

Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development
Government of British Columbia

THEY CAME TO LEARN, THEY STAYED TO DREAM

What is drawing more than 27,000 international participants, representing over 150 countries to British Columbia? And no, it's not the 2010 Winter Games. B.C.'s excellent public post-secondary school system attracts students from around the world, interested in everything from language and trades training through to graduate programs and world-class research facilities.

- Greater Vancouver is the destination of choice for over 18,500 international students – more than any other Canadian city.
- Since 2001, British Columbia has invested over \$1.5 billion in research and leveraged more than \$900 million in added research funding from other sources.
- The Government of British Columbia has developed an on-line resource for prospective students looking to come to B.C. The LearnLiveBC website www.learnlivebc.ca/media/welcome.htm provides links to all public post secondary institutions, the application and student visa processes, and an introduction to living in B.C.

CONTACTS



Michele Battisti

In B.C. since 2007, Michele is working on his PhD thesis in Economics at Simon Fraser University.

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Home Town / Country: Aldeno (Trento), Italy

Languages: Italian, English, German (intermediate), Danish (beginner)

Michele's main research interests are in the areas of Labour Economics, Economics of Education and Economics and Politics of Migration. Developing expertise in these fields during MSc studies at the University of York (UK), and during PhD studies at Simon Fraser University, Michele has been involved with the Centre for Education Research and Policy at SFU, involved in projects focusing on peer effects and special needs student and on Aboriginal education in British Columbia. Interests include migration and the role of migration in the labour market.

While completing his masters degree at York, Michele decided to pursue PhD studies in British Columbia motivated by advice received about the quality of the faculty, and by great things heard about B.C. and about Greater Vancouver.





Wei Shi

Graduate studies (PhD) Electrical and Computer Engineering, Faculty Applied Science at UBC (Point Grey Campus)

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Drawn to B.C. by the lure of world-class research, advanced facilities, and beautiful ocean and mountains, Wei Shi’s research is focused on developing new optical communication technologies. His current research project is aimed at developing devices and systems that are low cost, small sized and able to handle more data, helping to bring fiber-to-the-home (FTTH), local and wide area networks.

Wei’s most memorable Vancouver experience so far has been the birth of his first child. Although far from other family members, he says his friends provided family-like love and support. In his words, “it was an amazing journey full of love and friendship and definitely the most memorable experience in all my life.”

UBC Microsystems and Nanotechnology Group, ([MiNa](#)) is a dedicated team of visionary and exploratory researchers from the departments of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Chemical and Biological Engineering and Physics and Astronomy.



Post-graduate researcher, UBC/Child & Family Research Institute

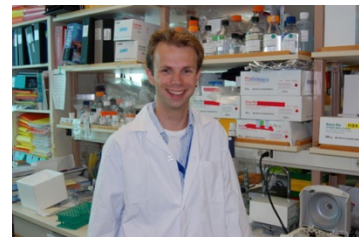
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Hendrik’s goal is to become a clinician-scientist, bringing new developments from the lab to the clinic. His research is focused on serious adverse drug reactions (ADR’s), the fourth leading cause of death and illness in the developed world. ADRs claim many lives and costing billions of dollars each year. Children are especially at risk for ADRs: an estimated 15 per cent of all children admitted to hospitals get ADRs.



While working on his MD in the Netherlands, Hendrik visited Vancouver for a research project. He is currently completing a postdoctoral fellowship at UBC/Child & Family Research Institute.

The Child & Family Research Institute is situated on the 46-acre campus of the Children's & Women's Health Centre of B.C. CFRI is it the largest research institute of its kind in Western Canada in terms of people, productivity, funding and size.



Costanza Casiraghi

In B.C. since January 2008, Costanza is completing graduate studies in microbiology and immunology, with a particular interest in exploring the link between Epstein-Barr virus and multiple sclerosis.

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Home town / Country: Arcore, Italy

“I always thought that international experiences are fundamental if your area of expertise is life sciences,” says Casiraghi.

“After my bachelor degree in Italy, I considered the idea of pursuing a PhD degree in North America. I chose UBC because of its excellent reputation. When I first met my supervisor, I was impressed by both his publication record and the exciting research pursued by his lab.”



In addition to finding a good match for her interests at UBC, Casiraghi also enjoys similarities between her home town and B.C. “B.C. is a great place for outdoor activities that are one of my greatest passions. I love outdoor activities especially hiking and skiing. I remember the first time I went to Whistler for a day of skiing. It was February 2008 and I was still a lot home sick (I came in January 2008). When the bus drove past West Vancouver and I saw the spectacular Howe Sound with high mountains capped with snow, I was so delighted! When then I arrived in Whistler and I realized how beautiful it was, so close to ‘my Alps’, I understood that I made the right decision.”



Sergey Blagodurov

In BC since 2008, currently completing his doctoral degree at Simon Fraser University, Computer Architecture, specializing in systems

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Home Town / Country: Moscow, Russia

As a researcher, Sergey is primarily interested in improving operating systems for computers with multicore processors, the heart of server



and desktop computers on the market today. One of the major challenges faced by the research community today is analyzing the potential performance of a multicore processor. Sergey's work on these systems will help to increase performance.

While finishing his MSc in Russia, Sergey decided to apply to a PhD program to advance his research abilities and pursue a scientific career. He had offers from several universities in Russia, USA and Canada, but he chose Vancouver because he had the opportunity to do research in the area of particular interest to him, namely, multi-core systems and operating systems design, and the opportunity to work with Dr. Alexandra Fedorova. He enjoys hiking, and the Greater Vancouver area is one of the best places to hike.



Kefu ZHAO

In B.C. since 2008, Kefu is an undergraduate student in SFU's dual degree computer science program.

