve dental assistants across the country," says Rosko, coordinator of VCC's distance delivery dental assisting program. The association serves its 23,000 members by advocating for formal education, labour mobility between provinces, universal name recognition and self-regulation.

Support the United Way

This year's United Way campaign runs until Nov. 22. The campaign theme, unchanged from last year, is "VCC Cares," a theme that is fitting given the work that VCC employees do for the college, the students and the community. VCC has always been dedicated to supporting people in need through the United Way – the goal this year is to continue this important tradition.

Pledge packages will be distributed to all employees and also made available in the mailroom at each campus.

Distributed Learning update

A vision document, 'Distributed Learning at VCC Towards a Vision for 2010,' has been developed and formally adopted by the college as a reasonable basis for planning Distributed Learning (DL) initiatives for the next few years. DL is any learning that is being done online or electronically.

The Distributed Learning committee is asking that all DL activities that are now occurring at VCC are to be recorded on an online survey. This inventory is important in planning for the future, as well as for setting a baseline to determine progress towards DL goals.

Please complete the online inventory form, by Nov. 30. It is important that everyone with a DL course complete the brief questionnaire in order to help the committee to plan effectively.

Vision Document at:
\\COMMON\ Distributed Learning Committee\ Towards a Vision for 2010.pdf
Survey at:
<https://data.grapevinesurveys.com/survey.asp?sid=200610113653643>

Fashion grads launched hot new designs at FIAT MODE XIX



Above: the three-quarter length mocha asymmetrical raw silk jacket worn with raw silk hipster chocolate trousers. Designer Pascale Rootham.

tion of themes in an incredible array of colour and fabrics for men and women.

Cabiri Callisto, winner of Apparel B.C.'s student illustration competition, presented her 11-piece collection, inspired by Brazil's Carnival. Bold colour and sequins set the mood for this lively and expressive collection, full of ruffles and revealing silhouettes.

"When I became serious about a career in the fashion industry, I looked at many different institutions," says Callisto, 23. "VCC stood out to me as a school, which, without suppressing the all-important creative aspect of design, offered a practical approach to fashion. Success in this field involves a lot more technical skill and business sense than I ever imagined."

Designs for men were featured by Ben Newcombe, 26, who took his inspiration from the sounds and shapes of a symphony orchestra and Melissa McMahon, who used dreams to pull together a refreshing combination of fall/winter garments designed with bamboo, wool and silk/hemp blends.

McMahon, 33, has recently found full-time work at Vancouver's socially conscious Lotus Wear boutique.

"VCC's Fashion Arts program is exceptionally well-organized, professional and thorough," says McMahon. "I think I've achieved good balance by warming up these 'cooler' fabrics with wool interlock, wool challis, wool boucle and cashmere coating." ■

VCC 2020 – Imagine the Future. VCC Day 2007

Imagine....what will VCC look like in 2020? As a VCC employee, everyone is contributing to that future now. That is why this VCC Day's theme – VCC 2020 – Imagine the Future is so fitting.

VCC Day, a fun professional development day for all employees, is set for Friday, April 27, 2007, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Vancouver Playhouse and VCC's downtown campus.

It's a chance to get the college community together to celebrate what's important. Speakers, workshops, food, entertainment and prizes are now being organized.

Volunteers are needed. All those interested in volunteering time, energy and enthusiasm for this informative

and fun event, please contact one of the following team leaders:

Program (workshops) – Pat Bawtinheimer, Gyda Chud, and Lisa Middleton

Food/Donations – Sandra MacSorley

Logistics – Elizabeth Burnyeat and Roseanne Ashworth

Registration – Elizabeth Burnyeat and Lila Heilbrunn

Communications – Karen Wilson

Gifts/presenters – Roseanne Ashworth

The committee is looking for everyone's valuable input to make this day a success. Come and be part of the fun!

For more information, please call Carol Sicoli, Chair, VCC Day 2007 committee at local 7011 or e-mail csicoli@vcc.ca. ■

OASYS: A dream for job applicants

VCC's human resources department is gearing up to launch OASYS, VCC's new automated job recruitment application system, on Dec. 1. The on-line application system, coined OASYS by the department, makes it easier and more accessible for prospective job applicants to apply to VCC.

For candidates, it will be a dream to be able to access job information, submit job applications and resumés online, and receive updates regarding the status of their applications both online and via e-mail eliminating paper after this date.

