Forging Connections: Community, Culture, and Professional AECD Practice

PART 1- LEEF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Basic Information

Title: BC Regional Innovation Chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development

Applicant Institution: Vancouver Island University

Faculty: Faculty of Health & Human Services

Primary Contact: Liz Hammond-Kaarremaa
Director, Research Services,
Vancouver Island University,
900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5S5
Telephone: (250) 740-6291
Facsimile: (250) 740-6256
Email: lizhk@viu.ca

Nominee: Linda McDonell
Faculty of Health & Human Services
Vancouver Island University
900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5S5
Telephone: (250) 740-6267
Fax: (250) 740-6466
Email: linda.mcdonell@viu.ca

Start Date: August 1, 2009

Institutional Authorization:

Ralph Nilson, Ph.D.
President and Vice-Chancellor


Summary

Aboriginal communities and Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners agree that healthy and holistic early childhood development is foundational to the future health and well-being of children, families and communities. Providing meaningful, culturally relevant and appropriate resources to assist families in their role of raising children will strengthen and enhance the preventive capacity of ECD services in Aboriginal communities. Prevention through ECD is vital to families and children in Aboriginal communities.

Many challenges affect the quality of existing educational programs in ECD for Aboriginal students and yet there is a desire to address those challenges both at the community level and at institutions like Vancouver Island University.

How to create meaningful, culturally relevant and practical resources is what the creation of the AECD Chair at VIU and this proposal is about.

Aboriginal communities are developing a unique vision of Early Childhood Education and Development. There is a strong desire to develop practices and training that are grounded in Aboriginal culture and strengths and are flexible to serve individual communities. It is not enough to bring cultural teachings into a non-aboriginal curriculum in an institutional setting. A fundamental shift in curriculum, those who teach curriculum and those who work in Aboriginal communities is called for so that the curriculum and later the delivery of child care services are truly embraced and useful.

Aboriginal communities wish to work side by side with researchers and practitioners who understand that the training of ECE staff and development of new programs needs to evolve to better serve their communities. They understand that the very research to support that evolution needs to take place in a different way.

Elders and community members desire to be partners in the process. A research partner from an academic setting is needed who will be respectful and skillful in forming and participating in that
partnership. Community participants will bring their strengths, understanding of their children, and culture and vision to the partnership. In turn they desire to work with a research leader who can bring research direction and knowledge as well as access to the supports of a quality academic institution and connections to ECD resources from around the country. The researcher needs to be a bridge of sorts, to be accepted and effective in both settings and to forge together with the partners a process by which new ways and means can be created.

The vision for this initiative is of a newly collaborative approach that combines action research with community-based practice in an interactive and reciprocal manner. The result will be innovative, high quality, locally and culturally relevant, community-based programs and services. This approach is unique in that it focuses on connecting -- connecting as partners with the Aboriginal community, connecting in a singular manner with each culture, and connecting professional AECD practice to both community and culture.

Vancouver Island University is perfectly positioned to make real that participatory research vision through the BC Regional Innovation Chair, Aboriginal Early Childhood Development (AECD) initiative. VIU has a depth of experience working with Aboriginal students within the institutional setting and has extensive relationships with Aboriginal communities in the region. VIU’s Faculty of Health and Human Services has both an Early Childhood Education and Care department and a Child and Youth Care department (including a diploma in First Nations) with significant Aboriginal content, developed relationships and a proven track record of strong collaborations with Aboriginal communities.

The vision for the AECD Innovation Chair arose from the knowledge and experience learned from the existing programs and from consultation and involvement over the past 20 years with Aboriginal communities as to how to make the programs more effective. We have learned that going to school impacts the students and can sometimes make it difficult to reintegrate back into their communities. Through the research done by the Chair in conjunction with community members, the design of the program and the support for students returning to their communities will change and evolve to better fit community and students needs.

The AECD Chair will, with the help of the community, forge and then build upon these dynamic connections. This forging and merging of connections builds community capacity, which, combined with culturally relevant content and processes, will result in a strong, Aboriginal-led education.

These dynamic connections will require innovative approaches that work with the community through action research that is interactive and reciprocal. Our innovative approaches involve working in very close partnerships with Aboriginal communities, practitioners and students within a research and innovation agenda that is collaboratively set and actively involves Aboriginal practitioners and educators in research and curriculum development adapted for their individual communities.
To date, consultations have taken place in five communities in preparation for the AECD Chair and a new research agenda:

- Cowichan Tribes
- Halalt First Nation
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Chemainus First Nation
- Penelekut Tribe

While each community involved in the research will develop unique solutions and practices, the model developed that outlines a method for Aboriginal action research will be transferable to initiatives with Aboriginal populations locally, nationally, and internationally.

**AECD Candidate Respected in Aboriginal Communities**

The candidate for the AECD position, Linda McDonell is already respected and valued in both the academic setting and in many aboriginal communities who will be partners in the research.

Linda McDonell has committed her professional life to developing the full potential of young children and their educators. Included in her 20 years of research experience is her involvement in groundbreaking work in Aboriginal and Indonesian communities with students and early childhood educators to enhance the connections between practitioners, family, community and culture. Ms McDonell’s work has allowed her to develop an extensive network of relationships and partnerships with numerous Aboriginal communities and within the ECD establishment, thereby providing her with the necessary connections to build a strong bridge between the two.

Ms McDonell was part of the team at VIU that identified the need for community-based ACTION research and has worked with local Aboriginal communities to further define how the research process could be established. While the intention has always been to have an Aboriginal person fill the Chair position, a comprehensive, three-year recruitment process failed to secure a suitable Aboriginal candidate for the Chair. While Ms McDonell is not of Aboriginal ancestry she already has strong connections in the Aboriginal communities and can provide expert knowledge to build leadership capacity through mentoring, partnering, internship and, ultimately help reach the goal of recruiting a BC RI Chair in AECD of Aboriginal ancestry. Her commitment is to pass the research torch to an Aboriginal candidate.

**Description of the Institutional Environment**

Established as a community college in 1969 and renamed Malaspina University-College in 1989, the institution became Vancouver Island University (VIU) when it received full university designation in 2008.
VIU’s First Nations Enrolment Highest in BC

More than 1,600 First Nations students are enrolled in a wide variety of programs at VIU, a greater number than at any other BC post-secondary institution. This represents 9 percent of the total student population. And, these numbers are expected to grow in the next few years. Maintaining and supporting a strong Aboriginal student population and actively engaging First Nations communities are important goals of VIU. Within the immediate region that VIU serves there are 18 First Nations groups from which students enroll in programs. Many Aboriginal students from outside Vancouver Island come to study at VIU because of the strong support for Aboriginal students and programs.

Proximity to Aboriginal Communities and BC Colleagues

Our main campus, centrally located on Vancouver Island, provides ready geographical access to a wide variety of Aboriginal communities, yet is convenient to the major urban centers of Victoria and Vancouver for provincial collaboration and liaison.

Aboriginal Community Engagement/Integration

To strengthen community capacity in Central Vancouver Island and within Aboriginal communities, VIU has worked diligently, with the help of many Aboriginal elders and now staff members, to develop innovative programs and activities that are welcoming and supportive of this growing student population and the local Aboriginal community.

Aboriginal Community Engagement is formally recognized as an area of institutional strength and priority at VIU in the Strategic Research Plan\(^1\). This strength and priority is consistent with the provincial government’s mandate for special purpose teaching universities to undertake applied research that is applicable to the needs and priorities of the region. One focus of Aboriginal Community Engagement is Aboriginal Early Childhood Development (AECD), the focus of this Regional Innovation Chair proposal. AECD is a critical, yet underdeveloped area for innovation, collaborative research, and action in British Columbia, particularly in the region of VIU.

Vancouver Island University and the Faculty of Health and Human Services, where the BC Regional Innovation Chair for Aboriginal Early Childhood Development (AECD) will reside, have an ongoing commitment to applied research that contributes to and enhances the well-being of regional and coastal communities, and in particular Aboriginal communities. We have created infrastructure to honour this commitment through:

- Development of Shq’apthut (A Gathering Place), a First Nations student support centre whose team intimately understands the barriers facing Aboriginal students and works closely with them, and also acts as a liaison with bands, tribal councils, and Aboriginal organizations.

\(^1\) http://www.mala.ca/research/researchatVIU/docs/VIU%20SRP%202008.pdf
• Inclusion of First Nations Elders in our programs in the classroom and activities to further incorporate traditional knowledge and to promote awareness for both First Nations and non-Aboriginal students.

• Creation and integration of a First Nations Advisory Committee which provides direction to the institution and advice and direction to the AECD Chair.

• Creation, approval and implementation of our Aboriginal Educational Service Plan.

• Appointment of Aboriginal Director of Education Sharon Hobenshield who helps guide First Nations programs and services and provides direction in institutional matters related to First Nations.

• Appointment of Shawn Atleo (A-in-chut), a Hereditary Chief from the Ahousaht First Nation and the British Columbia Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, as the University’s first chancellor.

These support structures and approaches provide the foundational relationships and trust to work collaboratively and effectively with Aboriginal communities. The AECD Chair, with a focus on applied research, innovation and capacity-building at the community level, will work with and enhance existing infrastructure and relationships to augment teaching-learning approaches and opportunities with Aboriginal learners and educators.

