

**David Harris Flaherty Undergraduate Student Library Scholarship 2017 Recipient**

**By Rebecca Steel, Faculty of Human and Social Development**

**Award-winning Essay**

DÁDOSET [To Learn]

As Child and Youth Care (CYC) student, I write numerous papers for each of my courses and UVIC's libraries have become a critical component of my education. They have provided me with academic resources both online and in print; with courses and videos that taught me how to cite properly or write an annotated bibliography, and, most important of all, with invaluable personal attention from trained library professionals, which has led to some of the most profound and satisfying learning experiences of my time at UVIC.

Last fall, when researching for a paper on Indigenous Language Revitalization in Schools as part of my CYC Practice in Indigenous Contexts course (CYC 230), I completed, as usual, my online research through Summon 2.0, and raided the stacks of McPherson Library; however, I still felt stuck. As a non-Indigenous student, I found CYC 230 challenging, and struggled to feel confident in my knowledge of the topics and subjects discussed in class. I turned for help to the subject librarian for CYC, who directed me to Pia Russell's subject guide on Language Revitalization. This collection, while geared towards Education and Masters of Language Revitalization students, is a guide to resources that discuss the merits, practicality, and importance of Indigenous language revitalization, and includes resources geared toward specific languages and nations.

Pia, the Education Librarian, shared her knowledge and ideas with me, which helped me to focus and refine my inquiry to a specific Salish language, SENĆOŦEN. Additionally, I was directed to the Curriculum Library which contains a vast Indigenous Education section. The

materials I found in this section allowed me to take my assignment in a direction I had not imagined before, by providing me with the resources include a section in my paper which discussed current SENĆOŦEN education methods and techniques, with examples and testimonies from the local Lau Welnew Tribal School.

After reviewing the literature, films, stories and various other types of media I collected on my journey though the University's library system—from the Curriculum Library to Special Collections—I was able to write a powerful essay discussing and advocating for Indigenous Language Revitalization in elementary schools. It was informed by current work teaching SENĆOŦEN in Brentwood bay, educational materials from the curriculum library, various studies, and even a Special Collections exhibit of poetry by students at Lau Welnew Tribal School entitled *We Can Say This*. I believe it to be one of my strongest papers to date—due to the diverse resources I discovered through the University of Victoria's libraries. Furthermore, this research ignited a permanent interest in SENĆOŦEN revitalization.

The people who work in UVIC's libraries are, in my opinion, one of our most underrated but critical resources, since they help students navigate the vast collections and find relevant resources. I came to university knowing that a library was a vast repository of books and other information, but now I understand that it is a community, too.