



Message from the President

Éy swáyel Colleagues,

As summer begins, I want to take a moment to reflect on the year we have just completed and to express my sincere gratitude to the entire UFV community.

Over the past several months, I have had the privilege of seeing, in so many ways, the dedication, care, and commitment that define this university.

Whether in classrooms, labs, offices, meetings, student spaces, or community partnerships, your work continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and in the communities we serve. Thank you for all that you

have contributed over the past year to support UFV's mission and to help shape our university as a place of learning, belonging, and transformation.

Earlier this month, we celebrated thousands of graduates as they crossed the stage at Convocation and began their next chapter. It was a remarkable celebration of achievement, possibility, and transformation. But Convocation is also a powerful reminder that none of those moments happen on their own. They are the culmination of the work that each of you do every day — teaching, mentoring, supporting, advising, researching, creating opportunities, solving problems, and helping students discover what they are capable of becoming.

As an Ashoka Changemaker Campus, we often talk about the importance of preparing students not only to succeed, but to contribute, lead, and create positive change in the world. Convocation was a wonderful reminder that this work is happening every day at UFV, through your teaching, mentorship, support, leadership, and care.

As we close a year that has asked a great deal of many across our community, I hope the summer months bring opportunities for rest, renewal, and time with those who matter most.

Thank you again for everything you do for UFV and for one another.

Kw'as hoy

Dr. James Mandigo



Campus and Community Highlights

Changemaker Coffee Houses

I was grateful for the opportunity to connect with many of you at the recent coffee houses in Abbotsford and Chilliwack. Those gatherings were a valuable reminder of the importance of making space to listen, share ideas, and connect with one another across our campuses.

At the coffee houses, we asked folks to reflect on our journey as a Changemaker University. What we heard was that colleagues across UFV shared a strong desire for connection, collaboration, and meaningful impact. People feel most connected through relationships, inclusive environments, and opportunities to participate in events, initiatives, and shared work. There is clear motivation to act as changemakers, but barriers such as limited time, competing priorities, resource constraints, and unclear processes can sometimes make it difficult to move forward. Many also expressed a need for greater clarity around what changemaking means in practice and a shared vision of seeing the positive impact of our work — especially in the lives of students.

I look forward to continuing the conversations throughout the year and finding opportunities for all members of our UFV community to become empowered positive changemakers.

Integrated Strategic Plan Renewal

Over the past six months, many members of our university community have shared their ideas and perspectives as part of the refresh of UFV's Integrated Strategic Plan. Thank you to everyone who participated in surveys, focus groups, and discussions. Your input is helping shape the priorities that will guide UFV over the next five years.

What has been especially encouraging is the strong alignment across our community. Early feedback highlights shared priorities around meaningful community partnerships, experiential learning, student well-being, and creating opportunities for lifelong learning. Over the summer, this feedback will be analyzed and used to inform the next draft of the plan.

At the Changemaker Coffee Houses, we asked folks to provide feedback on a potential revision to UFV's existing vision statement to incorporate our commitment to being changemakers. We invite you to share your feedback by July 31, 2026.

Submit your feedback

This fall, we will continue the conversation by sharing a public draft for feedback before bringing the renewed Integrated Strategic Plan forward for Senate and Board approval in early 2027. I encourage everyone to stay engaged as we work together to shape UFV's future.

Experiential Learning Lab

On June 17, I was delighted to attend the launch of UFV's new Experiential Learning Lab on our Chilliwack campus — a dynamic, simulation-based environment designed to strengthen nursing education.

Supported by funding from the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, this innovative space allows students to build critical thinking and hands-on skills in a setting that closely mirrors real clinical practice, helping bridge the gap between classroom learning and patient care. As demand on our health-care system grows, the lab ensures our learners are confident, well prepared, and ready to contribute.

The ELL also reflects UFV's strong commitment to collaboration and community impact, creating new opportunities to partner with health authorities, Indigenous communities, and others across the region.

