

THE CAMPUS RESIDENT

JULY 2, 2026
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Campus Comes out for Team Canada



Community members came out in full force to support the Canadian men's soccer team on June 18 as they made history with their first-ever victory in a World Cup. While the actual game took place at BC Place in downtown Vancouver in front of over 52,000 cheering fans, the electric atmosphere made its way 12 km west to campus, where hundreds of residents gathered at Norman Mackenzie Square in Wesbrook Village to watch Canada's historic 6-0 victory over Qatar. Organized by UBC Properties Trust, Soccer in the Square continues with daily match screenings from the 2026 FIFA World Cup, through to the final match which is set to take place on July 19. (Photo: Emmanuel Samoglou)

McCutcheon Not Seeking Re-Election

As residents get ready to vote for a new representative to sit on Metro Vancouver's Board of Directors this October, outgoing Director Jen McCutcheon shared some insights with *The Campus Resident* on the rewards and challenges that come with involvement in local politics.

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A Telltale Sign Summer Has Truly Arrived

IN OUR WORDS - UBC Farm's markets are a hive of local commerce, community, and a true indicator that long days of warmth and sunshine are finally here.

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Outdoor Fitness Equipment Planned for Campus Neighbourhoods

UNA directors were presented with a preliminary plan to install fitness equipment such as exercise machines and climbing walls in outdoor areas during their June monthly meeting.

BY EMMANUEL SAMOGLU

The UNA is exploring potential outdoor fitness equipment solutions for the campus neighbourhoods.

After receiving feedback from the public during recent community engagement initiatives, UNA staff presented a report on the matter for directors at their monthly meeting, which was held on June 23.

The UNA staff report includes fitness equipment ideas that address the community's needs, as well as preliminary cost details.

Several reasons for pursuing the idea were identified in the report. Developing new outdoor recreation facilities has been cited as an option to address ongoing capacity issues at the UNA's two recreation centres – Wesbrook Community Centre and the Old Barn Community Centre.

Additionally, recent discussions with a Wesbrook Place parent group identified a shortage of programming and dedicated outdoor play areas for teenagers and pre-teens. The staff report said there is currently "a sizeable gap" in both indoor programming and outdoor recreational infrastructure between the pre-teen/teen

group and children aged 3 to 12 years old, whom the bulk of existing playground equipment is tailored to.

Two options being explored include centralized fitness hubs with equipment grouped together in high-density park locations in the campus neighbourhoods, and a decentralized option that would distribute equipment on existing walking trails and paths. No specific locations were identified in the report.

The report also suggests including a variety of equipment that reflects the demographics of the campus neighbourhoods, with bodyweight resistance machines for all ages, including residents with mobility challenges. For youth, multi-equipment obstacle and agility courses integrating low-level rock-climbing walls, bouldering units, and functional movement stations are being evaluated in early-stage planning.

Depending on the equipment chosen, early cost estimates for the project range from \$305,000 to \$525,000.

To push the project forward, UNA directors voted during the meeting to establish a working group to oversee the project. The group will work with UBC, UNA staff, and the UNA's Land Use Advisory Committee on design and initiating engagement with the public.

Annual General Meeting Date Set

The UNA Board voted to hold their annual

general meeting on September 29.

Annual general meetings are an opportunity for community members to learn about the UNA's activities and its finances, including budgets and financial health. The meeting also provides an opportunity for residents to learn about how the UNA provides municipal-like services for residents of UBC's residential neighbourhoods.

The meeting will be held at Wesbrook Community Centre, with proceedings beginning at 7 p.m.



UNA Marks 25th Anniversary

This year marks the UNA's 25th anniversary, and directors were given an overview on how staff are preparing to mark the occasion.

Directors were told the UNA has created a commemorative logo to mark the milestone, and communications staff will be preparing a short video that will highlight the association's history and key accomplishments over the past 25 years. The video will be played during the 2026 annual general meeting on September 29. A dedicated webpage on the UNA website will also be developed to act as a central hub for anniversary-related events and information. 🎉

EMMANUEL SAMOGLU IS THE MANAGING EDITOR OF THE CAMPUS RESIDENT.

Art That Heals and Builds Community

When Dr. Amir Khatami was diagnosed with a brain tumour and forced to leave a career in dentistry, he used the experience to build on his lifelong devotion of the ancient art of marbling, and help others in the process.

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Utilities Company Asked to Return Customer Deposits

Village Gate Homes has asked utilities submetering company Enerpro to reassess its billing practices after the provincial utilities’ regulator began proceedings that are looking into the company’s operations.

BY EMMANUEL SAMOGLOU

A firm operating in the university neighbourhoods and currently the subject of an inquiry by the provincial utilities’ regulator has been directed by a UBC staff and faculty housing management company to return the security deposits of its customers on campus.

