

**Virtual Learning Lodge Project
Final Report**

**A collaborative project between
University of Victoria
and**

North Island Indigenous Community Partners

(Kwakiutl, Namgis, Gwa'sala-Nakawaxda'xw, Quatsino, Klemtu/Kitasoo Bands)

June 30, 2010

Written by Christine Shelton

With the support of the Virtual Learning Lodge Advisory Committee:

Marion Hunt
Heather Kirkham
Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi
Yvonne Coady
Celina Gibbs
Roger John
Russ Baker
Keith Webster
Patricia Eckland
Christine Shelton
(Shanne McCaffrey)

North Island Partner Virtual Learning Lodge Advisory Committee:

Marion Hunt
Rachel Hunt
Sarah Child
Alana Jacobson
Jan Armbrust

Special thanks to the student team who completed a usability analysis on the UVic
Virtual Learning Lodge: Meg Bishop, Matt Carlson, Baron Lam,
and Amy-Marie Miller (See Appendix J)

2010 Virtual Learning Lodge - Final Report.....	4
Preface.....	4
Acknowledgements.....	5
Phase One: Design/Construction Consultations.....	6
From One Lodge to a Village of Lodges	6
Consultations with UVic and Surrounding Communities.....	7
Key Implications of all Consultations on Design of the Lodge.....	8
Phase Two: The Virtual Learning Lodge Under the Stars: Exploration and Demonstrations of the Interactive Potential of the Lodge.....	9
Demonstrations and Connections	9
Considering the Events.....	10
Exploring Communications Technology for Interactive Events	14
Building the Prototype Sites.....	14
Components of the UVic Hub Site.....	16
Prototype Community Site	18
Types of Communication Within a Site and Between Communities.....	18
Social Networking Aspect of the Lodge	19
Developing Two Model Sites: The UVic Hub and a Model Community Site.....	20
Raising Awareness, Sharing Understanding and Soliciting Additional Input.....	21
Phase Three: Constructing the Lodge from Prototype to Multi-dimensional Site	23
Creating the VLL “Hub”	23
Software Selection	23
The UVic VLL Design.....	24
A Model for Intersecting Community Sites: North Island VLL	25
Making It Work	27
Phase Four: Strategic Planning.....	29
Budget April 2009	31
Appendix A: Virtual Learning Lodge, North Island Component, Report as of May 2009	32
Development of the Model	32
Step One	32
Step Two	33
Step Three.....	34
General Observations.....	34
Appendix B: Survey/Check List for Consultations	35
Appendix C: Consultations with UVic Elders Circle - April 21, 2009	38
Appendix E: Métis Nation of Greater Victoria (MNGV) Board Meeting - April 6, 2009.....	41
Appendix F: Consultation - Virtual Learning Lodge Networking Session - April 3, 2009	42
Appendix G: Event Streaming Report (Celina Gibbs).....	44
Diversity Research Forum.....	44

Technology.....	44
Challenges	44
Follow Up.....	45
HSD Research Conversations	45
Technology.....	45
Challenges	46
Follow Up.....	46
South Island Dispute Resolution Centre.....	46
Technology.....	47
Challenges	47
Follow Up.....	48
Celebrating Graduate Scholarship.....	48
Technology.....	48
Challenges	49
Follow Up.....	49
Appendix H.....	51
Appendix I: Virtual Learning Lodge Summary of Focus Group Presentation at Launch	52
Appendix J - Analyzing Usability (Bishop, Carlson, Lam, Miller - December 2009).....	56
Appendix K - Terms of Use.....	57
Appendix: Overview of plan for MITACS Accelerate program combined with Industry Support.....	60
Appendix- The Virtual Learning Lodge: A Framework Under Construction - 2009 Canadian E-Learning Conference Program	61

2010 Virtual Learning Lodge - Final Report

Preface

The Virtual Learning Lodge (VLL) is an evolving Web space linking the University of Victoria with Indigenous communities. The VLL emerged from a relationship between North Island Partner communities (Kwakiutl, Namgis, Gwa'sala-Nakawaxda'xw, Quatsino, Klemtu/Kitasoo), the UVic Office of Indigenous Affairs, and the School of Child and Youth Care. In 2007, the school began collaborating with these communities on the development of curriculum and planning for distance delivery of the Diploma in Child and Youth Care, Indigenous Communities. Through this consultative process, the community identified the need to support distance learners beyond the individual courses. The concept of the Virtual Learning Lodge began to emerge.

What is the Virtual Learning Lodge? The VLL is a vehicle that is evolving to facilitate connections between communities with the ultimate goal of supporting the success of both distance and on-campus learners while simultaneously building reciprocal relationships between UVic and Indigenous communities. It extends the university to the community and brings the community to the university. It reaches beyond the idea of a static Website. Interaction and the building of relationships are at the centre of the lodge with the guiding purpose of facilitating and supporting the success of Indigenous learners.

This project is framed, in part, by the 2007 *Elaborating the Virtual Learning Lodge* document, which is available upon request. The overarching goal of this project is to build and to populate the lodge:

- **Virtual Learning Lodge:** Create an environment that will support the success of all Indigenous learners at the University of Victoria including but not limited to SCYC Distance Indigenous Diploma learners, distance and on-campus learners across all participating UVic distance programs through:
 - Building student-to-student relationships beyond the classroom
 - Integrating connections to home communities
 - Connecting with community Elders
 - Developing and/or identifying and providing access to support resources
 - Engaging learners, departments, schools and communities in the development process

*Excerpt from the 2007 Elaborating the VLL
unpublished ASPF report*

An advisory committee with representation from key areas at UVic and from the North Island Partners, guided the project (See cover page).

Acknowledgements

This multi-dimensional project could not have been successful without the hard work, creativity, and collaboration of many people. In particular, the following people should be acknowledged for their many contributions, some of which are identified below:

- **Fran Hunt-Junnouchi** provided leadership and expertise regarding the UVic context and interrelated projects while also promoting the concept in her role as the Director of the Office of Indigenous Affairs (INAF).
- **Celina Gibbs** and **Yvonne Coady** provided leadership in the promotion of the VLL and in the exploration of the technical possibilities.
- **Celina Gibbs** coordinated all events and acted as the conduit for live interaction.
- **Keith Webster** provided insight into the potential of Web 2.0 and created the prototype site.
- **Caroline Green** provided invaluable office assistance throughout the project.
- **Alana Jacobson** and **Rachel Hunt** provided technical expertise to various events and created the prototype site in the North Island.
- **Celina Gibbs, Patricia Eckland,** and **Sara Child** led the various consultations in Victoria and the North Island.
- **Jan Armbrust** led consultations with the CYC students and facilitated the North Island event, “Co-constructing the VLL”, as well as providing research, writing, and imaginative support to the North Island VLL.
- **Marion Hunt** provided leadership to the North Island partner site and helped identify the events and resources useful in the UVic hub site.
- **Roger John** acted as the Master of Ceremonies on the UVic site for the “Exploring and Building the Virtual Learning Lodge: An Event Hosted by the North Island Community Partners”.
- **Greg Sebastian** provided technical assistance to a number of events.
- **Heather Kirkam** was invaluable to the advisory group in the area of program development.
- **Russ Baker’s** experience in project management, in particular the Water project, provided insightful advice.
- The following all agreed to streaming, recording, and promotion of the VLL: **Grace Wong Sneddon** and the 2009 Diversity Conference committee, **Jeremy Berland**, the South Island Dispute Resolution Centre, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, participants of the Celebrating Graduate Scholarship Forum, and **Elizabeth Banister**.
- **Manjeet Birk and Multi-racial and Indigenous Girls and Women’s Network (ANTIDOTE)** coordinated the Unlabelled Fashion Event and the subsequent CYC practicum project via the VLL.
- Students and instructors of the CYC Indigenous Community Diploma Program.

Finally, we would like to particularly thank **Shanne McCaffrey**, a Senior Instructor with the School of Child in Youth Care, who provided vital leadership in the initial stages of this project and whose input was sorely missed in subsequent stages of this ongoing process.

Phase One: Design/Construction Consultations

The Elaborating the VLL document (EVLL) outlined possible community membership, recommended components of the lodge (e.g., buy-and-sell, ride-share, community connections) and suggested an “inclusive development process that engages learners, departments, schools, and communities” with the intention of ultimately attracting membership from a broad community:

- Current Aboriginal students, particularly students taking an Aboriginal course sequence;
- Past Aboriginal students;
- Aboriginal students who may not be current students but have not yet completed their chosen program;
- Guest experts to facilitate specific discussions;
- Instructors within Aboriginal programs and Aboriginal instructors;
- Supportive Indigenous community leaders, Elders and educators from home communities;
- UVic Elders voices;
- Indigenous student advisors, counsellors, and other experts to support writing and study skills.

(Adapted and updated from the EVLL.)

Phase One of this project was, therefore, focused upon consultation with various communities and potential VLL members and member communities. Through these consultations participants were invited to imagine their place in the VLL, identifying elements of success and ways to facilitate connections or membership.

From One Lodge to a Village of Lodges

The North Island community consultations were launched in the fall of 2008 (Appendix A). These consultations provided extensive background that informed the site and project design and planning. Consultations were carried out with:

- Community Elders
- CYC Indigenous diploma students (via distance)
- Education coordinators (North Island)

The input of the students and North Island Elders was particularly useful in reframing our initial understanding of the VLL. The original project proposal had anticipated the development of a single virtual space using a defined social networking platform (e.g., Moodle) that pulled members together in a single community. It envisioned connections to other social networking sites as a vehicle

to “push” other communities to the VLL for membership and activities. These connections were conceptualized as one-way information broadcasts with a link for lodge registration.

When consultations began, the CYC Indigenous diploma (IDCYC) students had already created their own virtual community space within Facebook. While membership was optional and not all students chose to join, we began to wonder whether we should meet the students on their chosen platform. We further wondered if we should create a separate space within Facebook that students could also connect to using their existing Facebook profile.

The technical advisory subgroup (Yvonne Coady, Christine Shelton, Celina Gibbs, and Keith Webster) discussed the implications and the possibilities. The reputation of Facebook for explicit, informal, and at times professionally inappropriate profiles was considered. The group concluded that creating the VLL in Facebook might result in an unintentional violation of privacy and could compromise professional identity for some students. Facebook was, therefore, eliminated as an option for the VLL social networking tool.

The students’ choice to construct their own community, however, could not be overlooked or undervalued. If students chose to build relationships and connections between themselves that might support their learning on this platform, then there was value in supporting their choice. We needed to explore the possibility of connecting without violating their privacy. Offering an RSS (really simple syndication) news feed from the main site, it was thought, might serve to create links and keep students informed without threatening privacy, while also encouraging the independent, fledgling community.

Privacy was also a concern that emerged in the consultations with the North Island Partner Elders. The Elders pointed out that their community would have unique teachings, forms of student support, and protocols. Some communications, they pointed out, should be kept within their community. It was also noted that communication and education needed to be reciprocal. While there were varying levels of interest in the idea of a virtual space, some Elders indicated a willingness to participate under the right conditions.

Following the North Island consultations, it was determined that a separate North Island Partners’ community site should be developed that would link to the UVic VLL and would or could originate some events. The site structure and related protocols could then become a model for future community partners.

Consultations with UVic and Surrounding Communities

Consultations with UVic and surrounding communities included:

- Human and Social Development Distributed Learning Directors
- Child Welfare Research Network
- UVic Elders' Voices
- Indigenous Faculty Caucus (provided verbal support through the chair, Taiki Alfred, noting that Shanne McCaffrey had provided an overview in the previous year and that they supported the concept...and now want to understand processes)
- Indigenous Students Union (attempts to connect unsuccessful to this point)
- Math and Computer Sciences through Yvonne Coady and Celina Gibbs
- Metis

The need for privacy within unique and contained communities that intersected with the VLL again surfaced as an important concern. The VLL was redefined as a series of intersecting communities with a central hub at UVic rather than a single community that included membership from multiple communities. The VLL was beginning to emerge as a village of lodges. (See context of technological change.)