**Long Track Record in Early Child Education**

The Early Childhood Education and Care Program, established in 1972, has a long and reputable history at VIU and is one of the earliest ECEC programs in the province. Additionally, the Child and Youth Care Program (established in the late-eighties) and the ECEC program have worked closely to ensure professional and community relevance and greater accessibility to their programs. One of their most notable and long standing partnerships with the Aboriginal community was the work during the mid-nineties to develop the First Nations Child and Youth Care (CYC) and ECEC Diploma. The two departments, along with Cowichan Tribes and the University of Victoria developed curriculum for that program using a generative method. This method engages students, instructors and community in a co-construction of meaningful knowledge to be applied in their respective programs and in students’ and graduates’ practice in Aboriginal communities. The First Nations CYC diploma program continues to be offered and has had very positive reviews from both students and Aboriginal communities. Similarly, ECEC has led the development of three separate and highly successful First Nations ECEC programs in collaboration with First Nations communities. Currently, VIU offers a Bachelor Degree in Child and Youth Care as well as a Child and Youth Care Diploma, an Aboriginal Child and Youth Care Diploma and a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care. Seated within the Faculty of Health and Human Services the Chair will work closely with the ECEC and CYC faculty and students as well as other programs in the area and across the university.
The AECD Chair will contribute new and emerging understanding to our teaching and training programs and will benefit from the availability of our senior undergraduate students to act as research assistants in a variety of capacities. The resources and visibility the Chair will have as a VIU faculty member will enable her to make valuable contributions in academic leadership and set a collaborative action-oriented agenda with community partners.

**VIU’s Strong Multi-disciplinary Teams**

AECD innovation activity necessitates the involvement of a multidisciplinary team. VIU’s relatively small size and its academic culture are especially conducive to extensive cross-disciplinary interactions. The physical proximity of departments facilitates collaborations and connections based on mutual interest, strengths, and commitments.

The history and philosophy of our institution encourages cross-faculty interaction, close working relationships between students, faculty, and community, as well as community-responsive and relevant research.

VIU has the diversity of faculty expertise to support the goals and objectives of the AECD Chair. Programs in Health and Human Services, Social Sciences, Education, Arts and Humanities, and First Nations Studies - employ highly qualified faculty who can be collaborators, supporters and critics of the work being proposed, and who will provide the foundation for additional multidisciplinary collaborations and community based action research associated with the AECD Chair. At both the institutional and departmental levels, VIU will welcome and support the work of the BC Regional Innovation Chair for Aboriginal Early Childhood Development.

**Strength in Interdisciplinary Research**

An important part of Vancouver Island University’s research mandate is a commitment to healthy residents, communities, and ecosystems in our region. Our institution values interdisciplinary research and sees strong merit in bringing many perspectives together to approach complex community situations, questions, and issues. For research purposes, this complexity ranges across many disciplines, and addressing these challenges typically calls for integrated models which draw on expertise found in many parts of the institution. Formal and informal interaction between these areas is a further testament to VIU’s priority to cultivate interdisciplinary research and knowledge mobilization.

The AECD Chair will undertake participatory action research that includes Aboriginal individuals, groups, and communities as co-researchers, not as subjects. As leader of the co-researchers, the AECD Chair will facilitate community groups as appropriate; prioritize questions and objectives central to the inquiry and action processes; work collaboration to foster effective change; help steward the various activities; and bring together relevant stakeholders (educators, practitioners, community members, researchers) to address complex issues.

**A Role Model for Community and Stakeholder Interactions**
Our research and innovation chairs are leadership chairs. The AECD Chair will have subject and community-based research expertise, and will play a significant leadership role in mentoring students, community members, and faculty. Central to the work of the Chair is an ability to build on existing relationships with Aboriginal communities; to develop and maintain new relationships with Aboriginal communities, regional organizations and coalitions; and to liaise with relevant national organizations and groups. With the activity occurring provincially and nationally in early childhood development, this liaison work is critical.

**Description of the Institutional Commitment**

Vancouver Island University is committed to excellence in teaching and learning, and we believe that applied action-oriented inquiry and research is critical to engaging faculty and students within disciplines and through interdisciplinary collaborations. Our commitment to action-oriented research is evidenced in research-planning documents such as our *Strategic Research Plan*, and in policies requiring our Innovation Chairs to participate in teaching, interact with students, and take part in departmental activities while maintaining significant inquiry activities.

VIU sees the potential of the AECD Chair to contribute to existing and new undergraduate research training within her department and in other departments, to enhance research and innovation capacity in our local and regional Aboriginal communities, as well as to integrate her projects into our Early Childhood and related programs. Our AECD Chair will contribute to high quality teaching and learning. The institution is fully committed to providing the necessary support.

The BC Regional Innovation Chair in AECD will be appointed to the Faculty of Health and Human Services and will be a faculty member in the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care. Our nominee, Linda McDonell, has an impressive background working with children and families, has an extensive teaching background that includes nearly fifteen years of teaching Aboriginal learners, and is committed to VIU’s mandate of involving students in formal inquiry and research activity.

**Administrative & Financial Commitments**

Ms McDonell will be provided with office space including the necessary computer and telecommunication equipment and access, and secretarial and technical support.

Vancouver Island University is committed to providing substantial administrative support and encouragement for faculty undertaking research and community engagement through the Research and Scholarly Activity Office. This office will provide financial and administrative services, assist the Chair in identifying and applying for future research support, and work closely with the AECD Chair, Faculty Departments, Human Resources, Accounting, and other service areas of the institution to provide the necessary support structures.
We recognize that there is a need to build an activity plan and budget that will allow the Chair to maximize limited financial resources, yet have enough flexibility to carry out the proposed activity plan and respond to emergent requests. The Research and Scholarly Activity Office will work with the Dean and the AECD Chair to develop a workable plan.

**Facilities & Networking Opportunities**

Major financial commitments have been made towards the acquisition and maintenance of infrastructure for faculty and student-centered research projects, including the work of the AECD Chair. Facilities for small-group teaching and research seminars, community meetings and consultations, and space to support various activities are provided in the $11M addition to the library.

Recently, a Canada Foundation for Innovation grant and a matching BC Knowledge Development Fund award has led to the establishment of the Institute for Coastal Research (ICR) located in our library building. The ICR supports a wide variety of interdisciplinary research and community engagement, specializing in making connections with stakeholders concerned with sustainability in BC’s coastal communities, particularly First Nations communities.

The ICR initiative will support the Chair in two key ways. First, by providing physical space for interdisciplinary collaborations; project activity; office space for visiting community members, practitioners and researchers; meeting rooms; a conference room for community meetings; an area for social receptions and meeting space. Second, by fulfilling a networking function the ICR will encourage researchers and other contributors from other disciplines to inform the issues of Aboriginal early childhood development. These facilities and support services will be fully available to support the AECD Chair.

**Fit with Strategic Research Plan**

The application for a BC Regional Innovation Chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development is aligned closely with VIU’s *Strategic Research Plan* (SRP) which identifies Aboriginal Community Engagement and Community Health as areas of institutional strength. The research and innovation activities of the Chair clearly involve working towards improvements in the health of Aboriginal people and their communities. This type of work is highlighted in the SRP as central to the ultimate goal of ensuring that Aboriginal ECD programs are consistent with traditional language, culture and values.

As our SRP states: “areas such as: chronicity, disability, and adaptations; the promotion of health and prevention of illness from infancy to old age; the complexities of health behavior; and the strengths and resilience of individuals, families, groups, and communities are examined in the context of healing approaches, culture and context, mental health, professional relational practice, and intervention outcomes.”
Further, an objective of the SRP is “to support and enhance research opportunities in areas of strategic importance to Vancouver Island University communities and regions, emphasizing coastal and Aboriginal communities.” This establishment of the AECD Chair reflects our commitment to this area of research and community engagement. An explicit interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning, which is also a priority area in the SRP, will further support the AECD Chair in this aspect of the proposed plan.

**Letters of Reference for the Proposed Chair Holder**

Dr. Frances Ricks  
Emeritus Professor, School of Child and Youth Care  
(Professor and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies)  
University of Victoria  
Designer and Coordinator of Awasis Project, Northern Manitoba (Awasis Child Welfare Agency)  
Telephone: 250 383-4001 Email: fricks@uvic.ca

Sandra Griffin,  
Assistant Deputy Minister for Quality Assurance, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Province of BC;  
Contact 250-216-8623 (work cell) or email: Sandra.Griffin@gov.bc.ca

Anne Maxwell,  
Senior Director Projects, Programs and Services, Canadian Child Care Federation, Ottawa, Ontario;  
Contact 613-729-5289 or email: amaxwell@cfc-efc.ca

**Suggested Reviewers**

Hope Beanlands  
Scientific Director  
National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health  
St. Francis Xavier University  
195 Main St., 2nd Floor, PO Box 5000  
Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada B2G 2W5  
Tel: (902) 867-5406  
Fax: (902) 867-6130  
Email: hbeanlan@stfx.ca  
http://www.nccdh.ca

Janet Jamieson, MA Child Study and Education, University of Toronto  
Chair, Community Services  
Red River College  
Executive Producer  
Our Children, Our Ways: Early Childhood Education in First Nations and Inuit Communities  
Telephone: 204-632-2494
Email: jjamieson@rrc.mb.ca

Dr. Rob Santos,  
Scientific Director and Senior Policy Advisor,  
Healthy Child Manitoba Office,  
Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet,  
Government of Manitoba;  
and  
Research Scientist, Manitoba Centre for Health Policy,  
Department of Community Health Sciences,  
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba  
Suite 219 - 114 Garry Street,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
CANADA R3C 4V6  
Tel: 204-945-8670 / Fax: 204-948-2585 / Toll-free: 1-888-848-0140  
E-mail: Rob.Santos@gov.mb.ca /  
Web: http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild

Dawn Walker  
Public Health Special Advisor  
Health Canada  
DIRECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE  
200 Eglantine Driveway, Tunney's Pasture  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada K1A 0K9  
Telephone: (613) 948-6758 Email: dawn_walker@hc-sc.gc.ca  
Fax: (613) 941-8904
Description of the Proposed Research or Innovation Program

Background

Healthy early childhood development is the cornerstone of healthy families and healthy futures for communities. This claim is supported by well over a decade of early child development (ECD) research that has established the early years as the most critical period of human development that has a direct and powerful impact on a children’s healthy, holistic development and ultimately on children’s futures (e.g., Siddiqi, Irwin, Hertzman, 2007).