Utilities submetering company Enerpro is involved in proceedings with the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC), which is looking into whether the company should be classified as a public utility and subject to more regulation.

Enerpro offers submetering services, including the installation and reading of meters in rental units which track the consumption of utilities, usually heating and cooling, as well as hot and cold water.

The company is contracted by property management companies, including Village Gate Homes (VGH), which manages UBC staff and faculty rentals. VGH sent emails to tenants making the announcement last month.

As reported in March, the BCUC – which regulates utilities in the province – had received hundreds of letters from tenants across the province who live in buildings serviced by Enerpro, including from Wesbrook Place.

The letters contain a variety of grievances, including bills described as excessive, a lack of transparency regarding charges and rates, and service fees described as inexplicable and unnecessary.

Following reporting by *The Campus Resident*, VGH began notifying tenants last month that they have asked

Enerpro to review their business practices in light of the BCUC proceedings.

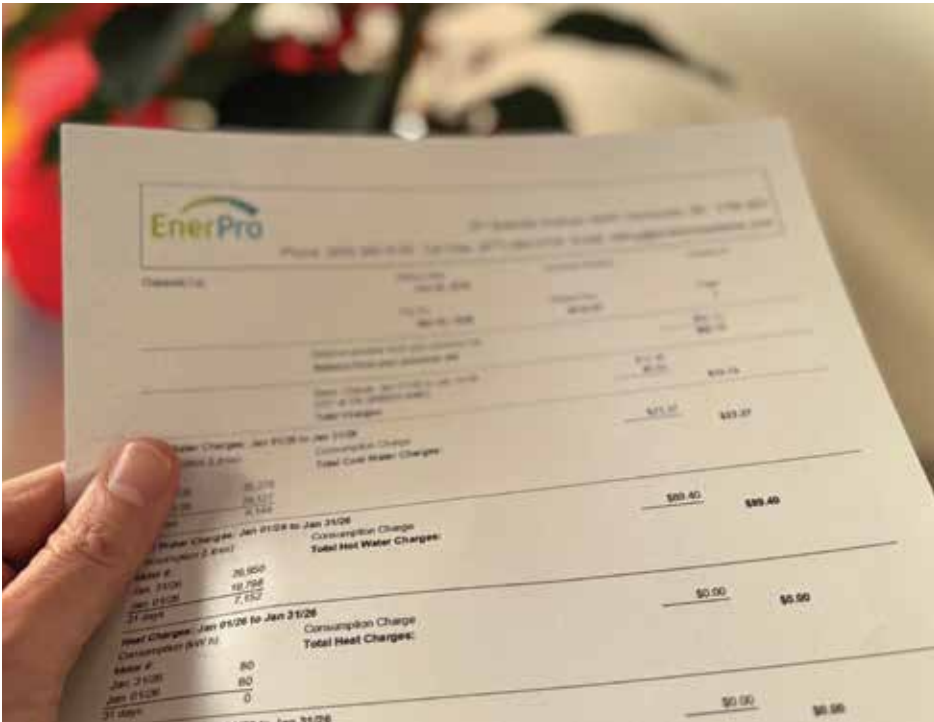
“We are aware that Enerpro is currently part of a review by the BC Utilities Commission, which is examining how services like this are classified and regulated,” the email reads.

“In light of this, and as part of our ongoing commitment to residents, we have requested Enerpro to reassess its billing approach to ensure it reflects evolving regulatory guidance, industry best practices, and provides greater clarity. This is intended to make it easier to understand how your utility charges are calculated.”

The emails also stated Enerpro will be returning security deposits they have collected from residents and will appear as a credit in their June bill.

It is not clear what led to the decision to return the security deposits; however, it could be related to a submission by the B.C. Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs to the BCUC as part of the upcoming inquiry.

The submission addresses the collection of security deposits by agents acting on behalf of a landlord, such as Enerpro. According to the Ministry of Housing and



A copy of an Enerpro bill. (Photo: Emmanuel Samoglou)

Municipal Affairs, the Residential Tenancy Act contains stipulations that forbid Enerpro’s practice of requiring the payment of an additional security deposit.

UBC Properties Trust, the parent company of Village Gate Homes, did not respond to questions by the time this issue went to print.

The BCUC has not announced when it will be releasing its report into the Enerpro matter.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY ERIC WILKINSON.

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No Response From UBC on UNA Call for Housing Action

Rents continue to drop in Vancouver and across the country as UBC staff and faculty wait for details on how the university will address calls for greater housing affordability on campus.

BY EMMANUEL SAMOGLOU

Staff and faculty tenants on campus continue to wait to hear from UBC on whether the university will take further action to address ongoing housing affordability issues.