A checklist/survey (Appendix "B") was designed to solicit feedback and to encourage contributions from the various groups. The checklist/survey adapted and extended suggestions on the components of a lodge and invited additional suggestions and feedback. It helped to inform and explain the lodge to the reference groups while also opening a dialogue. The checklist focused on the central lodge concept, namely building relationships and connections to support learners.

Key Implications of all Consultations on Design of the Lodge

1. Village of intersecting communities and lodges:
 - a. Connect to emergent and naturally occurring student communities.
 - b. Create a model for Indigenous community lodges.
2. The need to remain flexible and responsive meant the addition of a **design/planning blog or forum** to run within the site.
3. Create the structure to facilitate reciprocal communications and education between participating communities (e.g., both sending **and** receiving RSS feeds).
4. The need to provide resources that explain and support lodge participation:
 - a. Continue to define, explore, and communicate the value of the lodge.
 - b. Clear, simple instructions on how to participate, initiate, and plan for VLL.
 - c. Consider providing training for affiliated groups.
 - d. Develop guiding respectful protocols.
 - e. Define and describe affiliated membership and related sign-up system.

Phase Two: The Virtual Learning Lodge Under the Stars: Exploration and Demonstrations of the Interactive Potential of the Lodge

Engaging in the consultations described in Phase One during and after some of our exploratory events helped to define and confirm the potential of the lodge. In order to work within the approximate time frame of the project, it was necessary to undertake the following multiple tasks concurrently:

1. Sponsoring and facilitating events to promote and demonstrate lodge potential while building relationships and understanding:
 - a. Communicating UVic's commitment to exploring issues relevant to Indigenous learners and communities while enhancing connections.
 - b. Demonstrating an understanding that UVic is sensitive to context by facilitating and connecting to events that are not central to UVic (i.e., events that originate elsewhere while also being relevant to and connected to UVic through communities of interest).
 - c. Providing opportunities to facilitate reciprocal and respectful knowledge exchanges.
2. Identifying and exploring the appropriate tools and building prototype sites for the North Island Partners VLL and for the UVic hub site.
3. Raising awareness activities beyond the demonstrations and live events.
4. Membership building (see Phase Four).

As a result of the short time frame and multi-tasking, elements of the Virtual Learning Lodge were demonstrated outside the virtual walls of the lodge as the permanent location/site had not been built. The initial events and demonstrations were, in effect, "under the stars". This was both the strength of the project and a limitation.

There was little time for planning and integration with the individual organizing teams for a given event. While the events were selected according to the criteria identified, they were also identified with respect to the available opportunities. We did not have extensive planning time or time to develop protocols to mediate all the technical challenges associated with the events. The project development was organic and responsive. Rather than following a standard project management model, it was a process of discovery and co-construction between the VLL project team and the collaborating communities.

Demonstrations and Connections

The VLL advisory committee believed it would be beneficial to illustrate and explore the lodge's potential by extending to the community, through incorporation into the lodge, a selection of already planned Aboriginal initiatives, relevant events, and activities taking place either at UVic or within Indigenous communities. As a consequence of this experimentation with the interactive delivery of a variety of events, we were better able to understand and demonstrate the potential of the lodge while also evaluating various technologies and approaches to delivery. The emergent process helped to clarify guidelines and the future training/orientation required to facilitate a self-sustaining, fiscally prudent, but vibrant VLL.

Events were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- The potential to facilitate meaningful connections, relationships, and student support:
 - Relevance to CYC students
 - Relevance for North Island Partner communities and their on-campus or distance students
- Engaging constituents from a broad potential membership
- Opportunities to host events from communities outside UVic

Considering the Events

The UVic VLL represents the enriched space between classes where ideas are exchanged, relationships are fostered, and understanding is expanded. Beginning in January 2009, nine unique events that occupy this "space" were made available under the sponsorship of the VLL. The events were intended to demonstrate the rich variety of opportunities available to facilitate multiple connections that could support the success of Indigenous learners while also promoting the VLL. The selected events fell primarily into two categories: (a) enriched learning opportunities, and (b) relationship building or connecting opportunities.

The relationship building or connecting opportunities included:

- "The transition to Distance Education" (a link between the IDCYC students and the School of Child and Youth Care).
- A celebratory event **hosted by the North Island Partners** called "exploring and building the virtual learning lodge".
- An alumnae gathering with related presentations.
- Graduate student presentations.
- Graduation ceremonies (not yet complete).

Two of these events were facilitated using the Eluminate live Web-meeting technology.

The first event was put in place to assist students with the transition from a series of face-to-face intensive courses to a full distance model of three Web-based courses delivered concurrently. Students, together with their learning coach and the lead partner of the program, gathered in the North Island community medical centre or in their homes to meet their three distance instructors, the Director of the School of Child and Youth Care, their academic advisor, and the SCYC Manager/Director of Distance Learning. The purpose of this event was:

- to encourage the forging of a tighter connection between the students and the school by providing a circle of connection across the technology;
- to celebrate the shift to distance learning while assisting the students with the technical challenges associated with the shift;
- to test the technology that would be a primary conduit for their learning; and
- to introduce the instructors and provide a brief overview of the courses, while demonstrating that the instructors were taking a programmatic approach to the individual courses, for example by coordinating and collaborating to ensure that assignment deadlines would not overlap.

No formal evaluation of this individual event was completed. There was full student participation and we were able to accomplish most of the defined objectives. Feedback later suggested that a more thorough review and introduction of the Web-meeting software and detailed explanation of what is involved in distance education would have been valuable.

The second relationship-building event was hosted through the North Island Partners and the Fort Rupert Medical Centre. Using the Eluminate meeting software, combined with a telephone link, we were able to connect Fort Rupert with UVic. In addition, two of the lead consultants/advisory board members participated from Charlottesville, Virginia. This event celebrated the partnership and suggested the potential of the VLL to help forge reciprocal connections between the communities and UVic. This event provided an initial cultural exchange. Public school students performed community dances in full cultural regalia, IDCYC students were connected with fellow IDCYC students across the distance, Fort Rupert community members in Victoria connected with Fort Rupert community members in Fort Rupert, Elders from the North Island community connected with UVic Elders. The dream of the lodge was shared.

The technology was inadequate but participants could see beyond the technology to imagine the connection and the support that it could bring to learners. A subsequent survey provided useful feedback to help frame future development (Appendix B). While the original intent was to gather written responses, the researcher found that

it was more useful as a tool to frame discussion. The resulting narrative data helped to clarify that, indeed, this sort of connection does contribute to the building of relationships between UVic and the community. Feedback was very encouraging. Almost without exception, participants noted that they felt more connected to the UVic community (See Appendices C, D, E, F).

We also recorded and hosted a third event, an alumnae celebration with related presentations through the Office of Indigenous Affairs. This was event was recorded as a service to the community and to raise awareness around the Virtual Learning Lodge with no intention of creating live interaction.

As part of the “Celebrating Graduate Scholarship” conference, the Faculty of Human and Social Development, the Indigenous Faculty Caucus, and the UVic Office of Indigenous Affairs, co-sponsored the fourth event, the “Indigenous Student Research Presentations”. It was selected for its potential to facilitate the building of relationships. This event was streamed live. Each student was invited to share the link to the live stream with family and friends. More than 40 individuals connected. As presentations were given, comments and questions were shared through text-based messages associated with the stream. Some comments were shared back with the presenters who were delighted to discover that their communities were with them, albeit at a distance (see Appendix G). This fourth event was evaluated through a technical review, as well as via the informal feedback received from those in attendance. This event best demonstrated the connections and the support that the lodge is intended to facilitate:

To help you understand a little how REAL this feels for the students let me tell you about one of the presenters...

She was the first one to respond to my e-mail to agree to be recorded and streamed, so I knew she wanted to participate. Her presentation was beautiful, informative, personal, and VERY emotional. I spoke to her after the presentation as I was actually a little nervous about how she felt about giving such a vulnerable presentation and it was being streamed to strangers that she could not see. She was not at all concerned, but excited to find out how her mum in South Africa could view the recording. At that point I felt bad that maybe she had not gotten my e-mail including the stream link to send to her family. It turns out she DID get the e-mail, but she knew that even just the thought of her mum (who she misses so dearly) watching her “real time” would be too much for her to handle. She told her mum she would send her the link to the recording.

The point I am trying to make with this story is that, even though we are still far off from perfect, these students are so comfortable with this technology that you are a REAL presence; not to say that you are not with them without technology. I LOVED Jan G's – I think that's who it was, again numbers are hard to track – comment last night when I asked if they were seeing and hearing Cliff okay, “Yes, can't you see me there standing beside him?”

An excerpt from a March 16, 2009 e-mail from Celina Gibbs, VLL distance event coordinator (reproduced with permission)

Many who were present at this event echo the real connections that Celina describes. As previously mentioned, graduation ceremonies are expected to constitute the fifth event.

The remaining four events (the enriched learning opportunities) were selected for their direct links to the IDCYC students' academic themes:

1. Diversity Research Forum.
2. HSD Research Conversations - "Wonder and Danger: Knowledge Translations and Indigenous Adolescent Girls' Sexual Health Education" by Elizabeth Banister RN, PhD from the School of Nursing and Deborah Begoray, PhD from the Faculty of Education.
3. South Island Dispute Resolution Centre Society (SIDRCS), a non-profit Canadian charity. A SIDRCS presentation by Jeremy Berland was hosted at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC) on March 24, 2009.
4. Unlabelled Fashion.

While these events were potentially of interest to CYC students in general, all were potentially of interest to Indigenous students in many of the other schools located within the faculty of Human and Social Development. In a fully functioning lodge and with the appropriate communication systems to alert affiliated members to the activities, similar events could be integrated into the enriched learning experiences and community building opportunities of all schools serving Indigenous learners.

The first events were streamed live. Distance students and community members were invited to participate by sending questions and comments through Web-based text messages (i.e., Chat). The success of each event varied but we learned from all of them. (A related appendix will be included in the final report). Participation in these events was limited due to the heavy time commitments of the students who were both working and taking three distance courses (a minimum requirement for those in receipt of funding support). Above all, we came to understand the need to connect such events directly to the course work. Although these events were relevant in the larger context of Child and Youth Care work and could enrich the understanding of course themes, there were no direct links to the assignments or other course materials. Without such links and given their busy schedules, it was difficult for the students to decide whether to participate.

As the IDCYC course work proceeds, we will look for opportunities to integrate these already recorded events for the benefit of the students. One of the recorded streams from the diversity conference, for example, may be integrated into the

“diversity” module in the introductory CYC course. If we are successful with this integration, the presenter has offered to participate in an online discussion with the students, either in real time or in a non-linear fashion.

One goal of the lodge is to encourage and accept relevant connections such as streamed events from affiliated communities. The third event related to CYC content was an exploration of this potential. The speaker, Jeremy Berland, was recorded and streamed live from the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, speaking on *KIDS, CRIME AND CARE: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes*. The Native Friendship Centre community expressed considerable interest in this event.

“Unlabelled Fashion”, an event initiated by ANTIDOTE, was the final CYC-related event. It was recorded and edited and will soon be placed in the lodge as a resource. The intention was to use the recording to frame another live event to accompany one of our practicum courses. The collaborative sponsorship of this event resulted in the forging of a new connection and affiliated membership with ANTIDOTE.

Exploring Communications Technology for Interactive Events

The selection and exploration of technological options were important elements of this project. The technologies explored included:

- Eluminate-live (a Web-conferencing system affording real-time audio and video connections).
- Streaming through the services of the Martlett (real-time and recorded) accompanied by real-time chat through the NING site in the North Island.
- Streaming through audio/visual services (real-time and recorded) accompanied by real-time chat through the NING site.
- Streaming using a student assistant through Ustream accompanied by real-time chat that is associated with Ustream.
- Video recording with download/streaming following the event.

We were able to identify guidelines and training that might be needed to use each of the above options effectively, while identifying related costs for each of the available technology options. In addition, we began to explore methods of live chat connection associated with each of the streams. As the site continues to evolve, this information will help to define the core technologies and the multiple processes needed to facilitate access and use of the site.