The reality for many families is that while they are busy raising and nurturing their children’s development they are also struggling to contribute to the collective family income, manage households, increase their education to improve their opportunities and earning capacity, and balance a host of other family and community demands. The reality of contemporary family life is further complicated by the diverse support needs of their children and the contemporary cultural and community diversity in which families live.

The complexity of family life is nowhere more evident than in Aboriginal communities. Government efforts to assimilate Aboriginal people into Euro-Western language and culture have had a devastating impact on families and communities. This has had a destructive generational impact resulting in many Aboriginal people being disconnected from their traditional and cultural practices related to raising children and supporting and nurturing their development. As well, impoverishment, family violence and substance abuse have resulted in harmful impacts on families. This has lead to several generations of Aboriginal people being disconnected from traditional and cultural child rearing (Malaspina University College, 2005).

There is a large body of research and anecdotal evidence to show that the capacity and ability of parents to nurture their children are critical influences on child development (Maggi, Irwin, Siddiqi, Poupeslami, Hertzman, & Hertzman, 2005). Researchers have also suggested that existence or lack of resources such as “parenting skills and education, cultural practices and approaches, intra-familial relations and the health status of family members” (Siddiqi et al., 2007, p.5) affects parenting ability.

Three main factors critical to healthy childhood development were identified in a recent report on The State of Public Health in Canada (2008): family income, effective parenting and family functioning, and supportive community environments. Headstart Programs have been established in many Aboriginal communities to provide extra supports to children as they develop, and to enhance children’s school readiness. As well, Headstart programs provide culturally relevant opportunities for parents and caregivers to learn about both ECD and resources in their community to support positive parenting. As efforts are renewed to move governance of child protection services to the Aboriginal communities it will be essential that a variety of resources focused on prevention such as Headstart are available. Increasing the health and capacity of
families through good quality resources increases the capacity of communities by preventing harmful impacts and promoting resilience. Indeed, "if we prevent, then we do not have to protect." (Provincial Forum on Aboriginal Children and Families, 2006).

Prevention is a key component of the work of the AECD Chair. Meaningful, culturally relevant and appropriate resources to assist families in their role of raising children will strengthen and enhance the preventive capacity of ECD services in Aboriginal communities. Appropriate and relevant educational opportunities will be offered in order to support professional practitioners working with children and families.

In Linda McDonell’s various roles, as an educator and coordinator of Early Childhood Education, she has learned first hand about the serious shortage of trained and qualified Aboriginal Early Childhood Development specialists working in community programs. The paucity of culturally relevant, informal training is an issue for individuals desiring to upgrade their skills. Additionally, culturally and locally relevant advanced educational opportunities are limited for individuals wishing to fill leadership positions in ECD in their home community and elsewhere. Finally, practitioners often require specialized training and support to work collaboratively with other educators, particularly where professional beliefs and values differ from those articulated by Aboriginal communities, compounded by the differences between each community. All of these challenges affect the quality of existing educational programs in ECD and in other relevant disciplines, and limits the capacity to have responsive, relevant, and appropriate educational opportunities to support families and communities to advance optimal, healthy child development.

Research & Innovation Goal:

The vision for the AECD Chair is to strengthen the local and cultural relevance of education for ECD practitioners that would enhance promising practice, and to create new opportunities to develop innovative, high quality, locally relevant, community-based programs and services that will positively influence the holistic development of Aboriginal children, families, and communities.

This will occur through building both new and strengthening existing connections with and between Aboriginal agencies and communities, VIU, licensing and professional bodies, and other public post-secondary institutions. A new model for community development and ultimately Aboriginal leadership in the AECD Chair position will emerge and guide the activity.

In much of Linda McDonell’s previous research, data was collected through surveys/questionnaires and face-
to-face focus meetings with discrete ‘communities’ (e.g., practitioners, parents, professional organizations). Such data collection allowed the gathering of specific information to identify issues, and generate ideas through open and facilitated group discussion. These research activities were planned to move toward creating new or different ways of approaching issues to best support groups and communities to optimize opportunities for positive change. The methods used are in keeping with community-based collaborative action research (CBCAR)\(^2\) and are useful ways to both develop collaborative community partnerships and move toward action through the development of an innovation plan to guide our work together.

Using CBCAR methods will enhance the ability to follow through with suggestions made by Aboriginal individuals, groups, and communities consulted in the AECD proposal development. Those consulted initially recommended that the researchers:

a) focus on strength-based solutions,

b) link research to concrete outcomes, and

c) become familiarized with appropriate community protocol for working with Aboriginal communities.

Using CBCAR methods is consistent with Ms McDonell’s experience collaboratively developing Aboriginal Early Childhood programs and with the findings of other successful community initiatives in Aboriginal ECD. In *Hook and Hub: Promising Practices in First Nations Communities* the importance of AECD work being community-driven was emphasized as a way to better ensure communities are fully engaged in planning, development and implementation. In this way community vision and values provide the foundation for effective collaboration (Ball, 2004).

**Aboriginal Leadership for the AECD Chair**

Unfortunately, a comprehensive, three-year recruitment drive using four different selection processes failed to secure a suitable candidate with Aboriginal ancestry. Therefore, the Chair’s Advisory Committee and the Selection Committee decided to incorporate capacity building into the project to develop ECE leadership at both the community level and at the Chair level in the hopes that, ultimately, a candidate will come forward with Aboriginal ancestry.

Part of the difficulty is that there are not yet a large number of innovators and researchers with Aboriginal ancestry in Canada and the small number that are at this level are engaged at larger Universities where the pay and the length of research track record of the institution draws the candidates. VIU is developing its research capacity quickly and has a strong niche in collaborative and field research but it is still difficult to compete for candidates from non-regional-based universities for a host of reasons. That being said, the opportunity for VIU and for

---

the Aboriginal communities is to work from the ground up to develop and mentor potential candidates of Aboriginal origin that could be the Chair in years to come.

This approach will encourage leadership development at many levels, the mentoring of potential candidates, and the partnering with education institutions, all of which will help work towards the goal of a Chair with Aboriginal ancestry.

While it is difficult to estimate the time that will be required to achieve this goal, it is our hope to have an Aboriginal Chair in place within the near future.

**Guiding Principles**

Integral to the work of the BC Regional Innovation AECD Chair will be incorporating principles of: *respect, relevance, reciprocal relationships*, and *responsibility*. In showing *respect* we ensure that Aboriginal culture(s), values, and traditions are given the deference and regard they warrant and that our relationships are built on honesty, trust, and equality. If outcomes are *relevant*, they will better meet the needs, interests, and realities of the community and ensure that Aboriginal knowledge is recognized as both legitimate and valuable. *Reciprocal relationships* recognize that both the community and the institution have important contributions to make and implies that the relationships are both meaningful and respectful. Collaboration provides greater potential for creating new knowledge and new actions, as well as new ways of working together. *Responsibility* suggests that individuals and groups/agencies have power, authority, and inner resources to take advantage of opportunities to effect meaningful change (Greenwood, 2008; Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991).

An area that often creates concern is the duplication of local beliefs, values, traditions and stories of one community into the curriculum of another community or the program in general. While this initiative might bring forward examples in order to stimulate discussion, each community’s unique information will be respected and will not be incorporated into a 'standard' curriculum. When select pieces are brought forward for discussion, the community from which they come will be acknowledged and will be asked for permission. The way in which the curriculum will be developed and delivered allows it to both respond to and reflect the unique values and traditions of individuals, families and community. The cultural aspect of the curriculum cannot be standard or scripted; it changes depending on who is in the classroom. In this way, community information will be protected since the curriculum developed in the classroom is only shared with those in that class and community.

**Objectives**

The five developing objectives outlined below will be achieved with full engagement of local Aboriginal communities.
1. **Enhance family and community knowledge** about the importance of high quality early learning and care experiences in the healthy development of children, families and communities through a holistic, culturally-based approach.

To enhance ECD community awareness and cultural relevance, information materials will be developed in partnership with community professionals and agencies to make available to parents, family and others in ways most culturally meaningful. Examples of collaborating professionals for this work include Early Childhood Educators, Early Intervention and Supported Early Childhood Development workers, teachers and principals, health workers, and social workers. Information will have different formats such as brochures, booklets, posters, and DVDs. The ACED Chair will create a clearinghouse of available materials for use by multiple stakeholders. This will both increase visibility about the importance of the early years across professional groups as well as inform families about what they can do to support healthy child development. These materials must integrate local Aboriginal knowledge and cultural values as well as reflect current ‘best evidence.’ Bringing professionals together to work collaboratively on this and other similar projects will strengthen professional connections in the community and begin to identify new ways of working together in and across communities for the benefit of children, families, and community.