The issue of affordability has been ongoing but was recently put in the spotlight when UNA directors sent a letter to UBC’s Board of Governors and UBC Properties Trust in May, calling on the university to meet its commitment of offering faculty and staff housing at 25 per cent below the average rents in surrounding communities.

As of June 24, the UNA had yet to receive a response from the university, said UNA Board of Directors Chair Eagle Glasheim, who signed the letter on behalf of all directors.

The Campus Resident sent questions to UBC on May 13 with subsequent follow-ups, requesting details on how the university would address the concerns cited in the UNA letter. No response had been received as this issue went to print.

The UNA letter cited campus rents failing to adjust to developments in the housing market in Vancouver.

As reported in the media, an increase

in vacancy rates in the city have created a “softening rental market”, resulting in more affordable housing for renters. But the UNA says campus rents have failed to adjust to those market dynamics, and action needs to be taken to reflect more favourable market conditions for renters and bring housing costs in line with UBC’s 25 per cent rental rate target.

“Most 2-bedroom UBC apartments are now priced over the West Side average (\$2,503-\$2,907), not at 25 per cent below market rents,” the letter reads.

Last month, B.C. Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs Christine Boyle released a statement that acknowledged the drop in rents throughout the Lower Mainland.

“Rents are falling in B.C., but the dream of affording rent or owning a home in a community you love still remains out of reach for many British Columbians,” she said.

“B.C. had six cities among the 15 largest asking rent decreases over the prior year in the country: Burnaby (-10.5 per cent), Abbotsford (-10 per cent), Richmond (-9.7 per cent), New Westminster (-9.7 per cent), Coquitlam (-9.0 per cent) and North Vancouver (-8.8 per cent).”

“We’ve said it before, and each month shows that what we’re doing is working and we need to keep going so renters can get the full benefits of more reasonable housing costs and more housing choices,” Boyle added.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

More Promotion of UBC Sports Needed

I’ve been a resident for many years at UBC.

The university has many sports teams such as baseball, hockey, basketball etc, but my observation is the teams lack spectators!

It would be nice for The Campus Resident and UBC’s athletic department to coordinate to publish in your paper dates and times of coming athletic games and events.

I’m sure residents would be more likely to attend a game if they saw a schedule in the paper, as one cannot rely on trying to maneuver through the UBC website.

When I first moved to UBC over 20 years ago, there was some advertising of sporting events, especially hockey.

I’m sure UBC and the paper can come up with a suitable format for the paper. The teams might develop a following.

JOHN MORGAN, RESIDENT

McCutcheon Not Seeking Re-Election

As residents get ready to vote for a new representative to sit on Metro Vancouver’s Board of Directors this October, outgoing Director Jen McCutcheon shared some insights with The Campus Resident on the rewards and challenges that come with being involved in local politics.

BY EMMANUEL SAMOGLOU

Campus residents will be voting for a new representative on Metro Vancouver’s Board of Directors when municipal elections take place this October.

Current Electoral Area A director Jen McCutcheon has held the position since 2019 and announced in May she will not be seeking re-election.

Electoral Area A is an unincorporated region of Metro Vancouver that includes UBC’s Point Grey campus, the University Endowment Lands (UEL), the area between Howe Sound and the west side of Pitt Lake, Carraholly Point and a number of small islands in the surrounding area.

The director - Electoral Area A’s only elected representative at the regional level - sits on the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors and the Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation which oversees TransLink. As campus is an unincorporated area of Vancouver, its residents are not entitled to political representation on city council.

McCutcheon served as director for seven years, first elected to the role in a by-election in June 2019 and was subsequently re-elected in the 2022 municipal elections. Her current term concludes at the end of October.

Reflecting on her time as director, she said some major highlights have been meeting and working with passionate and engaged members of the broader campus community, including the University Endowment Lands. On a regional level, she said she appreciated the opportunity to have a voice and vote at bodies such as the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board and TransLink’s Mayors’ Council for Regional Transportation.

“I care deeply about our region and our planet, and it was a privilege to be able to voice my opinions and to vote on issues that will shape the future of the region such as public transportation, air quality and climate action, and regional planning,” McCutcheon told The Campus Resident.

One of the biggest challenges she cited was not being able to participate fully in decision-making matters that affect the local community, as most of that work falls under the jurisdiction of UBC’s Board of Governors

“I found it important to develop strong relationships with various stakeholders to ensure that the needs and opinions of residents were heard,” McCutcheon said. “However, at the end of the day, the Electoral Director does not have direct say in most of the decisions made at the local level.”

As for some advice for a political hopeful looking to take of the director role, she said: “Public service can be both very rewarding and quite thankless.”

