



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Western University and Capilano University welcome \$2-million investment supporting early childhood education in B.C.

NORTH VANCOUVER B.C. September 26, 2019 – Child care is a key societal issue and currently in a process of transformation. As such, the education and professional learning of early childhood educators needs a dramatic change.

Early childhood education (ECE) researchers at Western University (Western) and Capilano University (CapU) recently received \$2-million from the B.C. Ministry of Children and Family Development for the Early Childhood Pedagogist Network (ECPN), which will do just that.

“When ECEs succeed, children succeed,” says Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development. “This new network allows ECEs to collaborate, learn from each other and bring innovative early learning theories and practice to their child care centres. Investing in this profession is key to government’s economic plan because we know that when parents feel their kids are being nurtured and inspired outside the home it makes it easier for families to pursue their own education and careers.”

This funding will be used to launch the new role of pedagogist, an education theory and curriculum specialist, across B.C. In the first phase of the project, approximately 30 pedagogists will be hired to engage early childhood educators to work with the [BC Early Learning Framework](#) and to design innovative pedagogies within their early years programs.

“The ECPN is facilitating a transformative approach to educators’ professional development,” says Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw, a professor in Western’s Faculty of Education. “We are excited to see how the pedagogists will work with ECE educators to collaboratively create educational processes that respond to the times in which we live.”

The ECPN is a key initiative within [Childcare BC’s strategy](#) to address key issues in the profession, recognize the essential role educators play in children’s lives, and support parents to work or pursue their education. This dedicated funding for the ECPN is part of a \$136-million investment over three years to help recruit and retain early childhood education workers to better meet the child care needs of B.C. families.

“The ECPN is a significant step toward a unified early learning and childcare system where all B.C. children can flourish,” says Dr. Kathleen Kummer, Chair of the School of Education and Childhood Studies at Capilano University. “It creates a situation where ECE programs can be developed within the local communities, and early childhood educators are recognized and supported as critical players in children’s education.”

Dr. Denise Hodgins, who serves as the ECPN’s Deputy Director, adds, “We know from experience just how important the pedagogist’s role is to inspire, invigorate and sustain educators in their professional practice.”

Western University and Capilano University are leading research in the area of early childhood care and education. Drs. Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kummer and Hodgins are proud to introduce the Network on September 28, 2019 at the North Shore Early Childhood Conference at CapU.

About Western University

Western delivers an academic experience second to none. Since 1878, The Western Experience has combined academic excellence with life-long opportunities for intellectual, social and cultural growth in order to better serve our communities. Our research excellence expands knowledge and drives discovery with real-world application. Western attracts individuals with a broad worldview, seeking to study, influence and lead in the international community.

About Capilano University

Capilano University is a teaching-focused university based in North Vancouver, with programming serving the Sunshine Coast and the Sea-to-Sky corridor. The University enrolls approximately 10,000 students each year and offers 97 programs, including bachelor's degrees in film, music, early childhood education and tourism management. Capilano University is named after Chief Joe Capilano, an important leader of the Squamish (Sk̓w̓w̓ú7mesh) Nation of the Coast Salish people. Our campuses are located on the territories of the Lil'wat, Musqueam, Sechelt (shíshálh), Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

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