2. **Support and strengthen healthy Aboriginal early childhood development** by working with communities to enhance the responsiveness of activities and programs to address the emerging needs and issues of Aboriginal families, agencies, and communities.

Various methods such as appreciative inquiry (a form of CBCAR) will be used to: a) identify existing programs and services and the strengths of those services, b) identify emerging needs and gaps in services, and c) generate ideas about how to best strengthen services to meet needs and fill gaps. Annual evaluations to determine the effectiveness of services would be integral to the ongoing development of the AECD Chair’s work and the relevance of that work to both the community of post-secondary BC educators in and Aboriginal communities. VIU faculty and Aboriginal students will collaboratively undertake these evaluations to strengthen existing programs and possibly develop new ones through course work and practicum activities.

3. **Mobilize and integrate knowledge** about ECD, including Aboriginal perspectives, between and across early childhood professionals, families, communities, and educational institutions. Generating and sharing Aboriginal perspectives will occur in both the community and the classroom. Aboriginal students and community members will discuss their experiences as part of family, community, and culture in Aboriginal communities (urban and rural, on-reserve and off). Elders and community members will be invited to attend classes to share perspectives and to contribute to curricula development processes. As appropriate, such knowledge will be extended to relevant provincial groups and post-secondary institutions to integrate Aboriginal knowledge into curriculum as appropriate and desired by the Aboriginal communities. Mobilizing knowledge in this way influences
policy development related to: post-secondary institutions and programs, government, child and community care agencies, health services, social work and other professional areas.

4. **Enhance accessibility to and expansion of culturally sensitive and relevant basic, advanced, and continuing education and professional development opportunities** for Aboriginal students and professionals working in AECD.

This objective will have two foci. One will be to collaborate with Aboriginal groups and communities to develop new curriculum materials as the need is identified. The second will be to identify successful initiatives in current courses and programs and adjust curriculum and teaching methodologies to strengthen cultural sensitivity/safety and relevance. Consultation with Aboriginal groups and communities has identified that individuals in Aboriginal agencies and services require specific training in areas that may not be relevant in non-Aboriginal services. These gaps will be identified and used to revise existing courses, and develop new professional development activities. The need for access to advanced education opportunities relevant to Aboriginal graduates and community leaders will influence future post-secondary program development in BC.

5. **Strengthen existing, and promote new connections among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal professionals and organizations** working in the area of AECD regionally, provincially, nationally, and internationally to strengthen AECD professional practice through knowledge transfer.

The AECD chair will be primarily focused on working with Aboriginal communities at the local and regional levels to build capacity through direct partnership. As well, **there is a strong commitment for the AECD Chair in developing collaborative networks across the province and nationally.**

One of the first and most significant tasks of the AECD Chair is undertaking an environmental scan. This activity would include:

- a) identify those organizations, institutions, and agencies involved in ACED activity and to request information about the publications and curriculum they have developed and distributed, and

- b) seek information about the models of interacting with communities that they have used and/or created. Information collected in this process will be shared across institutions.

This will be a first step to strengthen the AECD networks to identify innovative ways of working together and sharing best practices. Points of contact will include (but not be limited to): Aboriginal Early Childhood Development organizations and programs such as Aboriginal Head Start, Aboriginal Infant Development, Aboriginal Child Care Society of BC, Friendship Centres; AECD post secondary programs such as University of
Victoria First Nations Partnership Programs and UBC HELP; ECD and child care professional and service organizations such as Early Childhood Educators of BC and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies; Health and Social Work services; AECD and ECD Faculty, Research Chairs, Directors and Managers of related agencies; policy analysts and program managers in related government ministries. Many of these partners will lead us into national and international collaborations.

Once a process has been developed, implemented and evaluated for local participatory action research, the Chair—acting as a conduit of information—will:

- Create opportunities for pan-Canadian linkages at local, regional and provincial levels;
- Provide a unique opportunity to develop a model for participatory action research;
- Prevent unnecessary duplication of research;
- Build on contemporary knowledge;
- Provide for the analysis and dissemination of valuable information;
- Demonstrate the ways in which local research fits into the larger infrastructure; and,
- Provide a model for capacity building and training within and across communities.

To this end, we have connected with the B.C. Regional Innovation Chair for Aboriginal Early Childhood Care (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or FAS) Committee at Thompson River University, Dr. Margo Greenwood at the University of Northern B.C., Dr. Alan Pence and Dr. Jessica Ball at the University of Victoria. The involvement of these researchers and others will provide exciting opportunities to expand and strengthen the B.C. network of Aboriginal Early Childhood Development researchers and engage in cross-exploration and interdisciplinary collaboration.
Timeframe of Activities

A brief description of the first three years of AECD Chair activity follows.

Year One will focus on relationship-building by reconnecting with Aboriginal communities in the region to update and inform them about the initiative; connecting with new organizations to begin to build new relationships and networks; creating an Advisory Council in collaboration with communities and First Nations Advisory Council at VIU; creating working structures and finalizing guiding principles, objectives and strategies for the AECD Chair in collaboration with the local Aboriginal communities and VIU; undertaking an environmental scan of what exists related to AECD; and developing short and long-term plans for AECD Chair activities including developing and implementing an annual evaluation of progress toward goal and objectives.

Year Two will focus on maintaining those relationships and responding to opportunities to communicate and connect; creating methods and models of mentoring and working with faculty and students within Health and Human Services and across the institution more generally; creating methods and models to implement action research projects through student and faculty activities in and with Aboriginal communities; working with the Teaching and Learning Centre to identify opportunities to facilitate cross-cultural training within the institution and working with communities to develop similar opportunities in community; establishing a VIU AECD Research Resource Library to house publications and serve as resource to both VIU and the Aboriginal communities.

Year Three will focus on implementing cross-cultural activities; expanding research and innovation plans based on feedback from evaluation and on emerging needs and issues of communities; working with VIU administration and faculty to ensure cultural relevance and sensitivity across program and policy areas; collaborating with communities to identify work that can occur both within and across communities to strengthen families and communities in AECD; and assessing and revising both short and long term goals to reflect what communities have shared and what is working institutionally and organizationally.
Social and Economic Development

Enhancing work and strengthening partnerships in AECD has significant potential to variously support and impact social and economic development within and across communities.

First, improving child care and ECD services and programs in line with community needs will result in increased numbers of parents able to advance education and careers to improve the family economy, as well as improving the community economy by increasing employment opportunities.

Second, enhancing the quality of ECD programs will also have an impact on the health of the community more generally by improving community capacity to understand and address the needs of their community.

Third, expanding education and career opportunities will create jobs in AECD related areas and will improve opportunities for local employment in both new and existing leadership positions.

Fourth, more Aboriginal people will be educationally prepared to access leadership positions outside their community in government, colleges and universities, and human service and health agencies, and government.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, individual and cultural esteem will be improved as Aboriginal people find that their cultural, traditional, community values are respected, recognized, acknowledged and validated through knowledge transfer and integration in curricula and policy.

Training and Supervision Activities

Mentorship of VIU faculty and students will be a process central to both developing a model for CBCAR and in ensuring opportunities for its implementation. Opportunities will be created for Health and Human Service faculty to come together to share and discuss existing innovative projects and programs. Students, both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal will be involved in discussions and action research and innovation in AECD – specifically with regard to those projects suggested and supported by Aboriginal communities. These activities will foster the training of highly qualified personnel in this important and underdeveloped area. As the research and innovation initiatives are expanded, new connections between VIU faculty and student and the Aboriginal communities will be developed and implemented along with collaborations with other post-secondary institutions. Structures and policies will be developed in collaboration with the communities and VIU to promote and facilitate such activities and to ensure ethical processes and policies are integrated. These policies and processes will guide the implementation of community/VIU initiatives and will ensure that both processes and content are relevant to, and desired by, the communities.
Impact of VIU’s Aboriginal Research and Innovation Initiative

The impacts noted below represent a few of the key results expected and reflect previous input through community consultation.

In the Aboriginal communities it is expected that this collaborative work will:

- Increase awareness about the critical importance of the early years of a child’s life to their future and the future of the community and strengthen capacity of the community to support families to meet their responsibilities to their children.

- Train professional practitioners who work with children in ways that are reflective of and promote the traditions and cultural values of the community, and who are increasingly responsive to the diverse needs and abilities of families.

- Increase access to high quality, sustainable AECD services in community.

- Produce a culturally relevant and publicly recognized professional structure and professional standards for Aboriginal Early Childhood Educators regionally and provincially.

- Create strong and expanded networks of professional practitioners in the regional and provincial contexts working with young children and families and increase potential to work together across professional groups in communities supporting holistic growth and development of both children and families.

- Develop strong and expanded networks of professional practitioners regionally, provincially, nationally, internationally influencing change and promoting knowledge transfer.

- Forge strong partnerships within and across communities and with academic institutions facilitating CBCAR research and innovation in AECD and related areas.

- Increase numbers of community members working in ECD accessing advanced post secondary education and working in AECD leadership positions both in their communities and externally.

- Increase the number of community members accessing and completing post-secondary education.

- Enhance strong and expanded working relationships between VIU and other public post-secondary institutions regionally, provincially, nationally, and internationally.
At VIU it is expected that this collaborative work will result in:

- Improved recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students and broader representation of those students across academic and technical programs.

- Increased numbers of AECD courses, programs, and advanced credentials across Health and Human Services that reflect both mainstream theoretical and practical content with a strong, central, generative approach with cultural relevance and content for Aboriginal students.