“Understanding the trade-offs and complexities of these decisions and contributing to how our region grows can be rewarding.”

“However, the current political environment - even locally - can sometimes feel a bit toxic, so having thick skin and a strong conviction about what one believes in is important.”

Once her term concludes, McCutcheon said she would like to continue working on projects that can have a positive impact on the community, particularly within the areas of public health, environmental protection, social justice, and keeping youth – particularly girls – involved in sports.

“It has been a privilege serving this community over the past seven years. I have enjoyed getting to meet residents and hear their concerns as well as what they love about this special corner of the region,” she said. “If anyone is interested in learning more about the role, I would be happy to connect.”

When campus residents vote for a new director, the rest of Vancouver will be voting for their mayor and 10 city councillors, as well as park commissioners and



Outgoing Electoral Area A director, Jen McCutcheon. (Photo: Submitted)

school board trustees.
Advanced voting days are schedule for Oct 3,7,10,13, with general voting to take place on Oct 17.

EMMANUEL SAMOGLOU IS THE MANAGING EDITOR OF THE CAMPUS RESIDENT.

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Project Produces Inventory of Every Tree in Neighbourhoods

The joint UNA/UBC project has captured data for over 4,000 trees in the university’s residential areas, including the tallest ones.

BY AMIE BERNAERDT

A UNA and UBC partnership has produced a comprehensive inventory of every tree in the university neighbourhoods. The inventory will help lead to a more proactive approach to the management of the local urban forest.

In June 2025, UBC’s Urban Ecology & Sustainability Lab (UESL) began field research to create an inventory of trees in the university neighbourhoods. The project’s goal was to create a dataset containing every tree with basic information about them like species, size, location, and condition.

“In urban forestry, a tree inventory is almost like the bite-size information for guiding management, streamlining operations, and building analyses from,” says Aubrey Benson, a research associate and lab manager at the UESL. “Once trees are mapped and measured one by one, that information can be used to understand broader patterns across streets, neighbourhoods, and the wider peninsula.”

This project was carried out in partnership between the UESL, a lab within UBC’s Faculty of Forestry, and the UNA. The UNA funded the research, and the purpose of the inventory is to support the UNA’s planning and management of landscapes.

“The tree inventory report is part of a comprehensive, three-pronged initiative designed to transition our urban forestry management from a reactive model to a proactive, data-driven system,” says Wegland Sit, the UNA’s operations manager.

This system includes the development of tree management guidelines and collaborative research opportunities, in addition to the tree inventory study.

The project plays a role in the UNA’s broader Landscape Management Plan. The tree inventory will allow the UNA to address immediate issues, but also to track changes over a long period of time.

“The dataset provides the UNA with the exact tree counts, species distribution, and health conditions necessary to make informed operational and financial decisions,” says Sit.

It will also provide risk mitigation, research opportunities, and an interactive dashboard for the public to learn about the trees in their neighbourhood, Sit adds.

The initial inventory was completed in October 2025. Areas surveyed include the neighbourhoods Chancellor Place, Hawthorne Place, East Campus, Hampton Place,

and Wesbrook Place. Three natural areas, Rhododendron Woods, East Campus Park, and Chancellor Forest Patch, were surveyed as well.

“Some areas were definitely more challenging than others,” says Benson. “Street and park trees are generally more straightforward because they were planted and deliberately spaced, making them easier to access. The natural areas are more difficult because plants are typically more densely packed and more complex, with spontaneously growing vegetation.”

In all, researchers found 4,087 total trees, with 96 unique species and 54 genera. A total of 2,973 of the trees were street and park trees, and 1,114 were natural area trees.

The tallest trees measured were two Douglas firs, both recorded at 55.5 metres. Western red cedar was the most common species overall, while the street tree population had a lot of maples. The natural areas included more trees native to the region, while the street trees were more decorative.

“My personal favourite finding so far is that our students noticed a group of tulip trees planted along the same street that were in strikingly different condition, despite what appeared to be relatively similar growing environments,” says Benson. “To me, that shows the importance of understanding how individual trees respond to micro-scale conditions, which is increasingly urgent as urban trees face growing pressure from climate change and development.”

Maintaining the inventory is an ongoing commitment for the UNA. They plan to do a full inventory assessment every 3-5 years to track tree health and canopy cover over the long term, continue working with the UBC urban forestry researchers on UNA-focused projects, and eventually integrate the dataset with an upcoming UBC tree inventory platform.

In the meantime, the inventory will be available to the public soon.

“In collaboration with the UBC Urban Forestry Research Group, we have developed a public, front-facing tree inventory dashboard,” says Sit. “We are currently working alongside our communications department to finalize the launch details and expect to release this dashboard on the UNA website in the near future.”

