



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Capilano University celebrates new UNESCO-designated Howe Sound Biosphere Region with launch of Skw'cháys

NORTH VANCOUVER B.C. September 20, 2021 – As a proud partner of the [Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society](#) (HSBRIS), on September 22, 2021 Capilano University (CapU) will launch Skw'cháys (pronounced skwa cháys), the University's legacy canoe, in honour of the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound region being designated *UNESCO Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region*, Canada's 19<sup>th</sup> [UNESCO biosphere reserve](#). The launch ceremony will take place adjacent to the Mamquam River in Squamish, B.C.

September 15, 2021: [Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound region becomes Canada's 19th UNESCO Biosphere Region](#)

"The Howe Sounds Biosphere Regional Initiative is an exciting new development that offers an abundance of research opportunities for students and faculty that can lead to positive contributions in knowledge and mobilizing new understanding aligned with the goals of HSBRIS" said Laureen Styles, VP academic & provost of Capilano University. "HSBRIS is engaging students and faculty in meaningful questions and issues to support sustainability and conservation in the Howe Sound region."

#### Canoe Ceremony and Launch Event:

Date: 4-6 p.m., Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Location: Adjacent to the Squamish Yacht Club,  
37778 Loggers Lane, Squamish, BC, V8B 0B2

Event: Remarks by representatives from the Squamish Nation, UNESCO, HSBRIS and Capilano University, followed by the canoe launch and refreshments.

"As a UNESCO Biosphere Region, one of our key pillars is to support and facilitate research, education, and monitoring. Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound Biosphere Region is an area rich with Indigenous culture and biodiversity, making this a prime location for place-based learning for all ages—especially post-secondary institutions," says Ruth Simons, Lead, Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society. "We're looking forward to a continued partnership with CapU as we advance biodiversity conservation and facilitate this important knowledge exchange within our community."



CapU's partnership with HSBRIS involves all academic faculties, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Education and the Office of Creative Activity, Research and Scholarship at the University. The partnership creates new opportunities for research and course-based undergraduate project work that promotes sustainable development; biodiversity conservation; and reconciliation, equity and inclusion.

"Our current research project aims to create dialogue, and facilitate the sharing of new idea and sustainable practices between forestry companies operating in the Howe Sound region," said CapU student Alysha Monk, research assistant working with HSBRIS. "We are helping to build an understanding of how current forestry practices line up with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)."

Ahead of the UNESCO designation, CapU has partnered with HSBRIS on various in-class faculty-led student projects and research projects. This year, with grant funding from the federal funding agency Mitacs, two CapU students from the School of Business will work with HSBRIS as Research Assistants to examine logging practices in the area with Indigenous and non-Indigenous companies. Additional research opportunities are in development.

The United Nations (UNESCO) designation promotes conservation of biodiversity and creates learning areas for sustainable development under diverse ecological, social and economic contexts.

### **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 offers 94 programs, including bachelor's degrees, in areas as diverse as film, early childhood education and tourism management. Capilano University is named after Sa7plek (Chief Joe Capilano), an important leader of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation of the Coast Salish Peoples. We respectfully acknowledge that our campuses are located on the territories of the Lílwat, x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), shíshálh (Sechelt), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

For more information, or to schedule interviews, please contact:

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