- A significant and an expanding influence on other program areas to develop Aboriginal-focused courses, programs, and advanced credentials.

- A publicly recognized centre for innovation in Aboriginal Early Childhood Education and related areas with a resource library of comprehensive resources for use by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, faculty, and local communities.

- Strengthened responsiveness and local relevance of administrative processes and policies developed by VIU to: guide their work and relationships with Aboriginal communities; strengthen internal admission and student support services on campus; increase numbers of Aboriginal staff and faculty and promote retention of those staff and faculty members.

- Strong and expanded links to regional, provincial, national and international organizations, agencies and professionals in AECD.

- Strong and expanded working relationships with public post-secondary institutions regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally.

REFERENCES


Malaspina University College. (2005). *Building on the strengths of children, family and community: A Chair for Aboriginal Early Childhood Development*. Nanaimo:


Nominated Chair Holder Information

Curriculum Vitae

Linda M. McDonell  
#4 Hobbit Lane,  
Victoria,  
British Columbia, V8Z 5C7  
250-740-6267 (office)  
250-479-7901 (home office)  
250-516-7901 (cell)  
Linda.McDonell@viu.ca

Education

University of Victoria  
M.A. in Human and Social Development  
Thesis: “A Story About Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia: A Fire in My Heart”

University of Victoria  
B.A. School of Child and Youth Care (with distinction)  
Areas of Concentration: Early Childhood Practice; Professionalization of Early Childhood Educators; History of the field of early childhood

Camosun College  
Preschool Teacher Training Program – (Credential - Preschool Teacher Certificate)

Awards

- Gayle Davies Award “Peace, Power, Friendship and Vision” for Professional Contributions to Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (2005)  
- West Coast Child Care Inform (Nominee) “Keep the Kite Flying” Award for Advocacy in Early Childhood (2004)  
- Canadian Child Care Federation. “In appreciation of your contributions to Canadian Child Care” (1996).  
- Provincial Child Care Council. “For your contributions to Early Childhood” (1994).  
- The University of Victoria President’s Scholarship (1991)  
- The University of Victoria Faculty Scholarship (1990)
# Teaching Experience

- **MUC/VIU Professor – Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC)**
  - 1995-present time
- **MUC/Saanich Indian School Board ECEC Certificate & Diploma**
  - 2006-2008
- **MUC/Cowichan Tribes ECEC Certificate & Diploma**
  - 2003-2005
- **MUC/UVic/Cowichan Tribes/Ministry of Advanced Education Child & Youth Care Ladder Project – Sessional Instructor ECEC Certificate & Diploma**
  - 1993-1994
- **MUC Sessional Instructor ECEC Diploma (Nanaimo Campus) – ECEC Practicum & Administration in ECE**
  - 1993-1995
- **University of Victoria Teaching Assistant – “Women in the Human Services”**
  - 1992-1993
- **Manager/administrator/teacher Hobbit Hole Nursery School and Day Care owned and operated child care service**
  - 1974-1991

# Related Experience

**Vancouver Island University/Malaspina University-College:**

- **Interim Associate Dean, Health and Human Services**
  - Aug. 18– Dec. 12, 2008
- **Academic Coordinator, ECEC Program for the Saanich Indian School Board, Malaspina University College Contract Services & Malaspina University College ECEC department. Teaching a cohort of aboriginal students and coordinating teaching, student and administrative activities. Working collaboratively with the SISB/MUC Advisory Committee**
- **Project Team Leader, Malaspina University College ECEC and Widya Mandala Catholic University (Surabaya) Indonesia Early Childhood Development Project (CIDA funded project). Needs assessment activities, curriculum development, teaching Indonesian students, assisting with planning and implementing practica experiences for both Canadian and Indonesian students, and project evaluation in Surabaya, Indonesia.**
  - Fall 1999-present time
- **Academic Coordinator, ECEC Program for the Cowichan Tribes, Malaspina Contract Services & Malaspina University College ECEC department. Teaching a cohort of aboriginal students and coordinating teaching, student and administrative activities. Working collaboratively with Cowichan Tribes/MUC Advisory Committee.**
  - Aug. 2003- June 2005
- **Chair, ECEC Program**
  - Aug. 1995 - June 2000

**University of Victoria, School of Child & Youth Care:**

- **Principal Researcher and Administrative Coordinator, First Steps Project School of Child & Youth Care, University of Victoria, (CAPC funded project) Managing and facilitating a training needs assessment of practitioners working with infants and toddlers and children with special needs (or otherwise at risk).**
- **Research Assistant** (to Dr. Alan Pence, School of Child & Youth Care) – Canadian National Child Care Study – investigating the history of early childhood services in BC.

**ECEC Related Research & Consulting:**

- **Principal Investigator**, Learning Circles in Aboriginal Nursing, “Health and Wellness in Aboriginal Communities” Evaluation. Fall 2008
- **Principal Investigator**, Learning Circles in Aboriginal Nursing, “Cultural Workshops” Evaluation. Fall 2008
- **Principal Investigator**, Home Support and Resident Care Attendant First Nations Focus Evaluation. Fall 2008
- **Principal Researcher**, Training Needs Assessment of Indonesian Early Childhood Development Teachers and Careproviders, Surabaya, Indonesia. 2002
- **Principal Researcher**, School Age Training Needs Analysis (Infant/Toddler and Supported Child Care). A project funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education. 2004
- **Principal Researcher**, Adding it Up. (ECEBC) A project funded by the Ministry of Health to determine the Human Resources costs of undertaking professional regulation of the ECE field. 1992
- **Principal Researcher**, Taking it to the Field. (ECEBC) A Project funded by Ministry of Health to investigate interest of ECE field to become a regulated profession. 1990

**Publications and Papers**


“National Child Care Policy and Child Care Milestones”; The Early Childhood Educator. (Summer, 2005; Vol. 20, No. 3). Vancouver: ECEBC.


“ECEBC Updates – Changes to Child Care: A Provincial Update”. The Early Childhood Educator. Spring, 2002; Vol. 17. No. 1.

“ECE Updates – Government Updates”. The Early Childhood Educator.


“Report to the Malaspina Faculty Association Research Fund” (2001) - a needs assessment of ECD practitioners in Indonesia.

President’s Column, Early Childhood Educator, ECEBC – quarterly columns:
  o “Summer is Here”. The Early Childhood Educator. Summer, 2001; Vol. 16. No. 2.
  o “A Busy Year Ahead for ECEBC”. The Early Childhood Educator. Fall, 2001; Vol. 16, No. 3.
  o “A Busy Year for ECEBC’s Board.” The Early Childhood Educator. Fall, 2000; Vol. 15. No. 4.
  o “Introductions and Directions”. The Early Childhood Educator. Summer, 2000; Vol. 15. No. 3.


Contributor (Chapter Two) “Shared Diversity: An Interprovincial Report on Child Care in Canada” (Canadian National Child Care Study) (1997)


Recent Presentations and Seminars

- Challenging Behaviours: Canadian Perspectives June 2008
- Inclusion of Children with Special Needs: Canadian and Indonesian Perspectives June 2008
- Planning and Implementing Curriculum, Surabaya Indonesia June 2007
- Malaspina & Saanich Indian School Board ECEC Program: Background & Update of Project (Conference) March 2007
- Working in Partnership with Family, Surabaya, Indonesia June 2006
- Canadian Perspectives in Early Childhood Development June 2005

Current Memberships & Affiliations

- Malaspina Faculty Association
- Vancouver Island Early Childhood Advisory Committee
- Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia
- Canadian Child Care Federation
- BC Aboriginal Child Care Society
- Association of Community Colleges of Canada, ECEC Affinity Group
- Advisory Committee member Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Research and Innovation Chair initiative
- Advisory Committee member “Investigating Quality” Project, University of Victoria
- Advisory Committee member “Early Learning Framework”, University of Victoria, Selkirk College, Northern Lights College
- First Call, Vancouver, BC.

Past Professional Positions and Committees

The following list is not an exhaustive one, however represents work that reflects a ‘leading edge’ focus, over many years, on research, ethics, education, training, and regulation:

- President & Past President, Early Childhood Educators of BC. 2000-2004
- Canadian Child Care Federation Member Council. 2000-2004
- Early Childhood Articulation Co-Chair. 2001-2003
- Chair, Ethics and Development Committee, Malaspina University College. 2000-2002
Ethics and Development Committee, Malaspina University College. 1999-2002
Multi-Lateral Task Force on Transfer and Labour Mobility in the Community and Social Services. 1998-2002
Infant Development and Supported Child Care Advisory Committee. 1998-2001
Child Care Regulation Review. Stakeholders & Training Sub-Committee. 1998-2001
Early Childhood Articulation MUC ECEC Program Coordinator. 1996-2001
Child Care Regulation Review. ECEBC/Ministry of Health. 1994-2000
Early Childhood Articulation. ECEBC representative. 1991-1995
President, Past-President, President-Elect ECEBC 1991-1995
Feasibility of Professional Regulation, ECEBC Project Funded by the Child Care Initiatives Fund, Health Canada. 1992-1994
Blueprint for Quality: An Education and Career Ladder for Early Childhood Education; ECEBC project funded by the Child Care initiatives Fund, Health Canada. 1991-1993
Provincial Child Care Council, Reporting to the Minister of Women’s Equality. 1992-1994

Contributions
Ms. McDonell’s significant contributions span many areas crucial to the work of the AECD Chair: policy direction and professionalization of early childhood education, theoretical and practical training of early childhood development students, and a first-hand understanding of the application of locally and culturally relevant early childhood development within distinct cultures.