While this current dataset focused only on the university neighbourhoods, the UNA and UBC are collaborating on producing a regional tree inventory. “The UBC group is actively at the planning stages of a unified platform that would serve both UBC and the UNA,” says Sit.

“We are incredibly excited about this project, and the potential oper-



Bachelor of Urban Forestry (BUF) student, Antonio Iorizzo, measuring the DBH (diameter at breast height) of a western red cedar. (Photo: Evan Shea)

ational efficiencies and environmental benefits that a truly regional approach will bring to the entire peninsula.”

AMIE BERNAERDT IS A FIFTH YEAR STUDENT AT UBC, MAJORING IN CREATIVE WRITING AND ANTHROPOLOGY. SHE LIVES IN WESBROOK PLACE.



BUF student Jolene Ross using a range finder to measure the height of a tree. (Photo: Evan Shea)

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Produce for sale at UBC Farm’s market. (Photo: Vivian Su)

IN OUR WORDS

For Robyn Starkey, *The Campus Resident editor and Newspaper Editorial Committee member*, UBC Farm’s markets are a hive of local commerce, community, and a true indicator that long days of warmth and sunshine are finally here.

BY ROBYN STARKEY

Where do you locate the moment of delight when you notice that summer has arrived? Smelling the first rose on my patio is delightful, sure, but it’s too early, more of a late Spring thing. The first announcement that Kitsilano Pool’s opening will be delayed is too much of a bummer, and the actual opening happens well after we all agree that summer has arrived. The peak event at the perfect time is the first farmer’s market at UBC Farm.

It’s the first Saturday in June, perfect timing, and the weather is also perfectly

“I prefer to go to the market with a vague desire for an unusual radish and maybe some bread, rather than planning ahead and putting together a specific shopping list.”

cooperative. It rained pretty hard earlier in the morning, and although it’s clearing up, there’s a brisk breeze and it’s almost warm, but not hot.

I know there are a bunch of you who regard 10 a.m. on a Saturday as late morning, and that’s absolutely fine with me as long as you keep your early activities to yourself and don’t have loud arguments with your kids about whether they are upset because they are hungry outside my open bedroom window. I am not one of those people. I am not getting to the market at 9:45 a.m. waiting for it to officially open. In addition to not being an

early Saturday morning person, I am not a “let’s stand in line for an extra 20 minutes” person. It’s better to avoid the opening rush.

It’s possible to look up the vendors for any Saturday in advance. It’s also possible to peek at your wrapped presents before your birthday, if you don’t like surprises. I prefer to go to the market with a vague desire for an unusual radish and maybe some bread, rather than planning ahead and putting together a specific shopping list.

At the first market of the year, the farm staff make an effort to greet people at their table inside the gate, and I like that gentle recognition that means I get a “welcome back.” The crepe guys say they haven’t seen me for a while, which is also nice. The bread stand has a new person, but she says she likes my sweater, so we’re immediately friends.

The community vibe is reinforced by the kids who have their craft market in the middle of the field. A couple of them are delightedly telling each other they sold something to someone they didn’t even know. Nice one, random passers-by.

I bump into a couple of my friends who are market regulars, and we catch up. All around us, everyone is doing the same thing. People are also chatting to the vendors, asking them about their produce, taking their time. This is not the place to do a quick shop, it’s a place to soak up the vibe, and maybe get talked into buying a peculiar vegetable.

In the farm stand proper, the only radishes are regular red ones, but they are enormous. Radish of unusual size, score. I also grab some turnips because I have an ambition to make pink pickles. Nigella and Ottolenghi have given me ideas.

The guy behind me in the queue grabs a bunch of carrots and says to the person he’s with: “these are gonna be the best carrots you ever tasted”. Big claim, I think, but then I look around and see that his companion is a wee girl who looks about five. He’s probably safe. How many carrots has she eaten? Two?

My bag is pretty full at this point, and I didn’t bring a second one, so I head out. It’s a really short walk home, but I stop for a few minutes to sit on the bench in the community garden, as I always do. There are half a dozen butterflies flitting around, including a big yellow one I don’t think I have seen before. We decide that summer has arrived. 🌻

ROBYN STARKEY IS A WESBROOK PLACE RESIDENT AND A MEMBER OF THE CAMPUS RESIDENT NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

Berry Picking Season Is On

The UBC Farm’s first blueberry u-pick event will take place on July 4. There will also be a children’s book reading session with a local author and other kids activities. The Farm encourages visitors to check their Instagram page (@ubcfarm) for any updates to our u-pick days and availability as they may be subject to change.

Additionally, their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program is now in full swing. The program allows consumers to sign-up to receive farmer’s choice fresh organic veggies from June to October during the harvest season.