Building the Prototype Sites

The process of building the Virtual Learning Lodge prototypes for UVic and the North Island Partners was facilitated through the creation of a Moodle site. Moodle is an open source learning management system that includes powerful social networking components. The technical team included Rachel Hunt, Alana Jacobson, Keith Webster, Celina Gibbs, Greg Sebastian, and Yvonne Coady, with occasional participation by Christine Shelton. On this site, potential tools were identified and experimented with. The prototype for the UVic site was built on Moodle by Keith Webster:

The screenshot shows the Moodle interface for the Virtual Learning Lodge. At the top, it says "Virtual Learning Lodge" and "You are logged in as Christine Shelton (Logout)". Below this, there's a navigation bar with "UVicMoodle" and "Virtual Learning Lodge". The main content area is titled "Topic outline" and contains a welcome message: "Welcome to the Virtual Learning Lodge at the University of Victoria". The message describes the VLL as an evolving web space linking UVic and Indigenous communities. To the right of the text is a large circular logo featuring a stylized face with traditional Indigenous patterns. The left sidebar has several menu items: "UVic Community" (with sub-items for Office of Indigenous Affairs and University of Victoria School of Child and Youth Care), "North Island Community", "Antidote", "Administration", and "My courses". The right sidebar includes "Latest News", "Upcoming Events", "Online Users" (showing 1 user), "People", and "Search Forums". At the bottom, there's a "Practical Help" section with links for "Buy, Sell and Trade", "Ridesharing", "Used Books", and "Accommodations".

The limitations in terms of look and feel that were apparent in Moodle were identified as concerns by the technical team. More importantly, because the prototype site required UVic Netlink ID access, it was not used to host the community events. We created two alternative locations for the streaming of live events that did not present the same limited access problems associated with the UVic-based Moodle site: a link from, first, the UVic Office of Indigenous Affairs and, second, from the North Island Partners prototype site. Using these temporary sites allowed us to promote the lodge by providing easy access to the site and the related live, moderated discussions.

www.UVic.ca/inaf/vll

Virtual Learning Lodge

The Virtual Learning Lodge (VLL) is an evolving web space linking Uvic and Indigenous communities. The VLL emerged from a relationship between North Island Partner communities (Kwakwaka'wakw, Nangis, Gwa'sala-Nakawaxda'xw, Quatsino, Kwantlen/Kitsoo), the Uvic Office of Indigenous Affairs and the School of Child and Youth Care. The school began collaborating on the development of curriculum and planning for distance delivery of the Diploma in Child and Youth Care Indigenous Communities in 2007. Through the related consultations, the community identified the need to support distance learners beyond the individual courses. The concept for the Virtual Learning Lodge began to emerge.

What is the Virtual Learning Lodge? The VLL is a vehicle designed to facilitate connections between communities with the ultimate goal of supporting the success of distance and on-campus learners while building reciprocal relationships between Uvic and Indigenous communities. It extends the university to the community and community to the university.

VLLDiscussions

University of Victoria

North Island Partner Site: Limited to registered participants in the site. The partners can control the membership.

Virtual Learning Lodge

Home Invite My Page Members Photos Videos **Forum** Chat/Draw Links Events

All Discussions My Discussions [+ Add a Discussion](#) **Christine Shelton**

Community-based research partnerships: views from the community

Posted by [Celina Gibbs](#) on 12 February 2009 at 11:15am

[Add as friend](#) [View Discussions](#)

This session will be streamed at 1:00-2:30pm, Feb 12th.

Please post any comments or questions you have to this forum discussion thread.

If you indicate you would like to comment or ask your question to the panel I will pass these on to the panel.

[Share](#)

Sign Out

- [Inbox](#)
- [Alerts](#)
- [Friends - Invite](#)
- [Settings](#)

Quick Add...

Ads by Google [AV](#)

[Child Counseling Center](#)
Qualified Counselors
Work With You Flexible
Timings & Low Price.
Call!
www.lerichoCounseling.com

Components of the UVic Hub Site

The creation of the prototype site helped us to better define what is needed in a fully functioning site. Five basic components will be required:

1. An inviting overarching Website linking all components of the site that communicates the interactive and dynamic nature of the site. Here it should be possible not only for communities to apply or register as affiliates but for individuals to register as well. Registered members will be able to participate in the discussions surrounding live events either in their home communities or in the UVic community.
2. A location for hosting live, interactive events that support the primary goal of the lodge (supporting the success of Indigenous students) with interaction available to members and member communities. Related instructions, policies, and guiding protocols should be developed to guide event planning and ensure that respectful practices are implemented. Considerations include:
 - i. Anonymity versus accountability for comments.
 - ii. Guidelines for a site manager, re the ability to deny access and erase a thread based on agreed procedures to handle permissions and record keeping.
 - iii. How to handle ceremonial components including opening and closing prayers.
 - iv. Recording agreements and timelines.
 - v. How to show respect for Elders' presence.
 - vi. Respecting the diversity of communities.
 - vii. Protocols for sharing interaction between the face-to-face participants and the linked participants.
3. A dynamic library of recorded events with related blogs or discussion threads available. Again, protocols need to be developed to ensure respectful practices and communications within these forums and to spread the responsibility for various discussion threads. A process for closing a thread when a moderator is no longer available should be considered.
4. Access to a social network for students, instructors, UVic advisors, Elders, and invited guests (by invitation through the site manager, perhaps)
 - a. To function across all aspects of the site.
 - b. To define functions for limited internal student and internal community access, i.e., a process needs to be established for requesting temporary UVic Netlink IDs following an agreed UVic Netlink ID process to add guests to the site. These identity management issues were determined to be too limiting and could interfere with the natural flow of the site.
5. Forums for hub community members to network and receive support:
 - a. Buy and Sell (with a link to used books from UVic, used Victoria.com, craigslist, etc.).
 - b. Birth Announcements (submitted by, name of child, girl/boy, date).
NOTE: Communities will need to determine what level of privacy they

wish to encourage. For some groups, this might be considered too much information. Alternatively, is this information that needs to be in password protected in smaller sub-communities?

- c. Memorials (submitted by, name of deceased, optional tribute, date).
- d. Potlatches and community events forum (use a submission form then for consistency: event name, description, location, date, attendance restrictions if any, REMOVE Announcement by).
- e. Honours and awards (submitted by, recipient, description, date).
- f. RSS feeds from member communities.

Prototype Community Site

As demonstrated by the North Island Partner VLL, a community site could be as simple as a place to host events made available from the UVic hub, complemented by related discussions or interaction with the main site. Some communities may choose to add more components; some may choose to make the site a link to the community's events to help keep their students in touch with their roots. Others may choose to schedule time with community Elders, to help keep students grounded in their communities while pursuing their studies. Communities will have the autonomy to create sites that meet their needs and the needs of their learners. When there is a cohort of students in a single community, the site may be used to create artifacts from their learning experiences to bolster their sense of connection. The North Island Partner site, for example, includes images from students of the IDCYC program.

Communities will need to give consideration to guidelines for their individual sites including maintenance. In the prototype site, for example, any member has the ability to add new members. Communities should define the criteria for membership and determine who can invite new members. A site overview will be constructed identifying issues and explaining the choices made in a particular community. The building of the prototype site will begin to identify such questions for consideration while decisions will need to be made in each community. It will be recommended that the individual site overviews provide this context.

Types of Communication Within a Site and Between Communities

The VLL is intended to provide relationship-building opportunities beyond the classroom to contribute to Indigenous learner success. Building relationships, meeting community members in selected social networking realms, and the related software could contribute to the creation of a vibrant community beyond the live streaming of events. Consideration was given to the identification of tools that

would facilitate the building of relationships between individuals within the site and would make possible additional functions identified in the EVLL document.

Social Networking Aspect of the Lodge

The social networking component overlaps the live event, the library component, and the general Website. The intent is to allow individuals to explore the site including the library and live events within the context of their community and/or the UVic hub. Ensuring that the components of successful social networking sites are in place, therefore, is of critical importance to the design of the site.

Presence indication is of particular importance, as it will enable participants to move into one-to-one communication. Ideally, presence will indicate the type of member who is in the site, for example, Elder (name, from what nation), student (name, from what nation), community member (name, what community), advisor (name, from what school). A user could come to the site to follow a special broadcast of potential interest to Indigenous communities or students, and could then engage in individual discussions concerning either the particular broadcast or any other topic, thus encouraging the development of both individual relationships and the growth of a larger virtual community.

For this part of the development, the advisory committee focused primarily on identifying the functionality of related software that could contribute to the creation of a vibrant community beyond the live streaming of events. Consideration was given to the identification of tools that would facilitate relationship-building between individuals within the site and would make possible additional functions identified in the EVLL document.

The team considered tools to better serve the needs of students from cultures steeped in oral or aural traditions. Particular attention, therefore, was paid to the inclusion of tools to support verbal and, where possible, visual connections. Moodle was initially selected as the primary social networking software and Web environment for hosting the VLL. The prototype site was constructed within a Moodle site hosted by UVic. This decision was, in part, informed by the following factors:

- It is open source.
- It is supported by UVic.
- It is familiar to students as many courses are now located in Moodle.
- It seemed to have the ability to facilitate participation without a UVic Netlink ID.

We discovered there were access limitations for non-UVic participants, i.e., they could see the site but could not post to it. As we move from prototype to fully functioning site, we realize that a UVic-hosted Moodle site may not meet our needs. It will be necessary to create OR find resources that explain how to access the software, what protocols might be used to guide their use and safety in use, and how to set up computers to be ready to use all the linked resources to engage in these interpersonal exchanges.

As the team began explorations around enhanced participant-to-participant communication possibilities, it was necessary to assume that some of the basic community-building software would be accessible, in particular the ability to see who is online. If participants could see who is online (and could read a short profile), they would then have the opportunity to invite them to “meet”. Through the identification of multiple rich communications software options, they began to understand that they were not merely identifying a single platform already existing, but were choosing from a “mash-up” of multiple tools that would enable participants to select the options to best suit their situation.

Tools identified for use with one-to-one communications that in addition would allow meetings to take place through text, audio, or audio and video:

- TokBox
- Eluminate live meetings space (up to three concurrent visitors with audio and video)
- Skype phone with audio or audio and video

Following a strategy that suggests we should meet users in or with the tools they are using or prefer to use, we will not recommend specific software but will embed a variety of options within the site. Users will be invited to determine what works best for them.

Developing Two Model Sites: The UVic Hub and a Model Community Site

The consultation and exploratory processes helped us to understand the necessity of creating two sites: first, a UVic site, and second, a model site for Indigenous community participants. The different purpose, resources, and rules surrounding each site would guide tool selection and design.

The UVic site is subject to the guidelines and policies of the university including the need to ensure that the resources and data associated with the site would be housed within Canada and would, therefore, be subject to Canadian privacy laws while remaining free from U.S. legislation. While communities will be able to choose to

link to other communities, in this project we see UVic as a hub to multiple communities.

The UVic hub site will accept and organize membership from related communities. Community membership will offer the ability to:

1. Receive Really Simple Syndication (RSS) announcements regarding VLL events, recordings, and guest presence for posting on member home pages.
2. Send RSS announcements and possibly video to the UVic site for connection to individual and community members.
3. Participate in blogs (short for “web logs”) and live text or audio based discussions (one-to-one or community discussions with a mediator).
4. Access information on how to host and connect events of interest to Indigenous students and community members through the VLL.
5. Include visual representation of a member community on the VLL with links to the home site where desired.

The Indigenous community model site could be created using software from anywhere, although the advisory committee determined that it would be important to ensure that a message describing the privacy limitations would be part of the site. The model site that we are currently working with was built on NING. NING is an American-based online program allowing people to easily create their own social networks and is therefore subject to the Patriot Act. Participants will, therefore, be alerted to the limits of privacy.

Raising Awareness, Sharing Understanding and Soliciting Additional Input

Awareness of the lodge has been growing through the specific lodge events and through presentations. Fran Hunt-Junnouchi, Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi Director of the Office of Indigenous Affairs, has been an essential spokesperson for the lodge within the many forums that she has access to. She was particularly helpful in providing an overview and context for the Virtual Learning Lodge at the Diversity Forum. This led to the development of a contact list of like-minded people who have expressed interest in learning more about the lodge and contributing to its development.