Ms. McDonell’s development of relationships with Aboriginal communities in the region has already enhanced both the institution and the students that have returned to teach and work in those communities.

1. To the Early Childhood profession:
   a. Original research and documentation of the history of the professional association, BC Pre-School Teachers Association/Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (1969-2006); and the research and documentation of a broader history of child care services in BC (1910-1989). This knowledge has enhanced my ability to contribute to early childhood discussions about policy direction and development – past, present, and future - across organizations and related provincial ministries.
   b. Researched and promoted professionalization of Early Childhood Educators throughout my career (in particular the years 1984-2006) through leading and/or
supporting various projects including: training needs assessment, ethical practice, curriculum development, promoting visions of advanced educational programs in early childhood and legislated recognition of Early Childhood Educators.


2. **To the development and delivery of locally and culturally relevant aboriginal Early Childhood Development**, including:
   a. Working with aboriginal communities to strengthen family, community and cultural appropriateness and relevance of post-secondary early childhood courses and programs.
   b. Working with students in the classroom to enhance the family, community and cultural relevance of the course content and resources.
   c. Working across faculty to strengthen the relevance of course content, student experiences in the classroom, and student support while maintaining program and institutional expectations and standards.
   d. Influencing approaches to evaluation processes to enhance relevance of student evaluation and assessment across cultural groups.

3. **To the development of Early Childhood Development courses, professional development and services to children and families in Indonesia.** This has been possible through a partnership with Widya Mandala Catholic University in Surabaya, Indonesia and funding from the Canadian International Development Agency. Through the Indonesia Early Childhood Development project, we have also influenced the development of cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary relationships among VIU faculty and students, WMCUS faculty and students and the broader social service communities in Surabaya and Canada.

4. **To the education and training of Early Childhood Educators and the transfer of both theoretical knowledge and its application to professional practice.** By teaching ECEs in the classroom I have had the opportunity to enhance their awareness and understanding about their work as educators and caregivers. I have stressed the importance of a strong, relational connection to their work with children, families, community and the profession of Early Childhood Education. In this way, I believe I have helped to instill in others competence, pride in the importance of their work, and commitment to raising the profile of Early Childhood Education in both the private and public realm.

5. **To the holistic, healthy development of young children and their families through direct service in pre-school and day care services from 1974-1991.**
   a. Working with all children in ways that supported their own unique development and experience in the world and that ensured opportunities to explore and
b. Working with parents and other friends and families to promote caring and supportive relationships. In this way, I was able to demonstrate respect and caring for each family and their expressed needs and values.

c. Working with a rapidly expanding staff to promote, support and implement family-centred practice – practice that respected the knowledge that parents brought to the child care relationship about their child’s development and experience in family and community and that underscored the centrality of parents and family in the lives of children.

d. Working with staff to support and promote ‘best’ practice that consistently reflected and responded to the changing contexts of children’s lives, current research about good practice, expanding knowledge of child development, and the rapidly evolving professional and government standards.
PART 2 - CONSISTENCY WITH THE LOI

Summary of the consistency between the Full Proposal and the LOI's Original Intent and Demonstration of the Nominated Chair holder
Fulfillment of LOI Benchmark Criteria

The purpose of this letter is to verify that this “full proposal” is (1) consistent with the LOI’s original intent; and (2) demonstrates that the proposed AECD Chair meets the benchmarks established by the LOI. The full proposal has built on the direction that was outlined in the LOI, and the proposed program of research and innovation has developed a clearer focus following consultation with a number of Aboriginal individuals and communities. As in the LOI, the proposal emphasizes a generative model and response-based action research.

The LOI’s original intent - to design and implement a collaborative community development and learning model that will strengthen and expand parenting and family supports - remains at the core of the full proposal. In the LOI, it was recognized that achievement of success required the improvement of linkages and networks between community programs, services and educational organizations locally and provincially. The full proposal has kept to that key concept: the process is an essential component in achieving the intended results. The outcomes identified in the LOI remain the same in the full proposal. In keeping with the LOI, the full proposal focuses on two major goals:

1. to develop a model for Aboriginal action research that can be applied more broadly to initiatives undertaken in partnership with Aboriginal populations locally, nationally, and internationally, and

2. to assist Aboriginal communities in developing capacity and applying new capacity, education, and programming to improve family life.

Linda McDonell, our nominee for the BC Regional Innovation Chair, has qualifications that meet the benchmark criteria for the AECD appointment. She fully demonstrates that she has the experience and the capabilities to succeed in her proposed program of research. Ms McDonell has worked closely with all three of the people noted as benchmarks and has their full support as the leader of this initiative. Each of the benchmarks has offered to assist in ensuring the success of this innovation plan. Ms McDonell has a solid background in early childhood development, family practice, instruction and professional ECED reputation. She has worked closely and extensively with local Aboriginal organizations and has worked internationally in Indonesia. Most importantly, Ms McDonell’s well rounded experience, understanding and network of relationships will allow the AECD Chair to forge and merge connections between the ECE establishment, ECD students, communities, families and the numerous distinct cultures.

We are excited by Ms McDonell’s ability and her proposed research program. We are confident that this work will enable us to achieve the goals outlined in our Letter of Intent.
PART 3 - FULFILMENT OF PROVINCIAL RESEARCH AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES; ATTAINMENT OF QUALIFYING FUNDS

Summary of How the Proposed Chair Will Fulfill Long-Term Regional Economic Development Objectives

Vancouver Island University is convinced that the AECD Chair appointment and the proposed program of activities are vitally important in the achievement of long-term regional development objectives. The focus on social development is crucial, for without attention to social development, the economic development of our aboriginal communities will falter and their quality of life will diminish. As the research & innovation program indicates, economic and social developments are linked; economic development must be achieved through the development of community capacity which requires active participation of Aboriginal communities as partners in the process. Meetings with local Aboriginal communities have been held and will continue. (Appendix 1, Community, Provincial, and National Partnerships and Linkages, lists the community consultations and support.)

One of the strengths of this proposal is the further development of a promising support network of Aboriginal Early Childhood Development educators, researchers and workers that is emerging as a result of the proposal development. This support network includes post-secondary faculty and researchers and federal and provincial workers as well as community and agency members. On the research side, the advisory committee and Ms McDonell have started to pull together researchers from four universities in the province: Dr. Alan Pence, University of Victoria; Dr. Margo Greenwood of University of Northern BC, and Thompson Rivers University once their AECD Chair is in place. These innovative researchers bring a wealth of expertise to respond to AECD issues. Along with researchers, many educators, and community ECE organizations have been consulted and are eager to connect with the project to help bring about positive change. In addition, provincial Ministry staff and related organizations have expressed support for the project and a willingness to work as a team (Appendix 1)

Our proposal will lead, in several innovative ways, to the development of highly qualified people who will contribute to regional social and economic progress. The proposal emphasizes working with Aboriginal communities in a participatory action research approach where the participants themselves develop capacity and become knowledgeable supporters of AECD. The proposal demands focusing on a generative curriculum approach which involves the community in analyzing needs and gaps and in participating in developing curriculum for educating highly qualified AECD workers. Through the structure of the Innovation Chair and the research program, our student population from a variety of disciplines will work with researchers and

---

3 Nanaimo’s Economic Development Strategy Document emphasizes the importance of understanding “the fundamental link between economic prosperity and quality of life, which together create a healthy community.”
http://www.edgnanaimo.com/strategy_exe_summary.shtml
communities as part of a learning process. Ultimately, as a direct result of the AECD Chair’s innovative research activities, we will expand opportunities for Aboriginal children.

**Evidence of Qualifying Funds**

Vancouver Island University has been able to procure the matching funding.
Appendix I - Community, Provincial, and National Partnerships and Linkages

Connections: Collaborative relationships

Collaborative relationships are also being pursued with the following provincial and national organizations:

- B.C. Aboriginal Society
- B.C. First Nations Education Steering Committee
- B.C. Aboriginal Infant Development Programs
- Coast Salish Employment and Training Society (B.C.)
- Tla’Amin Community Health Services (B.C.)
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Institute for Aboriginal Health
- Centre of Excellence on Children’s Health
- Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare
- National Indian Child Welfare Association
- National Youth in Care Network
- First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada
- Caring for First Nations Children Society
- Aboriginal Children’s Circle of Early Learning
- Office of the Chief Scientist – Health Canada
- Aboriginal Skills and Learning National Roundtable
- Canadian Child Care Federation

While maintaining a commitment to work in partnership with local communities, a pan-Canadian mandate will also be ensured by the structure of the proposed advisory committee. During the recruitment process for this advisory team, Aboriginal representation will be a priority—at local, regional, provincial and national levels.
Over the past few years, members of the AECD Proposal Committee have reconnected with our Aboriginal community partners and established new relationships in an effort to inform local and regional communities about the AECD initiative, and to invite their support and participation.

**Connections: First Nations Communities**

Relationship building and ongoing consultations with local and regional Aboriginal communities are, and will continue to be, central to the development of the AECD initiative.

To date, consultations have taken place in five communities:

- Cowichan Tribes
- Halalt First Nation
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Chemainus First Nation
- Penelekut Tribe

The purpose of these consultations has been to:

1. Provide each community with a clear overview of the Leading Edge Endowment Fund (LEEF) initiative;
2. Determine ways in which the AECD Chair might assist with existing or proposed community educational programs;
3. Develop an appreciation of the people from each community who might be interested in participating in the AECD initiative and to clarify appropriate protocol with regard to inviting this participation;
4. Remove barriers or perceived barriers to community involvement with this initiative;
5. Determine areas of research that could benefit community members with respect to the preparation of professional practitioners; and,
6. Continuously listen and learn about the child’s and community emerging needs in order for the Chair to responsively support and innovatively access resources to address those needs.