Always in hot demand, residents can still sign up this year and begin receiving a weekly box of fresh, healthy, local, organic produce grown locally at the farm.

For more details, visit ubcfarm.ca/csa-boxes-2.



UNA UNIVERSITY NEIGHBOURHOODS ASSOCIATION

SUMMER CAMPS

Multiple camps each week at the Wesbrook and Old Barn Community Centres from Jul. 6 to Aug. 28.

Give your child a summer to remember by joining one of our summer camps! Each camp is filled with exciting activities — from sports and arts and crafts to filmmaking, robotics, and more. Campers will stay active, explore their creativity, build confidence, and make new friends along the way. It’s the perfect place for kids to learn, play, and enjoy a summer full of fun and discovery.

UNA CAMPS

Spaces are filling up fast. Register your kids now and let the adventures begin!

For details on each camp and registration visit myuna.ca/camps

Art That Heals and Builds Community

When Dr. Amir Khatami was diagnosed with a brain tumour and forced to leave a career in dentistry, he used the experience to build on his lifelong devotion of the ancient art of marbling, and to help others in the process.

BY OLIVIA HAI LAI JIAO

It is humans' nature to create, but can the creative impulse also help with healing and social connection?

Dr. Amir Khatami was forced to address this question after he was diagnosed with a brain tumor last July.

Upon receiving the news, he had no choice but to leave behind his career in dentistry and open a new chapter in his life. This abrupt change would involve him devoting his time to helping hundreds of adults and seniors deal with health concerns, reducing social isolation and finding connection through visual arts.

With the support of his son, UBC medical student Parsa Khatami, and Ali Tavakoli, a UBC dentistry student, Dr. Amir created Amir Social Connection and Healthy Aging Society - a program that promotes healing and social connections through art.



A workshop held earlier this year at UBC by the Amir Social Connection and Healthy Aging Society and led by Dr. Amir Khatami. (Photo: UBA)

Dr. Amir drew on his extensive experience in calligraphy and an art technique called marbling to create the society's program and workshops. The workshops have now helped hundreds of seniors and adults develop an appreciation of visual art. Dr. Amir's journey with the arts began long before he was diagnosed with a brain tumor and the lifesaving neurosurgery that followed.

He had long practiced marbling, known in Iranian culture as abr-o-Bād, as a creative outlet and a way to relax with his demanding dentistry career.

Dr. Amir was taught the technique by his grandfather, and it has now been passed down in the family over seven generations, he says.

Marbling involves creating paint patterns floating on a water and carrageenan solution, which is then transferred onto paper or textiles like silks. It had originally been used in conjunction with calligraphy, but later evolved to its own stand-alone art.

Dr. Amir says his perspective changed as a result of his health challenges. The abrupt brain tumour diagnosis and surgery instigated a dark and stressful period of his life. However, he eventually discovered a pronounced "appreciation for the arts, both in its universality and grounding qualities."

Emerging from this traumatic period gave him an understanding of how art can be a tool for healing and connection, capable of bringing joy in trying circumstances.

He and Parsa found that there was a comparable simplicity in the practice of marbling, which made it different from other traditionally technical visual arts mediums like oil painting. Because the technique was relatively simple to teach, providing materials and guidance meant that workshops could easily engage people of all ages and circumstances, leading them to a deeper appreciation of art.

Parsa's perspective as a medical student led them to create the society, which has a goal of helping individuals find their inner creativity while reducing social isolation, which has been cited as a factor that can lead to dementia in seniors.

Many participants in the workshops have found that they resonate with Dr. Amir's story. Creating art while having the opportunity to discuss personal experiences can provide participants with oppor-



Dr. Amir Khatami. (Photo: Silver Harbour Seniors' Activity Centre)

tunities for catharsis, joy, and community.

Since starting out, they have refined their programs through trial and error, while reducing barriers to participation. They have now organized over 40 workshops, reaching out to over 400 people.

While most events are primarily organized with health-care and long-term care providers, one of their recent workshops was supported by UBC Inspiring Community Grants, which provide up to \$500 to organize events and programs that are directed towards community building.

"Seeing a room full of strangers connect over the shared experience of creating something beautiful was exactly what we hoped to achieve with this grant," Parsa shares, while reflecting on the workshop that was held on campus earlier this year.

"The most memorable moment was seeing the look of surprise and joy on a participant's face when they lifted their first paper from the water. In that moment, the focus shifted from 'doing it right' to pure discovery."

For more information and details about Dr. Amir and upcoming events, visit amirmarble.org.

OLIVIA HAI LAI JIAO IS A STUDENT AT UNIVERSITY HILL SECONDARY SCHOOL.

Upcoming Workshops Aim to Address Youth Substance Abuse

BY SEOHYEON PARK

An upcoming series of workshops later this summer will be exploring the topic of youth substance abuse.