Lead coordinator and advisory member, Celina Gibbs, together with Yvonne Coady, founding advisory member and a member of the Math and Computer Science Department, have taken the lead on identifying opportunities to raise the awareness of the lodge through a variety of academic and institutional forums. Celina and Yvonne initiated and led presentations in the following forums:

ICT Summit (February 2009)



The ICT Summit is an event sponsored by the First Nations Technology Council. The focus of this year's summit was community tools and culture. The VLL provided a 90-minute interactive session at the ICT summit, including live online participation from the North Island support team. The session presented an overview of the background of the work, the technology applied, and the vision for the future. Audience participants offered their own online learning experiences, and use of technology. This venue afforded a wonderful opportunity to get feedback from members of communities and educators around the province

University of Victoria, Learning and Teaching Centre Showcase: The Virtual Learning Lodge (Celina Gibbs and Yvonne Coady were joined by Rachel Hunt, Alana Jacobson, Gregory Sebastian, and Christine Shelton.)

The role of a course management system (CMS) is well defined in terms of deployment of resources, opportunities for interaction between instructors and students and between students and students. It supports the structural elements of a classroom by facilitating, for instance, the exchange of assignments and the notification of grades. The social learning environments integrated into a CMS offer an opportunity to create a vibrant learning community within the classroom and beyond. The VLL is intended to provide a social networking capability that is connected to the virtual classroom environment but occupies the "space between the classes" allowing enhanced learning opportunities such as access to invited speakers of interest to a broad range of disciplines, and promoting social interactions that enrich the educational experience but occur in informal spaces such as the coffee shop.

In our initial explorations, we anticipated that the lodge could provide additional enriching activities beyond the classroom. Our North Island students made it clear that, though they were interested in connection to the campus, their schedule could not stretch to include many activities that were not core to their program of study.

We took steps to introduce space for the emergent opportunities afforded through an active lodge through a shift in course structure and design. We are evolving from a strongly structured fully pre-planned model to an integrated model with the flexibility to accommodate the addition of live events to course work. Through this showcase event, we were able to demonstrate what we had learned through the early stages of development, raise the profile of the lodge, and solicit additional feedback to inform the evolution of the environment.

Canadian E-Learning Conference (June 2009)

The VLL was introduced to this national forum in June of 2008. At the June 2009 conference we shared our experience of developing the lodge, including both the highs and lows associated with attempts to leverage technology in our endeavours to-date, coupled with recommendations for possible pedagogical changes required to include remote communities in our educational system. Highs include participation in on-campus events and educational offerings. Lows include unmet expectations in terms of quality of connections, video, sound, and ease of use. Pedagogical recommendations include the organization of cohort groups, the availability of distributed tutored video instruction for these cohort groups, culturally sensitive protocols for localized peer review exercises, and integrated reflection exercises appropriate for online course forums.

Phase Three: Constructing the Lodge from Prototype to Multi-dimensional Site

Creating the VLL “Hub”

The Virtual Learning Lodge team contracted with Media One to create the Hub site. With both a technical and an applied understanding of new and evolving media (including social networking and video distribution through the World Wide Web), this team brought the skills needed to move the prototype to a working model. These strengths were essential to building the foundational VLL.

Software Selection

Open source software, Joomla, was selected to provide the back-end structure to the site. This selection was made, in part, to ensure cost sustainability for the lodge.

Open source software benefits from the work of a collaborative community rather than a corporate, profit-driven structure and, as a result, there will be no annual fees or software costs. Some technical costs may be incurred as the site develops and what we learn will, in turn, be provided to the development community. The “community of users” approach to the technical background aligns with the overall principles of the VLL.

The UVic VLL Design

Our design attempts to respond to each of the criteria for success identified through our consultations:

1. **Create a Village of intersecting communities and lodges**
 - a. **Connect to emergent and naturally occurring student communities:** There are two opportunities for these links to occur in the new VLL design. Facebook communities could be linked back to the lodge at the discretion of the group OR students might individually link their Facebook profiles to the VLL. Note: although we have some concerns about the professional suitability issues, we felt that it was important to facilitate membership by reducing the need for repeated profile input. We will provide a link to a site that helps people understand privacy issues and the WWW.
 - b. **Create a model for Indigenous community lodges:** A model site was developed by the North Island communities through the work of Rachel Hunt in consultation with the communities (see next section of this report).
2. **The need to remain flexible and responsive meant the addition of a design/planning blog or forum to run within the site:** A forum called “Help Create the VLL” has been established. This report has been provided as a resource for the discussion.
3. **Create the structure to facilitate reciprocal communications and education between participating communities (e.g., sending AND receiving RSS feeds):** A family communities block has been established to enable the RSS feeds from the home communities to be viewable on the home page and the community page. Family communities are also encouraged to create a related group in the groups area which could either connect back to their home community or provide a dynamic presence in the lodge. The North Island VLL has begun to demonstrate the potential for weaving together the independent lodges (See next section of this report).
4. **The need to provide resources that explain and support lodge participation:**
 - a. **Continue to define, explore, and communicate the value of the lodge:** The advisory committee has begun work to explore possibilities around developing connections with additional groups while facilitating the creation of community lodges. The intent is to

build capacity within the communities while also strengthening connections to the hub.

- b. Clear, simple instructions on how to participate, initiate, and plan for VLL:** The advisory committee has made it a priority to develop these protocols as the lodge develops in direct response to emerging needs.
- c. Consider providing training for affiliated groups:** The advisory committee is seeking additional funding to support the development of affiliated, community-based lodges
- d. Develop guiding respectful protocols:** Developing appropriate, respectful protocols will be the work of the VLL communities and will be facilitated through the “Help Create the VLL” forum.
- e. Define and describe affiliated membership and related sign-up system:** The advisory committee is continuing to explore the affiliated membership concept through a thread within the forum. The North Island VLL has demonstrated one application of the link to the lodge by hosting live UVic events within their lodge (see next section).

A Model for Intersecting Community Sites: North Island VLL

The North Island VLL was developed in the North Island Community under the guidance of an advisory team including Marion Hunt, Sarah Child, Jan Armbrust, Alana Jacobson, and Rachel Hunt. The team consulted with the community (Appendix H) and solicited input from the community (Appendix I)

The pilot site was created on NING (another open source social networking software) but their permanent site has been established using Joomla, the same software as the UVic lodge.

Through discussion and consultation, the team determined that the initial North Island Partner lodge would:

- Provide privacy while maintaining connection with UVic and other students.
- Support learners from the home community as defined by the home community. The model community has made space for:
 - Culture stories and content (e.g., artists’ work, links to you-tube celebrating the community, traditional button-blanket work, traditional and modern dance;

Events

Newest Articles

Buy, Sell & Trade

+UVIC

+Kwakwakawakw

-Kwakiutl

Community Archive

-Media

Streaming Media

-Video Gallery

X-Mas 2009

Online Videos

Online Articles about the Kwakiutl

Photo Gallery

+Kwakiutl Culture

+Quatsino

+Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw

Registered Users

Username

Password


Remember Me

Forgot your password?

Forgot your username?

Create an account


Online Videos about the Kwakiutl



Tuesday, 16 February 2010 23:30

Olympic Medals

Written by North Island VII



Published in Online Videos about the Kwakiutl


1 Comment | Read more...

Tagged under [videos](#) [youtube videos](#) [online videos](#) [olympics](#) [corrine hunt](#) [olympic medals](#)

Wednesday, 03 March 2010 21:21

Olympic Torch Relay, Kwakiutl Performance

Written by North Island VII




Published in Online Videos about the Kwakiutl

Be the first to comment! | Read more...

Wednesday, 17 February 2010 03:35

Marion Hunt Doig Interview

Written by North Island VII



Published in Online Videos about the Kwakiutl


Be the first to comment! | Read more...

Tagged under [marion hunt doig](#) [kwakiutl](#)

Wednesday, 17 February 2010 03:40

Marion Hunt Doig and Class

Written by North Island VII

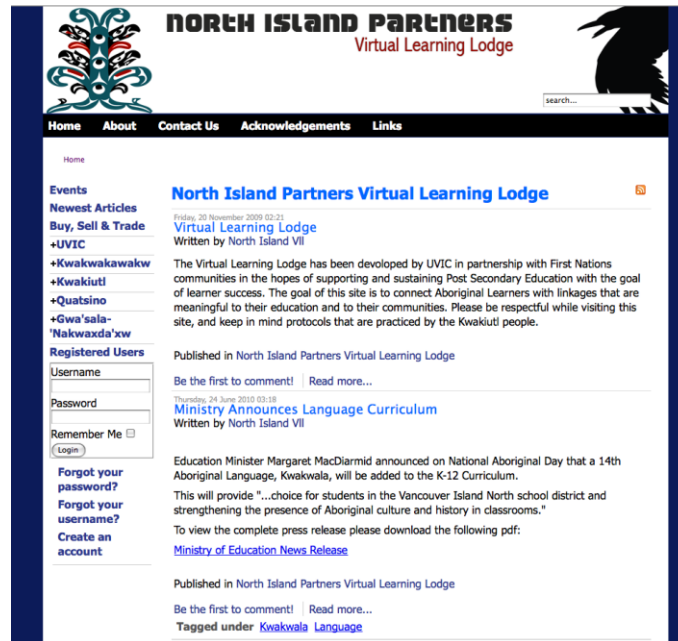


Published in Online Videos about the Kwakiutl

Be the first to comment! | Read more...

Tagged under [marion hunt doig](#) [teacher](#)

- Community events and news;
- Images from home;
- Connections/mentors;
- Peer-to-peer networking and support;
- Receiving event streaming and holding private to community discussion.



Making It Work

The move from prototype to the foundational VLL site is an ongoing process. The sites and resources are dynamic and will continue to grow to support the needs of the interlocking communities. We have begun to create and disseminate resources that explain how to access needed software, what protocols might be used to guide their use, and safety in use.

Training components (or connections to training and resources) are an evolving part of the core VLL site. After building both a model community site and the UVic site, and having reflected upon the feedback from our consultations, we have realized that the training needs to emerge in response to the specific advisory for each community. We also recognize that the family of intersecting VLL communities may take many forms.

Some family communities may be linked from primarily static websites that do not have social networking capability and these sites may choose to leverage the social networking with the VLL to meet their needs. Balancing the autonomy for each lodge while identifying opportunities for connection will remain a challenge.

As the North Island team worked through the project, they identified the following connections:

- Locating a UVic stream or event on the local site to host live events in their own context;

- Initiating events from the community to be streamed back to learners who are away (example: connecting students at UVic to local events such as community meetings)
- Provide RSS feed to UVic (or other intersecting lodges) e.g., announcements, ride-share, buy-and-sell;
- Accept RSS feed from UVic.

Rather than creating training for the family sites, potential family groups are invited to consider the North Island Site as a reference for developing a model that suits the needs of their communities and have identified some of the features that might be useful. They may be community supported static websites, social networking sites, or a combination. Through the construction of the lodge we have introduced processes and located information to support the following:

1. **Links to and from family communities:** We are adding a form to be sent to the administrator for approval and entry into each community block in addition to a form letter that will suggest ways that the community might link back to the lodge, including suggestions on hosting VLL live events in a community site. The form asks communities for a link to their RSS feed for inclusion in the VLL family.
2. **Processes for initiating live streaming through the VLL:** The VLL was, to some extent, ahead of its time at UVic. Streaming services are provided through Audio Visual and the instructions on how to book events from UVic communities are now available.
3. **Other training resources:** These may need to be configured as we continue to develop expertise and understanding of our dynamic, intersecting community model (for example, details of how to manage live discussion threads and RSS them to our site).
4. **Archiving materials:** As we build the site, approaches and procedures for archiving materials are expected to evolve.
5. **Terms of Use:** Terms of use were developed through reviewing and adapting examples from existing social networking sites (see Appendix K).
6. **Departmental home of the UVic VLL:** The INAF (Office of Indigenous Affairs) has agreed to act as the home for the UVic Virtual Learning Lodge and has designated an administrator. Ongoing technical support will be provided through the Distance Education Department at UVic.