I am proud of the collective effort that brought this vision to life and excited about the difference it will make for our students — and the communities they will serve. [Check out the photos here.](#)



Commitment to Student Success across the Fraser Valley

At this year's [ConnectED conference](#), the University of the Fraser Valley announced a partnership with six public school districts across the Fraser Valley to support student transition and access to post-secondary education:

- Abbotsford School District
- Chilliwack School District
- Fraser-Cascade School District
- Langley School District
- Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows School District
- Mission School District

This agreement is intended to improve student success from kindergarten through post-secondary graduation. Building on a shared regional vision, partners are aligning efforts across the public education systems to support student success as they transition to post-secondary education.

This partnership will support students in maintaining consistent learning experiences, pursuing their academic objectives, benefiting from culturally

responsive and evidence-based teaching methods, and accessing opportunities that align with their identities and ambitions.

[Read more about the Commitment Paper for Student Success.](#)



Celebrating the Gifts of Others

Tenure and Promotion

Congratulations to 15 UFV faculty members for completing UFV's Tenure and Promotion process in 2025–26. This professional milestone acknowledges significant achievement in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service.

During the 2025–26 cycle, the following faculty member applied for, and has been granted, promotion to Professor:

- Dr. Zina Lee (Criminology and Criminal Justice)

Additionally, the following faculty members have been granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor:

- Alejandro Yoshizawa (Creative Arts)
- Brock Hartman (Electrical)
- Dr. Carl Nienhuis (Kinesiology)
- Chelsea Wedel (Nursing)
- Dr. Kevin Burk (Criminology and Criminal Justice)
- Dr. Keziah Wallis (Culture, Media, and Society)
- Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker (Indigenous Studies)
- Dr. Luisa Giles (Kinesiology)
- Manjot Gill (Nursing)
- Marc Bardaro (Automotive)
- Dr. Rita Dhungel (Social Work and Human Services)
- Dr. Timothy Dueck (Social Work and Human Services)
- Trevor Embury (Graphic and Digital Design)
- William Maher (Creative Arts)

Outgoing Board of Governors Members

Members of UFV's Board of Governors volunteer their time and expertise to oversee the university's strategic direction, financial stewardship, and institutional accountability to ensure it fulfills its mission and serves the public interest. The following individuals will complete their terms effective July 31 as Governors, and I would like to thank them for their outstanding service:

- Cristen Gleeson
- Angelina Joseph
- John Pankratz
- Bailey Savage
- Jinder Sarowa
- Daria Tsynda

Thank you to Lesa Lacey who will assume the role of Board Chair and Stacey Crawford who will assume the role of Vice Chair effective August 1, 2026 for a one-year term.

Award Recipients

Congratulations to this year's Staff Excellence Award recipients:

- Priscilla Ang, Counselling Department Head — Staff Excellence
- Dr. Jelena Brcic, Associate Professor, School of Business — Research Excellence
- The Brightspace Implementation Team — Teamwork Excellence
- Mark Brosinski, Director, Budgets and Resource Planning — Inspirational Leadership
- Mary Stewart, Associate Professor, Modern Languages (posthumous award) — Indigenization and Reconciliation
- Dr. Brianna Strumm, Associate Professor, Social Work and Human Services — Teaching Excellence

Congratulations to Dr. Lolehawk Buker as one of this year's recipients of the West Coast Teaching Excellence Award.

Congratulations to Dr. Joanne MacLean, former UFV President, as this year's recipient of U Sports Austin-Matthews Award recognizing her outstanding leadership and lifelong contributions to Canadian university sport as an athlete, coach, administrator, scholar, and university leader.

Congratulations to members of the Information Technology Services (ITS) team who were recognized at the 2026 Ellucian Live conference for their development of the UFV Alerts, the university's new in-house emergency communications system.

Congratulations to Dr. Anthony von Mandl, UFV honorary doctorate recipient in 2019, for being inducted into the Canadian Business Hall of Fame.