Organized by the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Society, the workshops will look at the commonly used term "substance use", discuss frequently used substances and the mechanisms through which they can lead to addiction, and examine potential long-term implications.

Founded in 2023, the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Society works to increase public awareness of substance use, particularly among youth who may be more vulnerable to recreational use and its associated risks.

The workshops will take place as different levels of government and researchers continue to assess and understand the personal and public health implications of substance use.

Experts in preventative health and

substance use policy within our community highlight substance use as a public health issue rather than simply a moral failing or a lack of willpower among users, warranting more detailed study of the subject.

With regards to cannabis use, Dr. Erica Frank - a physician and professor in UBC's School of Population and Public Health and Department of Family Medicine - notes that many studies do not yet have the level of scrutiny necessary to fully understand the health effects that come with consumption. For instance, few studies have examined differences in modes of consumption (smoked, vaped, eaten, or consumed as beverages). As Dr. Frank observes, "so few data [are] being collected at the scale needed to determine, prevent, and address negative population-level effects."

Experts also emphasize the importance of how that evidence is ultimately applied. Dr. Kora DeBeck, Professor of Substance Use and Drug Policy at Simon Fraser University, emphasizes that

substance use policy should prioritize harm reduction approaches rather than punitive, law-enforcement-based strategies that criminalize substance use. She also stresses the importance of a holistic approach to addiction treatment that centers on overall well-being, rather than defining success solely through abstinence.

It is in this evolving landscape that the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Society's workshops will take place and strive to play a role in informing youth, who can often be drawn to recreational substance use without fully understanding the potential health consequences.

The workshops will be held in the multi-purpose room at the Westbrook Community

Centre on August 21 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. and on a second date in September to be announced at a later date.

SEOHYEON PARK IS A MEMBER OF THE YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION SOCIETY AND IS PURSUING HER BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES AT UBC.



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Why so Many Whales Are in Vancouver Waters—and How to (Legally) Spot Them

If you’ve noticed more whales visiting local waters, you’re not imagining it: Vancouver’s gargantuan guests are here thanks to the season, great grub, and conservation successes, researchers say.

A new study has confirmed transient killer whales are now seen in the Salish Sea for more than two-thirds of the year on average. And they are not alone. Humpback whales have rediscovered an ancestral feeding ground while grey whales are stopping by on their migration north.

Dr. Andrew Trites (AT), professor in UBC’s Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries (IOF), Taryn Scarff (TS), who conducted the study as part of her Zoology Master’s degree and Julia Adelsheim (JA), IOF alumna and whale biologist, discuss why we’re seeing this increase and how to keep our vast visiting whales safe.

What whales are people likely to see?

TS: We’re seeing more and more reports of transient killer whales travelling along the Vancouver shoreline. Based on sightings from 2016-2023, our study found orcas regularly visit the Strait of Georgia, North Island Waters and harbours in Vancouver and Victoria to hunt.

AT: We’ve also seen humpback whales. Historically, humpbacks were common in B.C. waters, but three years of commercial whaling from 1907 to 1910 eliminated all of them from this region. There were no whales left to pass on knowledge of feeding grounds to the next generation, so it has taken roughly a century for humpbacks to rediscover parts of their former range.

And lastly, we’re seeing grey whales visit, which is unusual — they’re usually seen along the outer coast of Vancouver Island.

UBC researchers explain what species you’re seeing—and how to watch them safely.

BY ALEX WALLS / UBC NEWS



(Photo: Used with permission)

Why are we seeing more whales than we used to?

JA: A lot of it is seasonal: this is when whales return to B.C. waters to feed after fasting in their winter breeding grounds and during migration. Baleen whales such as humpback and

grey whales arrive in the Salish Sea focused on rebuilding their energy stores, feeding on the Pacific Northwest’s cold-water prey, which are rich in fats.

TS: For transient killer whales, the recovery of seal and sea lion populations has created what amounts to a year-round buffet. Seals and sea lions were heavily culled until the 1970s, but protections allowed their numbers to recover—and the killer whales followed. Today, transients are seen in the inside waters around Vancouver Island on roughly 250 days of the year, and about 70 per cent of the West Coast population regularly uses these waters.

AT: Humpback whales are another conservation success story. Their populations rebounded after most commercial humpback whaling ended in the North Pacific in the mid-1960s. Large numbers now return to B.C. waters each summer to feed on krill, herring and other prey. In winter, they migrate to breeding grounds in Hawaii and Mexico. Recovery has been driven mainly by protections from whaling, but conservation measures such as improved fisheries management and efforts to reduce entanglements, underwater noise and ship strikes have also supported their return.