NOTE: The UVic Virtual Learning Lodge has undergone a usability analysis (see Appendix J). Changes have been made based upon this feedback as well as a careful tuning to reflect feedback from the groups and opportunities for inter-community connection.

Phase Four: Strategic Planning

The consultations, together with a review and consideration of the live events, provided a foundation for the construction of the lodge and our future planning. The strategic plan covers both the maintenance and the development of the VLL.

1. Continuing the momentum:
 - a. Continue the most successful events that facilitated connection with the model community (e.g., the Graduate student presentations, the diversity conference) and the support of students.
 - b. Through the events completed to date, there is a growing understanding of the potential of the lodge to improve the profile of Indigenous students and related events by providing a focal point and central hosting site. The advisory committee will continue to promote this understanding.
 - c. Funding opportunities will be sought to support the further development of the project. A major proposal is under development.

2. Maintenance of the UVic VLL:
 - a. While the UVic lodge was initiated through a partnership between the North Island Indigenous Partner Communities and SCYC, the advisory committee determined that the best fit for its permanent location is INAF. Like the First People's House, the VLL needs to serve the needs of Indigenous students across the full university community.
 - b. A site administrator was identified within INAF to facilitate the overall site.

3. Maintenance of the North Island VLL:
 - a. The North Island lodge has been launched and there is some initial membership but it does not have a permanent home in the community. The North Island advisory group is considering options for its long-term development and maintenance.

4. Membership cultivation at UVic:
 - a. Invitations to all Indigenous programs will be sent from INAF.
 - b. INAF will form a group within the lodge.

5. Facilitating the creation and/or connection of family communities:
 - a. The lodge now contains a form to apply to create a connection between the UVic lodge and communities interested in supporting

Indigenous student success through such a connection. The newly appointed administrator will add the news feeds to the family communities and create links back to the home sites. The UVic advisory committee determined that assisting new communities to create connections was beyond the scope of this project and began to seek alternatives for resourcing such development and the future development of the North Island and UVic lodges. Opportunities for funding to support the development of these connections and the creation of new VLL communities will be explored.

b. Conclusion: Context of Technological Change

The Virtual Learning Lodge is one of the many and varied attempts to leverage the Web 2.0 community-building capacity across multiple professional and non-professional contexts and communities. While some of these initiatives have been enormously successful, others have been unable to attract a viable membership. Tools, alone, cannot create a community. A community needs to have real purpose, utility, and meaning. It must serve some tangible needs while evolving to respond to its changing membership. We believe that our flexible and inclusive design will meet this challenge. It will link community to community across platforms and geographic barriers and will thereby build vital supportive connections for Indigenous learners.

Budget April 2009

	Total estimated	Additional Revenue and in-kind contributions	Amount designated from ASPF	Expensed through project
Project Animators, trainer, community relations, and development	\$41,000	\$15,000 (in-kind and ISSP Project)	\$36,000	\$46,664.00
North Island Community Coordinator /Trainer	10,000		10,000	13,855.00
Technical coordination, maintenance and development (includes website)	24,600	5,000 (in kind)	19,600	15,210.04
Reallocated from hosting to technical coordination and development	800			0
Interface/Instructional evaluation, assistant, and administrative support (adjusted to reflect correction in budget)	13,000	1,000 (in kind)	12,000	9,227.47
Elders	3,000		3,000	1,080.00
Website developing (prototype)	1,000	1,000 (in kind)		
			800	
Office Space	1,000	1,000 (in kind)		
			0	
Software	1,000	1,000 (in kind)		
			0	
Digital Video Camera	3,000			
			3,000	3,723.98
Travel Project Management team	7,000		7,000	5,514.33
Promotion/production/ launch/materials, other: Closing community gathering/feast	8,720		8,600	1663.15
Balance of promotion, launch, and event (NOTE: August 2010)				3,000
NOTE: Unsuccessful in securing \$5,000 for a Lenonet assistant				
	Estimated expense	In kind contributions	Total received	
Totals	124,120	24,000	\$100,000	99,997.97
NOTE: adjusted budget to mediate loss of Lenonet funding				

Appendix A: Virtual Learning Lodge, North Island Component, Report as of May 2009

The Virtual Learning Lodge is a means of honouring and promoting an exchange of learning and sharing between:

- a) on-campus students and their home communities
- b) the University of Victoria and our home communities
- c) home-based distance learners and on-campus students.

This is, then, the beginning of a broadly-based social development model. At present, it involves four North Island communities and two departments of the University of Victoria (the School of Child and Youth Care and the Office of Indigenous Affairs). In the future, it could well involve all Indigenous communities within British Columbia having students or alumnae with ties to the University of Victoria.

The underlying operational premise is one of mutualism, an assumption that all parties benefit in the bridging of the gap between urban academic endeavours and rural living. Ultimately, the marriage of local, Indigenous cultural values, knowledge and practices with University-based partners will:

- a) allow Indigenous students non-barriered access to academic pursuits
- b) allow the University improved access to those communities it endeavours to serve.

Development of the Model

Step One

Achieving unity of vision is the first step towards success. Intriguingly, this step is too often minimized. Simply put, the more diverse elements within a project context, the greater the importance of ensuring:

- a) that all parties are committed to the same vision
- b) that all parties realize and respect the reality that factors, such as culture or geographical location, influence how the shared goal will be pursued.

Two concrete examples of the foregoing may provide clarification:

- a) Livestream events from the University of Victoria to here are building towards success. That is, interest in attending and participating in such events is growing and we look forward eagerly to the June graduation live-

stream. This type of activity provided by the Virtual Learning Lodge achieves all three of the exchange objectives outlined above. It is representative of the vision as pursued by the University of Victoria partners. Its mode of communication was primarily verbal within a highly significant visual context.

- b) The Virtual Learning Lodge launch, which was hosted by the North Island partners, transmitted a live community event involving drumming and dancing and the presence of Elders, leaders, and community members to our partners. Its mode of communication was predominantly kinesthetic, oral and visual, with significantly less emphasis upon verbal exchange.

This concrete difference in emphasis upon means of communication is the nexus where growth and the benefits of the project will materialize.

Assessment

We have achieved a unity of vision all partners may not fully recognize at this point in time given the diverse factors operative in the project.

Step Two

The first concrete action at our end of the project once the goal had been understood and agreed upon was the hosting of focus groups to determine community desires, and address any concerns which might be raised. The Kwakiutl First Nation has been most generous in its resource allocation towards this project, providing manpower and physical premises for the work at hand. Support is present both at the band governmental level and within the community at large. Simplifying, the two foremost concerns expressed involving this project were and are:

- a) to protect against inappropriate cultural appropriation
- b) to protect against colonization and maintain momentum towards decolonization.

There must, therefore, be ongoing vigilance in these two respects as the project proceeds.

Assessment

We have community support, albeit at the nascent stage of development. Within the North Island context, we need to strengthen the working relationship with all of the partners here. This was identified at our most recent meeting and will be pursued actively as we proceed. Community support will build naturally as more activities occur and as the website develops.

Step Three

Having laid a foundation, we are at the point of no return. That is, we have agreed upon a logo for our part of the website and have also agreed upon the links which we now must begin to fill with material. Entering into the realm of virtual reality “for ourselves, for real” is the giant step, the point where decolonization within an academic context becomes an organic, living thing for the North Island partners and communities.

Assessment.

It is natural to pause before taking a giant step. We have done so, but there is no doubt we will now proceed over the next month to actualize components of our site. Video clips, the site logo, student contributions, are primary foci for this developmental stage.

General Observations

It is easy to say our resources are few and our time is limited. This is a reality which touches almost all social development models, including one such as this. What differentiates success from delayed success (which some call “failure”) is:

- a) the courage to do
- b) the courage to persevere.

Our locally-based Child and Youth Care students, who are a component of the Virtual Learning Lodge project, have demonstrated both of these qualities in abundance since last September, and yes, in the context of limited time and resources. Their example and the constancy and generosity of our University of Victoria partners provide ample evidence that the North Island web development will become a virtual, living tree for learning exchange.

Appendix B: Survey/Check List for Consultations

The Virtual Learning Lodge (VLL) Supporting Indigenous Learners by Connecting Communities

Post Information Meetings/Awareness Presentations

Survey/Checklist

*The VLL is a flexible and evolving virtual community space intended to support Indigenous Learner success through relationship and sharing. It originated through collaborative work between the School of Child and Youth Care, the UVIC Office of Indigenous Affairs and North Island Partner Communities (Kwakiutl, Namgis, Gwa'sala-Nakawaxda'xw, Quatsino, Kemtú/Kitasoo Nations). We are gathering input from UVIC Indigenous students, Instructors, UVIC Elders Voices, our North Island Partners, Elders, etc. to help us to adapt and grow the lodge. Through these consultations we have identified three key components to the lodge: building **Connections**, facilitating **Relationships** and providing **Access** to resources. Please help us to define priorities by checking the items that you believe are important to student success in the short survey below.*

Section 1. Connections/Relationships

Which of the following connections/relationships **facilitate and support Indigenous learner success**? Please check **ALL** that apply.

- Connections to/from home communities
- Connections to/from Indigenous students (Distance and on-campus)
- Connections to/from Elders
- Connections to/from Indigenous Mentors, professionals, graduates
- Connections to/from Faculty, administrators
- Connections to/from other support communities

- Connecting a critical mass of activity relating to Indigenous communities, issues and developments in one site through sharing:
 - Presentations
 - Discussions
 - Conference excerpts
 - Speakers from within UVic
 - Speakers from other centres

- Speakers from events, gatherings, celebrations, ceremonies
- Streaming recording Indigenous student research and presentations
- Streaming recording interaction relevant to Indigenous students
- Streaming events relevant to UVic students that originate in related communities including
 - Home communities
 - Friendship Centres
 - Ministries
 - Other: _____

Focusing on AND Celebrating :

- Indigenous themes?
 - Indigenous culture? Music? Dance? Food or feasting? Art?
 - Indigenous learning and teachings?
 - Storytelling
- Connecting the above events to curriculum

Section 2. Resources

Which of the following Resources/Access lines **facilitate and support Indigenous learner success? Please check ALL that apply.**

Access to resources such as:

Elders
 Advisors
 Study skills resources
 Gateway to courses

Access to technical/technology resources such as:

Overview on how to find information on the UVic website
 Social networking tools (DEFINE)
 Video/Chat

Section 3. Access

Please Answer **YES** or **NO** to the following statements

- It is important for Indigenous communities to manage/monitor their own virtual space for supporting their learners.
- Indigenous communities' virtual space will remain private.
- Indigenous communities will monitor the membership.
- Indigenous communities will control content.
- Autonomy and reciprocity of relationships can be balanced in a virtual environment.

Section 4.

- A. Can you imagine ways some of these connections, relationships, and access points could connect to the distance or on-campus classroom? Explain.
- B. Can you imagine using the Lodge in the future? Please describe.

Optional:

(Use additional paper if you need to)

We welcome suggestions to add to the 'checklist' of Connections/Relationships.

We welcome suggestions/ideas to add to the 'checklist' of Resources.

We welcome suggestions to add to the 'checklist' regarding Access.

All Feedback is welcome.

Christine Shelton
Director of Distance Learning
School of Child and Youth Care
University of Victoria
PO Box 1700 STN CSC
Victoria BC
V8W 2Y2

cshelton@uvic.ca

250-721-7988

Appendix C: Consultations with UVic Elders Circle - April 21, 2009

Elders: M. Cooper, J. Underwood, V. Underwood (regrets: S. Sansregret)
 INAF Staff: D. George (Cultural Protocol Liaison), A. Greenwood, R. Young
 Project attendees: C. Shelton, P. Ekland

Pat opened in Michif and introduced Christine. Both provided a brief summary of VLL history, its emergence through DL students from North Island, recent VLL events that were live-streamed, VLL possibilities and current status. Questions and active discussion followed.