Employee Excellence Awards Event | June 16, 2026

Student Union Society Executive

One of the greatest strengths of UFV is the commitment of our students to making our university community better for everyone. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our outgoing Student Union Society executives, Bilal Faisal Faheem, Eeman Kaur, and Gurpreet Singh, whose terms concluded on April 30. Thank you for your leadership, your advocacy, and the time and energy you dedicated to representing your fellow students. Your contributions have helped strengthen the student experience and leave a lasting impact on our campus.

I would also like to warmly welcome our new Student Union Society executive team, who began their terms on May 1: President Tanvir Hundal, Vice-President Internal Prabujot Bagri, Vice-President External Zack Castiglia, and Vice-President Students Saif Qazilbash. I look forward to working alongside you in the year ahead as we continue creating a welcoming and supportive university where every student has the opportunity to thrive and make a positive impact. Thank you for stepping forward to serve the UFV community.

Celebrating UFV's Gold STARS Rating

I am proud to share that UFV has earned a gold rating through the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), one of the world's leading frameworks for measuring sustainability in post-secondary education.

This achievement recognizes the outstanding work taking place across our university — from teaching and research to campus operations, planning, student engagement, and community partnerships. It reflects years of dedication by our faculty, staff, students, and partners, and demonstrates that sustainability is deeply embedded in how we learn, work, and serve our communities.

While this recognition is an important milestone, it is also a reminder that sustainability is an ongoing journey. Thank you to the Office of Sustainability: Alara Cremer, Karima Cherifi, Doran Hoge, Jennifer Martel, Alicia Nightingale, and everyone whose efforts contributed to this achievement.

Grounded Innovation

The Food and Agriculture Institute hosted the third Grounded Innovation Summit 3.0 at UFV's Chilliwack campus in Canada Education Park. The focus this year was on “exploring how agriculture connects to community well-being, climate action, and economic resilience for long-term food security.” It was an inspiring day of One Health in action that brought together “thinkers, practitioners, and decision-makers for dialogue around solution-focused work.” Special thanks to Dr. Lenore Newman, Dr. Stefania Pizzirani, and Dr. Alesandros Glaros for their leadership and the entire FAI Team for an inspiring day and to the Sustainable Food Systems for Canada Network for their national leadership.

Celebrating 25 Years of Alumni Association

This year, the UFV Alumni Association celebrates its 25th anniversary. Our alumni, now over 56,000 strong, continue to be changemakers all over the world.

If you have been watching the FIFA World Cup like I have, and in particular the games from Vancouver in B.C. Place, you will have seen the expertise of our alumni being featured on the world stage. The turf for the stadium was grown by Bos Sod Farms in Abbotsford by alumni from the Bos Family: Nicoline Bos,

Agri-Tech Diploma; Caleb Bos, Business Diploma; and Jaron Bos, Business Diploma.

Thank you to our Community Supporters

Since their first gift in 1995, Coast Capital has donated over \$1M to support students at the University of the Fraser Valley. This longstanding partnership reflects a shared commitment to expanding access to education and strengthening communities across the Fraser Valley. Their most recent contributions have gone towards supporting UFV's Inclusion and Access in Trades and Technology Strategy. The focus of the Coast Capital Leadership Award is on students who have overcome barriers and are contributing positively to their communities.

Thanks to the generosity of Dr. John Anderson and Oppy, UFV honorary doctorate recipient in 2025, four agriculture students were able to attend the 2026 Canadian Produce Marketing Association Convention and Tradeshow in Toronto. This opportunity provided students with their first major industry conference, and they returned with greater confidence to ask questions, initiate conversations, pursue opportunities, and see themselves as future leaders within the agriculture and produce sector.



Coast Capital Leadership Awards Event | April 28, 2026



Questions or ideas?

Have a question you'd like answered in the next newsletter, or want to share feedback or story ideas? Email the [President's Office](#).

Share your question or idea



The University of the Fraser Valley is situated on the territory of the Stó:lō peoples. The Stó:lō have an intrinsic relationship with what they refer to as S'olh Temexw (Our Sacred Land). We express our gratitude and respect for the honour of living, learning, and working in this territory.



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