Grey whales tell a different story. They feed near Alaska during the summer and fall on amphipods—tiny seafloor crustaceans that depend on nutrients from algae growing on and beneath Arctic sea ice. All gray whales must eat enough to fuel their 20,000 kilometre round-trip migration to Mexico, but pregnant females need even more energy—to support their pregnancy, nurse calves born in warm tropical waters and bring them back to the Arctic.

WHALES CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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Try a new fitness class, learn a new musical instrument or drop in to play a sport with your friends! There’s something for everyone at the UNA community centres.

Registration for Spring/Summer recreation programs is ongoing. Spots are limited, so sign up soon!

For more information, visit myuna.ca/programs or drop by the **Wesbrook Community Centre** (3335 Webber Ln.) or the **Old Barn Community Centre** (6308 Thunderbird Blvd.).

2026
SPRING/
SUMMER

PROGRAM
GUIDE

The Old Barn & Wesbrook
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Sketch and draw your drawing at the
Wesbrook Community Centre and help us
have a unique Father's Day celebration
on August 1st!

THE CAMPUS
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2026 SUMMER
PHOTO CONTEST

Submit your favourite vacation photo to win a **\$20 gift certificate from Doughgirls Comfort Kitchen & Bakeshop** and be featured in The Campus Resident.

Get outside and
start snapping!

Email your entries (along with a brief description of the photo) to: editor@thecampusresident.ca.

For full details and contest rules, scan the QR code.

Welcome to The Campus Resident's Arts & Culture section, where community members of all ages can share their creativity, including: paintings, photography, comics, poems, stories and more. This month, we have something special to share: a photograph from the first winner of our Summer Photo Contest.

Thank you for sharing your work and cheering on your fellow residents. To be featured in an upcoming issue, send in your submission to **editor@thecampusresident.ca** and don't forget to include your full name, address, a title and brief description of the work, and a short bio!

— The Campus Resident Arts & Culture team

Summer Photo Contest – Here Is This Month’s Winner!

MAHFIDA TAHNIAT IS THE JULY WINNER OF OUR SUMMER PHOTO CONTEST AND WILL RECEIVE A \$20 GIFT CERTIFICATE FROM DOUGHGIRLS! THE CONTEST CONTINUES ALL SUMMER, SO SEND IN YOUR PHOTOS BY 4:30 P.M. ON AUGUST 25 TO **EDITOR@THECAMPUSRESIDENT.CA** TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF THE CONTEST. SEE PAGE 7 FOR DETAILS.



▲ Summer Fun at Trout Lake

BY MAHFIDA TAHNIAT

We enjoyed the lovely sunshine at the beautiful Trout Lake amidst these gentle goose friends, who came with their goslings and were totally oblivious of any human presence! It was an absolute joy to witness the blissful nature around us and be reminded that we are not always the main attraction for a photo frame.



◀ Spotted in Wesbrook Village

BY AN UNKNOWN ARTIST

Art is all around us, and it can appear in different shapes and forms. This poster was photographed by a campus resident after being spotted in Mundell Park. Titled “Mundell Park’s Waterways”, it includes a wildlife guide with photographs, a map of the park, and two pieces of poetry. The artist's information in the lower left corner isn't clear, so if you're the creator of this work, or know who is, please get in touch with us at: editor@thecampusresident.ca.

WHALES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

In a recent study, we found pregnant females need 1,600 to 1,900 kg of prey per day to support fetal growth and store sufficient energy to produce milk while traveling after calving. Upon returning to their Arctic feeding grounds, lactating females require 1,300 to 1,600 kg of prey per day for another three to four months.

However, climate change is reducing sea ice, which in turn decreases the algae that sustain the amphipods grey whales depend on. As a result, some grey whales are stopping off in places like Vancouver in a desperate attempt to refuel

their emaciated bodies. Several grey whales have washed up dead along the coast, likely from starvation, and unfortunately, we're likely to see more deaths in the years ahead.

What can people do to keep whales safe?

JA: The biggest thing is simple: give whales space and stay alert. If you're on the water—whether it's a boat, kayak or paddleboard—assume a whale could surface nearby. Slowing down and paying attention can make a huge difference in preventing collisions.

It's also really important to follow the viewing-dis-

tance rules. Around southern B.C., vessels now need to stay at least 200 metres away from most killer whales and 1,000 metres from endangered southern resident killer whales, and at least 100 metres from other whales, 200 if they're resting or with a calf. If you're unsure, it's always best to be conservative and keep your distance.

A good rule of thumb is: if you see a blow, go slow. Whales can change direction and surface unexpectedly, so giving them extra space helps keep everyone safe.

THIS WORK WAS SUPPORTED BY THE NATURAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH COUNCIL OF CANADA.