Key Feedback from the Elders:

1. This (description of VLL) reinforces that Elders have an opportunity to help as follows, for:
 - UVic Understand to why they need to change: Cultural communal awareness to UVic, for individuals or for collectives
 - other institutions (e.g., Camosun) to understand
 - Community(ies) to understand why it is so impressed with relationship possibilities vis-à-vis culture, spirituality
2. Advisory of Elders to VLL and 'Community of Elders' with the hub
3. Trust
 - The Long House Traditions respect that what works in one area does not necessarily apply in another. The laws of one area are different from another, including family law.
 - Permissions are sought.
 - The visual diagram of the VLL hub of 'communities' could be consistent with the teachings that no one (person or community) is 'higher'.
 - How are things introduced?
4. Face to Face
 - a. Age factors: Elders acknowledge younger people are very open and many accustomed to the technology, e.g., video to video; talk box.
 - b. Institute style Startup for courses provide initial Face to Face than can continue in community with the virtual supports.
 - c. Group settings do provide one-on-one, face to face.
5. (VLL possibilities) Speeds up bringing people back to community
 - Elders saw the VLL concept as playing a strong role in support of this goal.

Staff Ideas: Collaborate with Health re virtual space? Health has developed strong venues and support for Meeting Space – technology / space is in place already. Is a partnership or collaboration with Health of interest? (Survey/Checklists were NOT distributed.)

Appendix D: Consultation - Le,Nonet Research Project - April 17/09

Le,Nonet Research Project
A Project to Support the Success of Aboriginal Students
With
Sarah Hunt, Co-Principal Investigator
Dawn Smith, Community Internship Coordinator

General: The Le,Nonet project is in its final phase, currently wrapping-up. Ms. Hunt summarized that students that connected with the project did not have any formal interconnections/interactions as a community. While students may have connected on-site at UVic's project office, all services were with individual students and there is no handy mechanism to connect them as a community.

Some Possible Areas of Interest for the VLL project

Suggestions were provided to follow comparable 'virtual' initiatives with:

- Justice Institute
- Intertribal Health
- Suicide Prevention Tech
- **Faculty: Arthur Kroker, Pacific Centre Lab, UVic.** It was suggested that Prof. Kroker and the Lab be visited.

"Dr. Arthur Kroker is CRC in Technology, Culture & Theory and Professor of Political Science at the University of Victoria. As Director of the Pacific Centre for Technology and Culture, he spearheads large global networked projects which work to materialize the "electric word," namely the world-famous scholarly electronic reviews, CTheory and CTheory Multimedia (in partnership with Cornell University's Digital Library).

A prolific author on the future of technology, he is a frequently invited lecturer at many of the world's leading research universities. With a particular interest in advanced visualization strategies, his most recent books include the new media anthology, *Life in the Wires* and *The Will to Technology*."

<http://web.uvic.ca/advnetday/bios.html>

"Closely related to Dr. Kroker's research projects is the development of a collaborative, interdisciplinary research institute called the Pacific Centre for Technology and Culture. This centre will bring together scholars from the social sciences, humanities, fine arts, computer science, law, education and indigenous governance to conduct research on the technological future. Organized by means of interdisciplinary research conferences and seminars as well as research networks and print/electronic publications, the Pacific Centre will serve as a hub of research on information technology and an intellectually

stimulating environment for cross-disciplinary faculty research, and graduate and postdoctoral research training.

Widely recognized for the highly innovative quality of his research publications, Dr. Kroker has often been described as the intellectual successor to Marshall McLuhan in understanding the digital future.”

http://www.chairs.gc.ca/web/chairholders/viewprofile_e.asp?id=847

Health Certificate Program for 2010

Dawn Smith is moving on to work in a UVIC Health Certificate Program, which includes the three Indigenous communities of Tsawout, Nuuchahnulth, and Kwakiutl (or Kwagiulth?). The start up is for 2010. This would be a student community of interest for the VLL. Dawn can currently be reached at 250-472-5980; ciprog@uvic.ca.

Two Survey/ Checklists were provided for return to C. Shelton, SCYC.

Appendix E: Métis Nation of Greater Victoria (MNGV) Board Meeting - April 6, 2009

General: There was excitement about the VLL. The Board was grateful to be approached and acknowledged. There was a sense that UVic seemed unaware that the Métis Nation of Greater Victoria existed. There are numerous local societies throughout the province.

General points of inquiry:

- How do we get in?
- How will the VLL be sustained?
- What are the costs? Who is paying now?
- What would we need to participate as a community of interest (re personnel, equipment, knowledge, facilitation)?

Some Possible Uses with the VLL

- Connections for Métis children and youth in the public schools to UVic:
 - University students talking about why University/College/why UVic?
 - Talking about their areas of study.
 - Sharing visions for their future; reinforcing planning and action.
- Connections Post-Secondary Student:
 - Students doing presentations in various disciplines: Sciences, history, law, medicine.
 - UVic students sharing with pre-University students by presentations.
- Creating inclusive relationships: The Métis are supportive of all efforts to be inclusive.
- Can we do meetings this way?
- Connections for gatherings; extends outreach for sharing.
- Cultural events; celebrations; festivals, music, dance.
- Presenting/hosting Keynotes and Speakers: Students, Elders, and Community members across the Métis Homeland.
- Instruction: Michif Language as one example.
- Instruction: Metis stories; history, women, dance, etc.

Survey/Checklists were distributed and to be returned by week of April 13, 2009.

Appendix F: Consultation - Virtual Learning Lodge Networking Session - April 3, 2009

Indigenous Child Welfare Research Network (ICWRN) Committee, SSW, UVIC

In attendance: Prof. Jacquie Green (Project Manager), Leslie Brown, Sandrina de Finney, Tyler Ernst, Jocelyn Sam. (P. Ekland and C. Gibbs for VLL)

General Feedback:

There was great interest in the capabilities of a VLL and much support for the kind of application witnessed in the recent Grad Student Presentations March 26, 2009.

ICWRN / Faculty's Information Points and Feedback

1) Access:

- How does an interested participant access the VLL now?

2) Requirements and Needs for using the VLL:

- An online request form.
- Well-defined workflow process for requesting streaming/recording to be hosted through the VLL.
- This workflow process must have low overhead.
- What about equipment needs for a community user? Is equipment available through VLL?

3) Staff and Training:

- What about knowledgeable assistance?
- Is there anyone available through VLL for coordination?
- For streaming needs: On-site and off-site?
- Up-train for Faculty, i.e., classroom applications etc.
- Is there anyone to 'train' community people?
- Trouble shooting?
- Other services ie., as host/hub?

4) Marketing and Promotion:

- How do we know anyone is listening?
- How do 'communities of interest' set up?
- Instructions or 'Guide to'?

5) Security and Privacy:

- Security and privacy: restricted access limited to department for some material.
- Elders' privacy.
- Sacredness of prayers, ceremony, etc.

6) Some Possible Uses with the VLL:

- Interviews with practitioners (restricted access)
- Training video repository
 - training session in Burnaby Apr 22-24, 2009
 - provincial conference in the fall, 2009
- Graduate defences
- Convocation ceremonies
- Sharing classes/training info around the world
 - ties to Australia and European countries
 - ties to Copenhagen

Checklist:

The form/surveys were distributed and are to be returned to C. Shelton @ week of April 13, 2009, (contact J. Green 721-6453).

Appendix G: Event Streaming Report (Celina Gibbs)

As described in the VLL proposal document, one of the goals of the VLL is to provide a virtual link between remote Indigenous communities and the University of Victoria. As a first step in establishing this link, we have experimented with providing access to university and local Victoria events to the current North Island community partners. Over a two-month period the VLL has organised the broadcasting of four such events. A range of mediums and support mechanisms were tested including live and recorded media and discussion threads. The following sections will overview these events in terms of: 1) relevance to the communities and the School of Child and Youth Care, 2) the technology applied, 3) challenges encountered, and 4) follow up.

Diversity Research Forum

The first experiment with a live event was in cooperation with UVic's Indigenous and Diversity Research Forum: Critical Conversations Continue on February 12th and 13th. With the goal of the conference being to bring a more integrative approach to diversity and specifically Indigenous research and practice, it was a natural fit with what the VLL was trying to achieve. The conference brought together 200 presenters and participants through prayers, keynote speeches, research presentations and panel discussions. From the program of these offerings, the North Island community end coordinators requested the live stream of the opening ceremony, two panel sessions and one keynote over the two-day conference.

Technology

In terms of the technology, streaming and recording was supplied by the Martlet who used rented video and audio equipment. Video and streaming are a new service provided by the Martlet, with this event being their first attempt. At a cost of \$15 per hour, this student-run company provided streaming with HTML code for hosting on the VLL site and the recording and post processing of requested talks and panels. A total of 15.5 hours of filming was done, along with post processing.

The live stream was hosted on the VLL site and was supplemented with discussion threads that were hosted on the North Island site developed by technical support Rachel Hunt and Alana Jacobsen. The discussion thread provided community members with the ability to make comments to the presenters through an onsite facilitator.

Challenges

Some of the challenges encountered in this event included:

- stalled streaming -- The Martlet diagnosed this problem after the first presentations as a sleeping server and provided a solution.
- stream connection issues -- Some people were able to connect to the stream of presentations on February 13th, but others were not. This happened to people

both on and off campus, while others both on and off campus were able to connect. It is still not clear what the issue was and therefore there is no solution to this problem as of yet.

- sound and connectivity issues at North Island site -- Technical support was not expected to be necessary at the community end as all they were required to do was click on a supplied URL that had been tested. When the connection did drop, there was no indication at the UVic end and therefore this disconnect was passed on to the Martlet services too late to address the situation.
- delay in discussion thread -- the current community site does not have an instant chat function. While the discussion threads are good for long-term conversations, a fast chat facility is necessary for more integrated feel to a live event.
- bad camera angle -- the camera was positioned to be able capture both the podium speeches and panel discussions. This dual setup led to a bad camera angle on the podium with the speaker's microphone blocking much of their face.

Follow Up

In terms of follow up, the recordings have been successfully hosted on the VLL Moodle site. These recordings can be downloaded or viewed through a stream. Keynote, Dorothy Christian has communicated interest in participating in a discussion with community viewers of her presentation. This could possibly be introduced into a course relevant to the North Island diploma students.

The presence and participation of the VLL at the Diversity Research Forum also allowed us to collect names and contact information for those that may be interested in supporting and participating in the VLL project. Through a sign up sheet, we collected 25 names from various faculties and from industrial and government partners. Understanding how to connect with and facilitate these relationships is part of the next steps in this project.

HSD Research Conversations

The second event was hosted in cooperation with the Faculty of Human and Social Development's monthly Research Conversations. February's presentation was entitled, "Wonder and Danger: Knowledge Translations and Indigenous Adolescent Girls' Sexual Health Education" by Elizabeth Banister, RN, PhD from the School of Nursing and Deborah Begoray, PhD from the Faculty of Education. The presentation to an audience of approximately 20 students and faculty, outlined a program of sexual health education for adolescent Indigenous girls featuring knowledge translation (KT) strategies in a community-based investigation. This presentation, given by Dr Banister on February 25th had a natural fit with Indigenous community interests and the curriculum of the Child & Youth Care students of the North Island partner communities.

Technology

This event was again streamed and recorded for future use. This streaming and recording, along with PHP code for hosting the stream on the VLL site, was provided by the university's Audio Visual Media Services. This established university

department supplied state of the art equipment and professional videography at a rate of \$30 to \$50 per hour. The connectivity, audio, and camera angle were excellent.

Again, the live stream was hosted on the VLL site with discussion threads again hosted on the North Island site. In addition, arrangements were made for technical support to be onsite at the community end to assist with set-up for viewing the live stream. Due to scheduling conflicts, the technical support was on the phone with the community and connected to the UVic facilitator through Skype's live chat facility.

Challenges

Some of the challenges encountered with this event were:

- student availability -- With the North Island students' schedules including family, work and course work, finding time to tune into a live stream event is very difficult. This did lead to a minimal number of community members connecting to this stream. Some informal feedback would be to incorporate the VLL events with mandatory course work.
- connectivity issues at North Island site -- Although prearranged technical support was on the phone with the community members trying to connect to the stream, they were unable to get a stable internet connection in the Fort Rupert Health Centre. The live chat link between the technical support and the UVic end facilitator at least provided a direct communication link that was not present with the first event. Though the connectivity issues were not overcome even after rigorous troubleshooting, there was an understanding of the situation at both ends.