Members of the AECD Steering Committee have met with representatives of various associations, attended regional meetings and conferences, and shared information via teleconferences. Their efforts have garnered the interest and support of a number of Aboriginal service agencies and individuals working with and on behalf of Aboriginal communities.
These include but are not limited to:

1. B.C. Aboriginal Society and Success by Six Regional Dialogue Meeting – February 2005
2. Maynard Harry, Manager of the Sliammon Crown Lands Referrals Department (Former Chief of Sliammon)
3. Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada
4. Kelly Kitchen, Special Education Manager, First Nations Education Steering Committee Special Education Manager
5. Karen Issac, Operations Manager, B.C. Aboriginal Child Care Society
6. Diana Elliott, Provincial Advisor, Aboriginal Infant Development Programs
7. Danny Henry, Executive Director, Coast Salish Employment and Training Society
8. Lourette Bloomquist, Executive Director, Tla’Amin Community Health Board Society, Tla’Amin Community Health Services
9. Mark Sommerfeld, Transfer Coordinator, Inter Tribal Health Authority (ITHA
10. Robyn Gray, District Principal, Aboriginal Education, School District 68
11. Dr. Alan Pence, Director, (Indigenous) Early Childhood Development Virtual University (ECDVU) and Co-ordinator of the First Nations Partnership Program, University of Victoria
12. Jessica Ball, Professor, School of Child & Youth Care, University of Victoria.
13. Don Giesbrecht, President, Canadian Child Care Federation
14. Lisa Sterling, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

In addition to the support we have received, in principle, from the above individuals and societies, formal letters of support for the AECD initiative have been received from Shawn Atleo, VIU Chancellor; the Cultural and Education Administrator of the Cowichan Tribes Cultural and Education Centre; Elizabeth Pennell on behalf of the Nanaimo School District Early Years Program, and Joan Gignac, Executive Director, Aboriginal Head Start of British Columbia, and many more.

**Connections: Community Vision**

Following are highlights of the many thoughts and ideas from the individuals with whom we have met or talked thus far about the development of an Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Chair. This synopsis of themes represents contributions from individuals across different communities with respect to their vision for early childhood development.
**Children...**

- Children are the future.
- Children will be the voice in the future.
- Children need to be protected from trauma and abuse.
- People need good skills to be good parents.
- It is imperative that children learn cultural traditions and teachings, and the language of their people. Through their children, families can relearn this vital knowledge.

**Parents...**

- Parenting skills can be enhanced by rediscovering Aboriginal parental teachings and traditions.
- Young parents need opportunities to learn about their rights and entitlements.

**Culture and Tradition...**

- Elders must be acknowledged as role models and be an integral part of the educational process.
- Honour Aboriginal protocols and recognize that these will vary across communities.
- First Nations teachings must be incorporated into all areas of education.
- Native language issues are critical; literacy programs are essential.

**Teachers...**

- Develop ways of increasing Aboriginal participation as practitioners. There is not enough participation in all areas of the field (including post-secondary instruction), however “we have a really successful relationship with [Malaspina University-College], and have now succeeded in having 75% Aboriginal day-care staff.”
- Find ways to support and partner with Aboriginal M.A. or Ph.D. students doing research in the areas of families, communities and early childhood development.
• Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers must be familiar with and practise culture and traditions.

• We must understand the characteristics of care providers that will promote nurturing and supportive environments for children.

• Trained educators are vital to promoting and enhancing early childhood development.

• Teachers must model and teach respect.

• More understanding is needed to enhance the retention, commitment and success of teachers of young children.

• Teaching methodologies need to be more inclusive of and meet the needs of Aboriginal teachers in training.

• It would be beneficial to involve successful graduates of Early Childhood Education and Child and Youth Care programs to mentor students in training.

**Research must equal ACTION...**

• Prevention through education is essential.

• There is great value in such work because there are a lot of things that aren’t understood, and understanding may help us to improve the situation for people in our communities.

• The focus of the goals and the research must be clear.

• The focus needs to be on solutions, not problems.

• Concrete outcomes must be pursued.

• We must act on what ‘communities know’ about their needs.

• We need less research and more action and follow through.

• We need to learn from and build on the success of Aboriginal Head Start programs.

• Partnerships need to be meaningful—“not just rubber stamping.”

• Ongoing communication is essential to maintain and enhance partnerships.

**Health Issues must be Acknowledged and Addressed...**

• The healthy growth and development of children is the key to healthy families and healthy communities.
• There are direct health benefits to children if families and communities are well supported in their roles and responsibilities to raise their children.

• Alcohol issues must be addressed.

• More information about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) is needed.

**Acknowledge History...**

• We need to acknowledge the effects of colonization and that Aboriginal people are residential school survivors.

• Residential schools have resulted in educational, employment and parenting issues. Consequences include long-term effects on self-esteem and the transmission of language from one generation to the next.

• We should increase understanding about the effects of history, culture (including language) and social issues.

The points above provide us with a foundation that can inform the process of creating a meaningful role for the AECD chair, so that the chair can work in partnership with Aboriginal communities towards their unique vision of early childhood development.

These issues match the concerns noted during the Aboriginal Leadership Forum on Early Childhood Development sponsored by the B.C. Aboriginal Child Care Society in 2003. **The need for adequate funding, coordination of services and trained Aboriginal practitioners to ensure that children and families experience accessible, comprehensive, universal, sustainable and culturally relevant early childhood development opportunities is highlighted in the report Many Voices, Common Cause** (which can be found at [http://acc-society.bc.ca/files_new/pdf_documents/PuttingChildrenFirst.pdf](http://acc-society.bc.ca/files_new/pdf_documents/PuttingChildrenFirst.pdf)).
Appendix 2- Building Capacity

Maynard Harry, Manager of Sliammon Crown Land Referral Department and former Chief of Sliammon, recognized the potential of the AECD initiative to truly make a difference in the lives of Aboriginal children and families by building community capacity. He wrote:

“I would be honoured to be considered a reference. My work with Success by Six should provide me with the necessary background regarding early childhood development … [T]he brochure … is very impressive. The kids in the photographs are just beautiful. It is good to see a project like this and of this magnitude come about. It is long overdue …”

(Maynard Harry, E-mail, May 3, 2003)

“Children are not our possessions, they are gifts to us. This is the belief of our people. Children must be restored to their place, the heart of the community, and in doing so restore our communities to a place of power and self-sufficiency.”


The creation of the AECD chair offers opportunities for innovative community-based partnerships that have the potential to benefit children and families at the local, regional, provincial and national levels through action based and participatory research. Ultimately, such innovation will build the capacity of Aboriginal communities to conduct research and to use these findings towards infusing culturally relevant knowledge into both post secondary institutional AECD curriculum, emerging professional relevant AECD practices.

To build community capacity, the AECD chair will:

- Respect and honour the unique protocols and traditions of each community;
- Develop mutually respectful relationships based on trust;
- Recognize and utilize the knowledge and experience of community members;
• Take on a coordinating role—be a conduit; and actively listen to community concerns and vision for their children and communities.

• Focus on participatory action research and engage community members to take active participatory roles in the development and implementation of each research endeavour; and,

• Ensure that follow-through is meaningful, and that outcomes are recognizable and measurable.
February 4th, 2009

Re:  Vancouver Island University proposal for BC Regional Chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development

To:  VIU BCRIC AEC Development Team

My name is Diana Elliott and I am the Provincial Advisor for the Office of the Provincial Advisor for Aboriginal Infant Development Programs. This letter is being sent to support Vancouver Island University (VIU) and their proposal submission for a Chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development.

Creating best outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families means integrating cultural and communal traditions into early childhood education, and this requires specialized training for early childhood practitioners. The Chair will work to enhance the educational experience of post-secondary students in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development which will build capacity and confidence within Aboriginal practitioners. The Chair will facilitate a community-driven research process that involves stakeholders and community members at all levels while respecting Aboriginal traditions and values.

As I understand it, VIU chose this area of research after receiving feedback from Aboriginal students in their programs and the Aboriginal communities with whom they work, as well as their faculty’s extensive experience in this area. The feedback they have received has consistently reinforced the importance of strong families and strong communities to support the development of young Aboriginal children for early and lifelong learning.

From the perspective of the Ministry for Children and Families, this research and these partnerships will be of great benefit to Aboriginal children and communities and provide comfort in that the research and what comes from it will be from an Aboriginal perspective, ownership, control, access and possession (OCAP) which is the philosophy that the AIDP office refers to in our own data collection.

This project fits with the current provincial agenda around Aboriginal Early Childhood development and our program and community philosophies over the decade of change in Aboriginal ECD.
VIU will provide a good institutional environment for this Chair in the long-term as it has with Aboriginal students for many years in ECE and child and youth care education opportunities.

We look forward to our future participation in this valuable project either as a member of the Advisory Committee or in another capacity.

I understand that VIU has the necessary matching funds and a nominee who will be very capable of taking on the role of Aboriginal ECD Chair. I am happy to hear that VIU has persevered in this process and look forward to hearing good news of a successful proposal.