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Home Town / Country: Zhejiang, China



As an undergraduate student in the Dual Degree Program at Simon Fraser University, Kefu Zhao's goal is to become an architectural engineer of business information systems. Because of fast-growing advances in software technology, the efficiency of the traditional business process and the reliability of the underlying data can be greatly enhanced. From work experience at HSBC's Software House, he believes that a strong and high-performing business information system cannot live without well-designed architecture. As a result, his future focus will be doing research on building software architecture, including web design, software backbone, etc. Starting in September 2009, Kefu will be doing a co-op work term at IBM's Victoria-based lab.

The two things Vancouver has most impressed upon Kefu are the nice people and cool weather. When he is lost on the street, people are always very patient to show him the way. As for the weather, it is never too hot or too cold. Now he knows the reason why Vancouver is one of the most liveable cities in the world.

The Dual Degree Program at SFU Computing Science is an exciting and unique program designed to attract highly-motivated individuals who recognize the importance of international experience, particularly with building a career network with China. Upon completion of this program, DDP students will receive dual degrees in Computing Science—a B.Sc. from SFU, and a Computer Engineering degree from Zhejiang University.



Fereydoun Hormozdiari

In BC since 2004, Fereydoun completed his MSc (2006) at Simon Fraser University, and now is working on his PhD in SFU's School of Computing Science.

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Home Town / Country: Tehran, Iran

Languages: Farsi, English and Dari (Gabri)

Fereydoun is focused on computational biology, personal genomics and personalized medicine. His goal is to develop tools and algorithms for finding all the variations in genomes between different individuals, the first step to detecting the underlining cause of a variety of diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's. Hopefully this sort of research would help in early detection and treatment of these diseases.

Fereydoun had various opportunities to continue his studies elsewhere, but chose Vancouver because the Computing Science department at SFU is one of the strongest in Canada and in the world, especially in graduate studies and research. He also has the opportunity to work with Dr. Cenk Sahinalp, and values both the strong Iranian community and nice weather.

Fereydoun holds a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) doctoral fellowship (Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarship) and accomplishments to date include more than ten papers in top journals in Genetics, Genomics and Bioinformatics. He is also involved in the "1000 genome project" whose goal is to sequence more than 1000 individuals.



Andrea Tagliasacchi

In B.C. since 2007, Andrea is a PhD candidate at GrUVi Laboratories - Simon Fraser University, studying computer graphics and geometry modeling, which are widely used in the computer animation industry.

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Home Town / Country: Como, Italy

Languages: Italian, English, Mandarin (beginner)

Andrea's ambition is to become a leading researcher in computer graphics. In 2005, Andrea had the opportunity to participate in a formal exchange program between his previous Italian university (Politecnico di Milano) and Simon Fraser University. After taking his first computer graphics classes, Andrea realized his passion for media processing was especially drawn towards its visual aspects. After completing his M.Sc. he was interested in pursuing a Ph.D at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver because he felt SFU provided a thrilling environment and the potential for competitiveness in international research, with an opportunity to work under the supervision of Dr. Richard Hao Zhang. Vancouver also reminds him of his hometown, but with many more people and opportunities.

The GrUVi laboratories are located at Simon Fraser University, atop Burnaby Mountain in the Technology and Science Complex. The lab was founded in 1992 by Professor Tom Calvert and today hosts an inter-disciplinary team of researchers exploring new methods in computer graphics, visualization and human-computer interaction. Research is mainly supported by the Canadian Foundation for Innovation and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada grants, and also often engages with industry research through MITACS (*Mathematics of Information Technology and Complex Systems*) a synergy of 62 universities, industry, government and not-for-profit organizations which helps turn Canadian research into economic and social benefits for all.

VISUAL RESOURCES

- High resolution images of students / researchers shown in this document are available through Corinna Filion at the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, contact below.
- A video presentation of British Columbia's post-secondary institutions is available on line at: www.learnlivebc.ca/media/welcome.htm

WEB RESOURCES

- **LearnLive BC** provides an overview and introduction to British Columbia's post-secondary institutions, helpful information about student visas, travel and culture. www.learnlivebc.ca
- **Welcome BC** is a comprehensive resource developed to enhance settlement and integration services, including foreign students wishing to study in B.C. www.welcomebc.ca
- **The British Columbia Council for International Education** provides students with essential information on education options at secondary and post-secondary levels, including short-term programs such as ESL, trades training, diploma or degree programs at public institutions. www.bccie.bc.ca
- Through MITACS graduate and post-doctoral internship program, MITACS leads the creation of internships across industry sectors and academic disciplines. MITACS offers students the opportunity to apply their research to real-world issues. www.mitacs.math.ca

MEDIA COVERAGE

1. German-born Helge Seetzen is a UBC physics and philosophy alumnus and chief technology officer of Sunnybrook Technologies, a UBC spin-off company developing monitors that display images as life-like as the real thing.
 - **Angels on Their Side**, Globe & Mail Report on Business, April 7, 2009
www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/article889412.ece
 - **UBC News release**, <http://www.publicaffairs.ubc.ca/ubcreports/2005/05jun02/future.html>
2. Students from India's elite Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) will spend three months working on mathematical sciences and economic research alongside select professors at the

University of B.C., Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria as part of a MITACS funded initiative to showcase Canada's excellence in research.

- **New program woos India's brightest**, Elite students spend three months researching. Vancouver Sun, May 30, 2009
www.vancouversun.com/Travel/program+woos+India+brightest/1646744/story.html
- **B.C. Leads the Nation in Graduate Internships**, [MITACS](#) news release, April 6, 2009
www.mitacs.ca/CMS/asset/143_2009-4-9-9-43-27_250BCinternships_060409.pdf

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