Follow Up

Again, in terms of follow up, the recording will be hosted on the VLL Moodle site to be downloaded or viewed through a stream. This growing repository of talks and discussions on the VLL Moodle site will provide a great resource for instructors to leverage when offering future courses, both locally and remote. The ways in which these can be used needs to be explored through the faculty focus groups.

South Island Dispute Resolution Centre

The third event recorded and streamed was in collaboration with community partner, the South Island Dispute Resolution Centre Society (SIDRCS), a non-profit Canadian charity. A SIDRCS presentation was hosted at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC) March 24th. Jeremy Berland discussed his findings in a joint project with the Representative for Children and Youth and the Provincial Health Officer. Jeremy discussed how early interventions targeted at risk factors can change the paths of vulnerable youth in care. This presentation, while generalized to youth in care, is highly relevant to Indigenous communities with a large number of youth in a care situation. The content of this presentation could have relevance to the Child and Youth Care diploma students.

Technology

The live streaming and recording of this event was handled in house, by VLL staff. A digital camera, purchased through VLL funding was used for the recording. A wireless lavalier microphone, rented through UVic's Audio Visual Services at a rate of \$44 per week was attached to the speaker's lapel. A roving wireless microphone used for audience questions and comments was rented through Long & McQuade. The camera set-up, recording, and streaming was handled by Greg Sebastian, a computer science student and VLL staff member. The streaming was to be hosted by the free support of UStream (<http://www.ustream.tv/>), but this support was not fully tested at the time of this event.

Challenges

Some of the challenges encountered with this event were:

- equipment rental -- The arrangement and pick up of equipment rental added extra overhead to this process. If the VLL plans to continue to stream their own events, the purchase of some of this audio equipment might be feasible.
- UStream support -- Due to our lack of experience and confidence with the UStream streaming support, we did not advertise this as a live event for students and community members to tune into. The camera purchased through the VLL project did not have the necessary streaming capabilities. The experimental stream that was done for this event used the built-in laptop webcam. The quality of this picture was lacking, but it gave us some experience with UStream and the quality was not a concern as a live audience was not linked in.
- poor audio through microphones -- The microphones did not amplify the speakers, but were plugged directly into the camera for audio feed. The lavalier microphone that was attached to the speaker worked very well, as it was positioned close to the speaker's mouth. Both the roving and lavalier microphones were battery powered and unfortunately the battery ran out during the discussion period on the speaker's microphone. The roving microphone, used for the audience and moderator captured the audio only when it was held close enough to the person's mouth. The moderator holding the microphone for someone with questions did not capture the audio as it was just not close enough to the person. In future, we should be sure to check battery power and ensure people understand how close the microphone must be to them to capture the audio.
- connectivity issues -- With this event being offsite, connectivity had to be arranged ahead of time. The event was initially to be held in the gymnasium to accommodate a larger number of participants, but was moved to a smaller room with an Internet connection. The set-up of our laptop with its Internet connection was not straightforward and required technical support from the VNFC for troubleshooting. Connectivity should be tested in advance for offsite events.

Follow Up

The recording of this event will be hosted on the VLL Moodle site to be downloaded or viewed through a stream. The link to this stream has been requested by both the SIDRC and VNFC for those that were unable to attend the session. Follow up with these groups will investigate the ways in which a partnership can exist and their further participation in the VLL through RSS feed subscription.

Celebrating Graduate Scholarship

The fourth and final event recorded and streamed was in partnership with the Faculty of Human and Social Development, the Indigenous Faculty Caucus, and UVic's Office of Indigenous Affairs through the Celebrating Graduate Scholarship conference held on March 26th and 27th. This conference was put in place to showcase the research of graduate students in Human & Social Development. The evening of March 26th, which was recorded and streamed through the VLL site, specifically hosted the presentations of six Indigenous graduate students on their research in the areas of: Indigenous Governance, History, Environmental Studies, and Child & Youth Care. While all of these presentations did not align with the North Island students' curriculum, the motivation for this event was broader. The intent was to not only provide information, but also inspiration to both students and any community member that may have linked in. With some of these presenters having close familial ties to the North Island community, this event was offered to a broader population of the community than just the diploma students.

Technology

With our experience from the previous event, we planned and advertised for the live stream of this event through UStream. The lavalier microphone was rented again from Audio Visual Services and Greg Sebastian handled the videography and set-up. The on campus location of this event allowed for connectivity and equipment set-up to be done in advance.

In terms of advertising for this event, the link for the stream was sent to all student presenters so they could pass it on to friends and family. The event organizer, Ruth Young, also forwarded the link to family and interested members. Rachel Hunt embedded the UStream link into the North Island VLL site, along with instructions of how to create a UStream account for identification purposes, and community members were notified through the North Island community coordinator.

In total, 40 participants (unique IP addresses) linked in to the live stream on this evening. Although it is difficult to say how many people or where they were located, we do know participants from the Kwakiutl and Nuchanulth communities gathered in groups to watch the events together.

UStream provided a chat window beside the live stream, allowing viewers to connect with each other and post comments and questions. Questions were posed to the speakers through an onsite event facilitator. While the students did know that the event was broadcast live, this two-way communication gave it a more 'real' feel. The expressions on the students' faces changed as they received real-time feedback from home and you could see it warmed their hearts. With this technology we were able to provide a new and additional way for communities to support their students.

This does not replace the spiritual connection, but augments it. We were reminded of this by one speaker's parent who, when asked if they were seeing/hearing alright responded with, "Yes, can't you see me there standing beside him?"

Challenges

Some of the challenges encountered with this event were:

- participant identification -- The instant chat function was much more proficient than the discussion thread used in previous events. The real-time feedback generated much more participation in this form. The one issue with this particular chat client was that it allowed participants to be anonymous and it was not made clear on the UStream site how to create individual accounts to remove this anonymity. This made it difficult for the facilitator to discern who was making a comment or asking a question. The community coordinator pointed out further issues with this, in that questions could be coming from a person traditionally owed respect, i.e., an Elder, and the presenter would need to be made aware of this.
- poor video quality -- The UStream quality was so poor, it was difficult to even make out faces of the speakers, let alone see the content of the slide presentations. Experimenting with a different camera maybe a possible solution, or only using UStream when we can zoom in on the speaker's face. How to provide a close shot of the speaker along with a separate view of the slides should be investigated.
- UStream recording limited functionality -- The recorded stream was again, very poor quality. In addition to the poor quality, the inability to edit and cut-up the recorded stream forced it to be posted as one, four-hour-long recording. Because of this, the recording contains portions with no valued content. This recording also cannot be scanned through or fast-forwarded making it nearly impossible to sit down and watch one presentation. In the future recording should be done on the camera itself to provide a better quality picture for download, with an ability to edit the content and partition the presentations into smaller segments.

Follow Up

The stream for this event is being hosted on the Moodle site and at the following temporary link: <http://owl.uvcs.uvic.ca/media/vll/grad.htm>

The presenter information and presentation abstracts are provided to support the stream. This link has been forwarded to all participating presenters to view and pass on to community and family members.

In terms of reciprocal engagement, this event was the most successful. With the goal to support student success, this provided a way for graduate students to share their successes with loved ones and to feed off the close connection to home. The future streaming and recording of this annual event is highly recommended.

The real-time communication not only provided a connection between the event and the communities, but also between the participating remote communities.

Family and friends of students were able to meet and talk with those family and

friends of other students. Understanding how to facilitate and better support this communication and connection through technology is necessary.

Appendix H

The VIRTUAL LEARNING LODGE

The VLL is an evolving website (<http://vll.myavalon.ca/>)

Here distance learners can connect with the University of Victoria, its events and people.

On-campus learners can connect with home to exchange and share knowledge and resources through chat rooms, photos, academic recordings, video-streaming, and post-style discussions

The Virtual Learning Lodge is a pilot project partnering North Island indigenous communities and the University of Victoria!

INTERESTED? HAVE IDEAS? LIKE TO HELP DEVELOP THE VIRTUAL LEARNING LODGE? BE INVOLVED? Please provide your name, a contact number or an e-mail address and we'll be in touch!

Photo by munzz at http://www.flickr.com/photos/high_hopes/171397903/sizes/o/. Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License can be found at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

Name Phone or e-mail information

Appendix I: Virtual Learning Lodge Summary of Focus Group Presentation at Launch

Sara Child – Focus Group Coordinator, Kwakiutl First Nations:

- Conducted three focus groups and informal discussions to gather information that would be used for the development of the VLL in order that it be driven by our community.
- In order to address the social, cultural and spiritual needs of our CYC students.

Thank you to all of those who participated.

Development of the VLL is based on UVic's understanding that our learners need learning to be delivered in our communities where students experience the greatest belonging, membership, connectivity and support. The University is seeking guidance to establish a site that will assist our present students and future students and help to improve:

- ❖ Access
- ❖ Retention
- ❖ Completion

With the help of our communities, the VLL will be what we and our students need it to be.

Thank you once again to all who participated in gathering this information. Your input is invaluable to our students and future.

- Three focus groups and individual discussions were conducted.
- The focus questions were developed in consultation with faculty and staff from UVic.
- Questions were open-ended in order that we not direct answers.
- We shared background information to set the context of the discussions.
- We briefly discussed the University's goals.

Share highlights of feedback from the discussions: Students Focus Group

Students discussed the importance of: Family, immediate feedback, connections with other students and the education administrator, a local coordinator/tutor,

local technical support, having encouraging instructors, a safe open and nurturing environment, and making real connections with the university and ELDERS.

They also discussed cultural differences between how we are motivated, that being motivated by our children, families and communities, a shared vision and goals is a reflection of our community and culture. They also pointed out that our classrooms often have a non-competitive atmosphere.

We discussed how they got support from the above and essential supports such as Intergenerational and cross-generational contact and having a level playing field between all players.

In addition to the above, the students need the VLL to provide or allow for:

- immediate responses to questions or as soon as possible
- a calendar with courses, assignments, tailored and specific
- access and connection to alumni, senior students, administration
- visual example of assignments
- real time connections between instructors, students
- opportunities where Elders actually teach, share, participate
- Site specific to CYC
- CYC links re: Financial aide, bursaries, fees due, course calendar
- Chat room, single, private and group
- Emergency area or conduit. Like having an online ombudsman, mobile alert
- Continuity between course work and assignments

The concerns that the student expressed included:

- Introductions with instructors should include overviews, be virtual and instructors should stipulate and clarify their expectations and be consistent.
- Protocol must be addressed.
- Focus Group Coordinator should be introduced to blackboard so that we can add to the VLL shopping list and share ideas with her as we think of them.
- There needs to be regular connection between all of the players, locally and at the university.

The vision of the VLL changed when the students viewed it as a Virtual Bighouse. They felt it would make it seem more accessible if it better represented their culture. It would instill more of a sense of community and it would better represent a place where their holistic needs were being met.

Elder Focus group

The Elders brought up several concerns. They felt that the VLL would be time consuming for them. They wonder how Elders would be compensated for their time

in such a system. They stipulated that we must maintain certain traditions such as opening prayers and this must be done in reality not staged. Cultural information must be gathered in appropriate ways by skilled individuals who understand and are familiar with the local culture and language. Protocol must be followed: We must not take shortcuts. We must not bypass the proper way. We need to realize that knowledge was shared and learned in real life settings, in teachable moments, not in set up or made up ways. The VLL will need to move within the community at times. In this way, protocol is appropriate because it is addressed in reality. Sacred knowledge must remain sacred and cannot be put on the Internet. Language preserves the sacredness of our culture but not all language should be translated. We (the community) need to decide what is okay to include. Each village has different language, views and culture. The University has to respect our culture. The university needs to remember our people are very visual learners. The space where our students meet and use the Internet has to be a comfortable space and the university needs to ensure this need is met. More meetings need to take place to watch the progress, to develop the lodge, and discuss it before problems arise. UVic needs to supply access to students who don't have the means to provide their own expensive Internet

The Elders then discussed positive aspects of the VLL. They believe the VLL will be a positive way to alleviate student burnout. It was also seen as a way to prevent time away from family and community. It was seen as a necessary and positive change.