Sincerely,

Diana Elliott
Provincial Advisor for
Aboriginal Infant Development Programs

Administering Agency - BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres
Funded by - Ministry of Children and Family Development
January 29, 2009

Laureen Styles  
Dean, Faculty of Health and Human Services  
Vancouver Island University  
900 Fifth Street  
Nanaimo, BC  V9R 555

Dear Laureen,

Re: Support For a Chair for Aboriginal Early Childhood Development

Having had the opportunity to review your efforts to create and maintain a BC Regional Innovation Chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development at Vancouver Island University, we are offering a letter of support for the initiative.

Aboriginal cultures across Canada have expended significant resources over the past two decades restoring values and practices related to the healthy growth and development of children. Such efforts have included supportive partnerships and innovative approaches including long-term research undertakings such as Vancouver Island University is implementing.

We commend your collaborative approach to work closely with regional Aboriginal communities and look forward to the work undertaken in VIU’s proposal: Creating Connections: Community, Culture and Professional AECID Practice.

In friendship,

Grace Elliott Nielsen  
Executive Director

Rene Robinson  
President, Board of Directors
February 3, 2009

Dr. Martha Salcudean  
Chair, BC Regional Innovation Chair Committee  
c/o Dr. Max Cairns  
Leading Edge Endowment Fund  
9th Floor, 1188 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver, BC V6E 4A2

Dear Dr. Salcudean,

As the first Chancellor of Vancouver Island University and the Hereditary Chief of the Ahousaht First Nation, I am pleased to provide this letter in support of the VIU initiative to establish a BC Regional Innovation Chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development.

The importance of this Chair to First Nations cannot be overstated. First Nations need to build capacity for our future, and our children lie at the heart of that future. The establishment of this Chair will provide the collaborative approach needed to bring culturally relevant practices together with support for early childhood development.

The nominee, Linda McDonell, while not of aboriginal ancestry, has worked in the field of early childhood development for many years and has established good working relationships with First Nation communities. She understands the importance of elders being involved in the classroom and of working collaboratively with First Nations in designing culturally appropriate curriculum.

The candidate and the proposed innovation plan have been developed collaboratively, which reflects the approach outlined in the proposal.

On behalf of First Nations, I applaud a key goal of this initiative which is to build aboriginal leadership capacity through mentoring, partnering, internship and the ultimate recruitment of a Chair with aboriginal ancestry. Both the candidate and the institution are committed to this goal and to working with those involved in aboriginal early childhood development to enhance the future health and well-being of children, families and communities.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo  
Chancellor, Vancouver Island University
Memo

To: Laureen Styles, Dean, Faculty of Health and Human Services, VIU
From: Elizabeth Pennell, Coordinator Early Years Program, SD 68
CC: Liz Hammond-Kaarremaa, Director of Research and Scholarly Activity, VIU
Date: 03/03/2009
Re: Aboriginal Early Child Development Chair

I am writing to support Vancouver Island University’s plan to create a research chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Education. The importance of early child development and the long reaching affects of success in this area can not be underestimated. All children have a fundamental need and right to grow up in an environment that is caring, nurturing and respectful of the cultural and familial backgrounds of their worlds.

For the past four years I have been the Coordinator of the Early Years Program for School District 68. This position has included extensive work with community partners whose work is supported by two government initiatives, Success by Six and Children First. Each of these programs has created opportunities for capacity building in our schools and communities and has provided support for programs and services to families of young children.

Two years ago funding from Success by Six was provided to an Aboriginal Engagement program to support early childhood programs. Since that time the aboriginal communities within the geographic boundaries of School District 68 have been working together and with community partnership tables to support families of young children. Many projects were initiated; outreach to young families, Celebration of Children events, Elder Story Telling evenings, the development of early literacy kits supporting a home visitation program. These are only the beginning of what can be done through collaborative relationships among First Nations and other communities. We know from research and experience that such programs are effective in providing crucial support to families and children, support that makes a difference. The role of the VIU Chair will be significant in supporting research, education, and the development of ideas and programs that will ensure the future success of Aboriginal children.

The position of the Aboriginal Early Child Development Chair will provide a strong foundation of support to everyone in the community engaged in the work of creating the best possible early learning environments for young aboriginal children. I am sure we will all have much to gain from this endeavour.

With Most Sincere Wishes of Success

Elizabeth Pennell
Coordinator Early Years Program School District 68
Co Chair Greater Nanaimo Early Years Partnership
February 2, 2009

Leading Edge Endowment Fund Secretariat
c/o 1048 – 4720 Kingsway
Burnaby, B.C.
V5H 4N2

Re: Vancouver Island University Chair in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development

Vancouver Island University’s First Nations Advisory Committee (FNAC) supports VIU’s LEEF proposal for the Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Regional Innovation Chair (AECD-RI).

The work of the AECD Chair will integrate well with community and believe Vancouver Island University will provide a good institutional environment in the development and promotion of Aboriginal ECD locally, regionally and provincially. The VIU AECD RI Chair will collaboratively create new opportunities in developing innovative, high quality, and culturally relevant, community-based programs and services strengthening professional AECD training and practices.

We support Linda McDonell as our AECD Chair with the knowledge that there will continue to be a search for an Aboriginal person to fill this position. Supporting the AECD Chair will be an AECD Advisory Council in collaboration with communities and FNAC; creating working structures and finalizing guiding principles, objectives and strategies for the AECD RI Chair.

We FNAC members and communities look forward to continued participation in this valuable project serving our children, families and communities.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Joe Elliott, Chair
VIU First Nations Advisory Committee
## First Nations Advisory Committee Contacts

1) Chemainus First Nation  
   Chief Terry Sampson  
   Rep: Tabitha Aleck  
   Ph: (250) 245-7155  
   FAX (250) 245-3012  
   Email: tabitha.aleck@cfnation.com  
   12611 Trans Canada Hwy  
   Ladysmith, BC  
   V9G 1M5

2) Chemainus Native College  
   12541 Trans Canada Hwy  
   Rep: Joe Elliott  
   Ph: (250) 245-3522  
   FAX (250) 245-8263  
   Email: joe.elliott@cfnation.com  
   PO Box 730  
   Ladysmith, BC  
   V9G 1A5

3) Cowichan Tribes Education  
   Chief Harvey Alphonse  
   Rep: Karen Collins  
   Ph: (250) 715-1022  
   FAX; (250) 715-1023  
   Email: Karen.collins@cowichantribes.com  
   5744 Allenby Road  
   Duncan, BC  
   V9L 5J1

4) Halalt First Nations  
   Chief Joseph Norris  
   Rep: Tyler George  
   Ph: (250) 246-4736  
   FAX (250) 246-2330  
   Email: education@cowichan.com  
   RR 1, 8017 Chemainus Road  
   Chemainus, BC  
   V0R 1K0

5) Hiiyte’yu Lelum House of Friendship  
   Administrator: Michelle Williams  
   Rep: Lucy Thomas  
   Ph: (250) 748-2242  
   FAX (250) 748-2238  
   Email: lucy_thomas2002@hotmail.com  
   PO Box 1015,  
   Duncan, BC  
   V9L 3Y2

6) Kwakiutl District Council  
   Rep: Lisa Wilson-Wells  
   Ph: (250) 286-3263  
   FAX (250) 286-3268  
   Email: polikdc@oberon.ark.com  
   PO Box 489  
   Campbell River, BC  
   V9W 5C1
7) Vancouver Island University
   Ex-Aboriginal Students Union
   Rep: Ian Caplette
   Ph: (250) 754-8866
   FAX: (250) 754-8919
   Email: canis173@hotmail.com

8) Cowichan Valley Métis Association
   Rep: Judy Dallin
   Ph: (250) 746-6271
   FAX
   Email: trishparent@shaw.ca

9) NanOOSE First Nation
   Chief Dave Bob
   Rep: Patti Edwards
   Ph: (250) 390-3310
   FAX (250) 390-1537
   Email: education@nanoose.org

10) Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
    Executive Director: Florence Wylie
    Rep: Maria Gomez
    Ph: (250) 724-5757
    FAX:(250) 723-0463
    Email: mariagomez@nuuchahnulth.org

11) Penelakut Indian Band
    Chief Earl Jack
    Rep: Cecelia Harris
    Toll Free 1-877-246-0530
    Ph: (250) 246-2321
    FAX (250) 246-2725
    Email: cecelia@penelakut.ca

12) Port Alberni Friendship Center
    Executive Director: Cindy Stevens
    Rep: Jeff Jeffries
    Toll Free 1-888-723-7232
    Ph: (250) 723-8281
    FAX (250) 723-1877
    Email: jeffries@alberni.net
13) Qualicum First Nations  
Chief Trish Cassidy  
Rep: Donna Kennedy  
Ph: (250) 757-9337  
FAX (250) 757-9898  
Email: council.qualicum@shaw.ca

14) Sliammon First Nations  
Chief Maynard Harry  
Rep: Lindsay Louie  
Ph: (604) 483-9646 ext. 224  
FAX (604) 483-4427  
Email:

15) Snuneymuxw First Nation  
Chief John Wesley  
Rep: Michelle Sokoloski  
Ph: (250) 754-3033  
FAX (250) 754-1489  
Email: tinam@snuneymuxw.ca

16) Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre  
Executive Director: Grace Neilsen  
Rep: Barbara Pollard  
Ph: (250) 753-8291  
FAX (250) 753-6560  
Email: admin@tillicumhaus.ca

17) School District #68  
Principal of Aboriginal Education  
Rep: Stella Bates  
Ph: (250) 741-5318  
FAX: (250) 741-5307  
Email: sbates@sd68.bc.ca