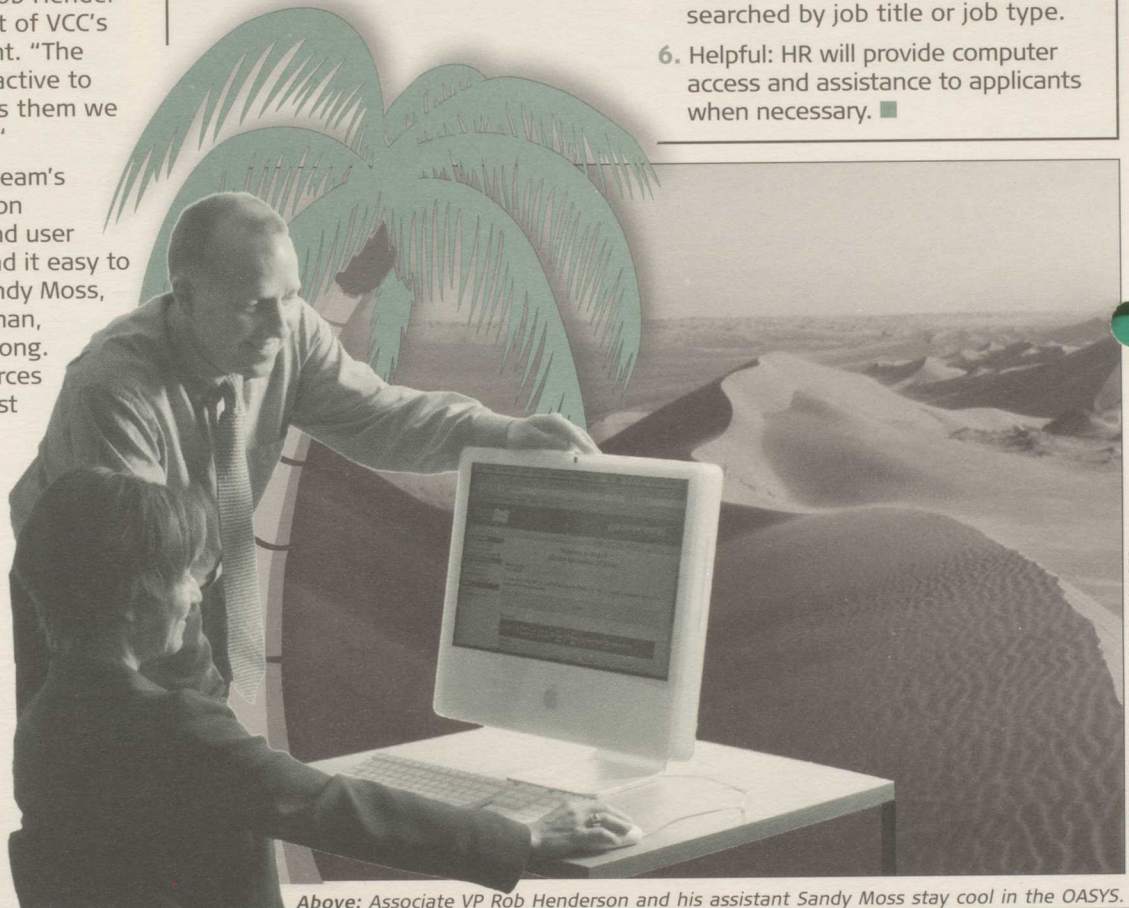
"Both job applicants and VCC staff on hiring committees are really going to benefit from OASYS", says Rob Henderson, associate vice president of VCC's human resources department. "The new system makes VCC attractive to future employees and shows them we are an innovative employer."

The OASYS implementation team's goal was to find an application process that was intuitive and user friendly, so applicants will find it easy to apply. The team includes Sandy Moss, Carol Galloway, Theresa Lannan, Lawrence Ng and Eugenie Wong. The team says human resources staff will be available to assist employees through the application process as needed and will be providing "Show & Tell" information sessions to enable employees to get acquainted with the new system.

The sessions are scheduled for Tues. Nov. 21 at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. in room 112 at the downtown campus and Wed. Nov. 22 at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. in room 5025 at the Broadway campus.

BENEFITS for Job Applicants

1. **Paperless:** after Dec. 1, all job applications must be submitted through OASYS.
2. **Streamlined process:** hiring committees can review job applications and shortlist candidates online.
3. **One stop shop:** creation and housing of all of the college job descriptions.
4. **Time saving:** no more printing of numerous copies of resumés for hiring committees.
1. **Time saving:** applicants create a profile once and can then re-use it to apply for other positions; can go in and edit/update as necessary.
2. **Flexibility:** applicants can attach customized resumés and cover letters and/or fill out online forms.
3. **Enhanced customer service:** applicants can check the status of the job for which they have applied.
4. **Adaptable:** applicants can add additional documents or withdraw their resumés as necessary.
5. **Convenient:** job postings can be searched by job title or job type.
6. **Helpful:** HR will provide computer access and assistance to applicants when necessary. ■



Above: Associate VP Rob Henderson and his assistant Sandy Moss stay cool in the OASYS.

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Vancouver Community College's
Employee Newsletter
November 2006, Volume 12, Number 5

Publisher: Stephen Barrington

Copy Editor: Karen Wilson

**Contributing Editor:
Bev Pausche**

**Design & Layout:
Daniel Rohloff**

**Photographers: Paul Joseph
& Lauch McKenzie**

Submissions for Connections:

Send details of your upcoming events, department news and achievements to Connections. Due to time constraints, we can only accept electronic submissions. We do, however, accept photos.

Submit your pieces via e-mail to:
Karen Wilson, kwilson@vcc.ca.

**Deadline for submission for next issue:
December 18, 2006.**

Please note: Material may be edited for clarity and length.

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NEENAH ENVIRONMENT® Papers Environmental Savings Calculation

This newsletter is printed on Neenah ENVIRONMENT PC100 paper, made with 100% post-consumer waste, processed chlorine free. By using this environmentally friendly paper for production of Connections over one fiscal year, VCC saved the following resources:

trees	water	energy	solid waste	water borne waste	atmospheric emissions
14 fully grown	2,447 gallons	3,316 million BTUs	260 pounds	17 pounds	503 pounds

Calculations based on research by Environmental Defense and the Paper Task Force. Source www.neenahpaper.com

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