Education Administrator and Community Feedback

The vision from these individuals was very similar to that of the students and Elders. The following points were made:

- High speed Internet will be necessary and should be supplied by the university.
- Accessibility, affordability, compatibility of technological equipment needs consideration.
- Equipment must be user friendly.
- Software, antivirus and spy must be compatible. Having the university supply access to equipment and software will better ensure compatibility.
- Orientation workshops to the equipment and technology are required and should either be part of the course work or offered as prerequisites.
- Access for education administrators to the site in order to contact students and the university.
- Regular hours for students to contact the university, tutors, and instructors need to be arranged.
- Regular face to face meetings and gatherings still need to be in place.
- Students need training in interview skills so that the quality of information gathered from local Elders and resource persons is maintained.
- The site needs to be kept basic and culturally familiar.

Concerns expressed regarding the VLL were as follows:

Protocol will be unique in each community. The site for students to access the Internet may become a problem for some communities or students. We need to ensure the site has flexible hours, at no extra cost to students. There may be future roadblocks to those taking courses that require labs. Access to research materials needs to be considered. College prep and prerequisite courses need be assessed or addressed. The site must be a true, culturally appropriate, reflection of our community.

Based on the discussions and information gathered, I made the following recommendations:

- VLL be developed as a work in progress.
- Suggestions from the focus groups direct the development of the VLL in order that it be a true reflection of our students' needs.
- The questions posed by the focus groups must be addressed as they are crucial to the development of the VLL.
- The local technology support should be familiar and knowledgeable about the culture and protocol of the area.
- The university also needs to be attuned to culturally sensitive content. A core group of local Elders and advisors should be approached to make final decisions regarding protocol or content appropriateness.
- The site should be a true reflection of the local community and culture. This will instill a sense of ownership and belonging in the students and community.
- Several more meetings should be conducted to address the questions that were posed by the students, Elders, and the community. In addition, subsequent meetings should be held once the students and community have had a chance to access the site and make concrete use of it.

Several Problems that need to be addressed regarding the development of this process:

Communication between the university and the local community has not been consistent. There need to be clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the:

- VLL development crew
- Focus group coordinator
- Tutor
- University
- Technical support
- Local education administrator

Regular meetings or contact between these players needs to be arranged so that everyone (including the students and community) can remain informed about what is going on. This is not occurring at present.

Appendix J – Analyzing Usability (Bishop, Carlson, Lam, Miller - December 2009)

NOTE: This is a large .pdf file and is provided on a memory stick.

Appendix K – Terms of Use

The UVic Virtual Learning Lodge website (the “VLL” or “Portal”) is provided for your convenience by the office of Indigenous Affairs (INAF) at the University of Victoria. The VLL website is intended to connect community to community within the website and between websites to support cultural understanding and Indigenous Learner Success.

USE.

You may use the VLL and materials contained within it for your personal, non-commercial, academic and research purposes.

The rights to posted content on the VLL belongs to their respective owners. If you wish to reproduce, distribute or circulate such content, you should obtain permission from the owner of that content.

The Site contains links to third-party websites (“Links” or “External Sites”). These Links are provided solely as a convenience to you and not as an endorsement by the VLL of the content on such External Sites. The content of such External Sites is developed and provided by others. You should contact the site administrator or webmaster for those External Sites if you have any concerns regarding such links or any content located on such External Sites.

You agree not to use this Portal or any material contained on this Portal: (a) in a manner that violates any local, provincial, national, foreign, or international statute, regulation, rule, order, treaty, or other law, including intellectual property law; (b) to stalk, harass, or harm another individual; (c) to impersonate any person or entity or otherwise misrepresent your affiliation with a person or entity; or (d) to interfere with or disrupt any other websites, servers or networks connected to this Portal. You further agree not to (x) use any data mining, robots, or similar data gathering or extraction methods in connection with this Portal; or (y) attempt to gain unauthorized access to any accounts, computer systems, or networks connected to this Portal, whether through hacking, password mining, or any other means.

You may discontinue your participation in and access to the Portal at any time. If you breach any of these Terms, your authorization to use the Portal automatically terminates. The VLL administrator may terminate, suspend, or modify your registration with, or access to, all or part of the Portal, without notice, at any time and for any reason. The VLL administrator may modify, suspend, or discontinue the Portal, or any part of it, at any time without notice to you.

USER SUBMISSIONS

Certain areas of the Portal may permit you to submit feedback, information, data, and other materials (“Submissions”) for the purpose of furthering the goals of the VLL website. By providing Submissions to the Portal, you are agreeing to share such Submissions with all users of the Portal, and you are granting permission to INAF to use, distribute, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate and publicly display your Submission. The Portal is not required to host, display, distribute, allow editing or

retain any of your Submissions. Your Submissions may be monitored and reviewed by the VLL administrator or designate and the posting or removal of any Submission is at the sole discretion of the VLL. You agree that you are solely responsible for all of your Submissions, that all Submissions are made at your own risk and that the Portal, INAF or the University of Victoria have no responsibility or liability with respect to your Submissions.

By posting any Submission, you represent and warrant that: (a) your Submission does not contain any information that you or another party consider confidential, proprietary, or personal and not to be shared; (b) you either own or are otherwise authorized to post your Submission with the Portal for publication; (c) your Submission does not infringe the copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret, or other intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or any other legal or moral rights of any third party; (d) you voluntarily agree to waive all "moral rights" that you may have in your Submission; (e) any information contained in your Submission is not known by you to be false, inaccurate, or misleading; (f) your Submission does not violate any law (including, but not limited to, those governing export control, consumer protection, unfair competition, anti-discrimination, or false advertising); (g) your Submission is not, and may not reasonably be considered to be, defamatory, libellous, hateful, racially, ethnically, religiously, or otherwise biased or offensive, unlawfully threatening, or unlawfully harassing to any individual, partnership, or corporation, vulgar, pornographic, obscene, or invasive of another's privacy; (h) your Submission does not contain any viruses, worms, spyware, adware, or other potentially damaging programs or files; and (j) your Submission does not contain or constitute any unsolicited or unauthorized advertising, promotional materials, junk mail, spam, chain letters, pyramid schemes, or any other form of solicitation. The VLL and its administrators reserve the right to remove the content from the Portal at its own discretion.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

You agree that any personal information that you elect to provide on this Portal is solely at your discretion and that this Portal provides no privacy guarantees with regard to such information or any of your Submissions. If you provide any personal information on this Portal, you agree that such information is treated as a Submission and may be shared on this Portal as described above.

DISCLAIMERS, LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

This Portal is provided "as is" and to the extent allowed by applicable law, the NRT and FNCT expressly disclaim all warranties of any kind, whether express, implied, or statutory, with respect to the Portal (including, but not limited to, any implied or statutory warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular use or purpose, title, and non-infringement of intellectual property rights). Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, no warranty is made that the Portal will meet your requirements or be provided uninterrupted, timely, secure, or error free.

In no event will the VLL, UVic and INAF be liable for any direct, indirect, special, consequential, punitive, or exemplary damages (including, without limitation, those resulting from loss of revenues, lost profits, loss of goodwill, loss of use, business interruption, or other intangible losses), arising out of or in connection with the

Portal (including, without limitation, use, inability to use, or the results of use of the Portal), whether such damages are based on warranty, contract, tort, statute, or any other legal theory and even if any such party has been advised (or should have known) of the possibility of such damages.

INDEMNITY

You agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the NRT and FNTC and against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, losses, costs, expenses, or fees (including reasonable attorneys' fees) that such parties may incur as a result of or arising from your (or anyone using your Portal account) violation of these terms.

TRADEMARKS

The New Relationship Trust and First Nations Technology Council are trademarks of the respective organizations. You may not use any trademarks of the NRT and FNTC, including the Portal logo, without prior written authorization for NRT and or FNTC

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

These Terms, together with any additional terms to which you agree when using particular elements of the Portal, constitute the entire and exclusive and final statement of the agreement between you and the VLL, INAF and UVic governing your use of the Portal. These Terms may be modified at any time, and your continued use of the Portal will constitute acceptance of the then current Terms. These Terms shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Province of British Columbia and any federal laws of Canada of general application and you agree to irrevocably attorn to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the Province of British Columbia as the sole venue for any legal action. The failure of the any party to exercise or enforce any right or provision of these Terms shall not constitute a waiver of such right or provision. If any provision of these Terms is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the other provisions of these Terms remain in full force and effect. The section titles in these Terms are for convenience only and have no legal effect.

These Terms shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding any termination of your use of the Portal. These Terms will be interpreted without application of any strict construction in favor of or against any party.

If you do not agree to be bound by these Terms of Use / Legal Notices / Disclaimers then please leave the Portal immediately.

Appendix: Overview of plan for MITACS Accelerate program combined with Industry Support

MITACS Background: If we can assemble a project with at least three students and \$30,000 in industry funding, we can match that with \$50,000, to provide an \$80,000 grant. That funds six four-month internships at \$10,000, and provides \$20,000 in support funds. For each additional \$5,000 in industry funds, we can create one additional internship worth \$13,333 (\$10,000 stipend plus \$3,333 support funds).

Project Goal:

In collaboration with UVic Elder's voices and a multi-program steering committee, this project will extend community and relationship building opportunities to distance and on-campus Indigenous learners and communities while building resources and transferring related skills through:

1. Facilitating membership/activity and inter-site connection between Indigenous programs, initiatives and services at UVic through the Virtual Learning Lodge.
2. Facilitate the creation of Indigenous community website/lodges or virtual community connections within the VLL umbrella or related websites, while facilitating related events from these communities to connect with the institution. (Note: Events originated from various communities will leave a legacy of functional skill within each community and resources to facilitate future events).
3. Create resources to facilitate a self-sustaining community of communities.

Within UVic, Interest has been expressed by:

- Budd Hall
- HSD programs
- Research network
- INAF
- Elders voices

“When the last switch is thrown and all Four Directions schools are online we will have celebration featuring secure chats, online audio, streamed media shared to the schools, a sharing of school web sites, speeches, songs and ceremonies at each of the participating schools.”

<http://www.4directions.org/resources/netday4d/default.htm>

Appendix- The Virtual Learning Lodge: A Framework Under Construction - 2009 Canadian E-Learning Conference Program

Time & Date: 11:00 A.M. - 11:45 A.M., Wednesday, June 17, 2009

Location: Rm. 260, Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKBLC)

Session Description: Though the role of course management systems (CMS) is well defined in terms of dissemination of resources, opportunities for enhanced peer review and reflection in social learning environments are still difficult to exploit without pedagogical change. Additionally, cultural considerations and attention to privacy issues and personal/professional boundaries need to be considered.

The Virtual Learning Lodge (VLL) is being designed specifically to support online and mixed mode courses for Aboriginal students in remote communities across British Columbia. The backbone of the Lodge is a CMS that gives students access to UVic resources (courses, advisors, instructors, etc.), and connection to local community sites is facilitated through RSS feeds in order to share public events. This semester, the VLL has facilitated inclusion of North Island participants in two conferences held at UVic, supported students in the School of Child and Youth Care, and included two North Island students participating in a first year Computer Science course held on campus.

Our experience includes both the highs and lows associated with attempts to leverage technology in these endeavors, coupled with recommendations for possible pedagogical changes required to include these communities in our educational system. Highs include participation in on-campus events and educational offerings. Lows include unmet expectations in terms of quality of connections, video, sound, and ease of use. Pedagogical recommendations include the organization of cohort groups, the availability of distributed tutored video instruction for these cohort groups, culturally sensitive protocols for localized peer review exercises, and integrated reflection exercises appropriate for online course forums.

Conference Stream: Extending the CMS

Session Format: Paper Jam

Co-Presenter: Celina Gibbs

Co-Presenter: Yvonne Coady