



## **FRESH PERSPECTIVES II**

**Innovation & Impacts  
of Applied Research**





**Anna Kae Todd**  
VICE-PRESIDENT, LEARNING

## Practical results with real world application

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Just look at the wide range of topics, individuals, and departments involved in applied research at Bow Valley College! (And these are only some of our current examples.) I am pleased and proud to share our second edition of *Fresh Perspectives* with our internal community and our external friends and colleagues.

A number of years ago, a well-known and well-respected Professor at the University of Calgary, Dr. Merron Chorny, published a book called *Teacher as Learner, Teacher as Researcher*, which showcased the research and learning of a number of teachers. Its intention was to demonstrate and encourage the development of teachers as reflective practitioners. It was the first time I truly understood the link between research, practice, and improved outcomes for learners.

It is clear in these *Fresh Perspectives* accounts that our teachers experienced the joy and satisfaction of being engaged with students in a mutually beneficial, shared learning experience. And I would add a special thanks to the Office of Applied Research and Innovation.

Some of our research projects exemplify innovation resulting in a new way of doing something, changes in thinking, processes in organizations, or products that can be commercialized. This year has seen remarkable growth in the development of a culture of research at Bow Valley College. We have reviewed and revised all our policies in preparation for eligibility for NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR. We obtained close to \$3 million in external funding for large research projects consistent with our institutional research plan, and we have engaged key partners in the post-secondary and business sectors as partners.

So too is it with our Bow Valley researchers, whether they be faculty or staff working with learners or co-workers. I applaud their efforts and commitment and celebrate their results.

One of the most challenging and under-served aspects of research is the effective dissemination and take-up of the results. We hope that this publication is but one small way that we can encourage you to learn about our research efforts, follow up on them, and reflect upon your own practice and potential. Maybe we will be featuring *your* applied research in the next edition of *Fresh Perspectives*.

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# Enhancing community through collaboration

Thanks to the dedicated work of the Office of Applied Research and Innovation, and other people throughout the College, we have successfully developed capacity across the organization in both academic and service areas to engage in applied research.

We can be very proud of how we have enriched the landscape of education, strengthened communities, and transformed learning through our diverse research projects. We have also strengthened our ability to collaborate with other post-secondary institutions across the province.

This is a watershed moment for the College as we move to a new phase in how we deliver applied research. I look forward to the evolution of applied research as we continue to promote excellence and innovation in applied research. I encourage all members of the College community to join us in this exciting journey!



**Sharon Carry**  
PRESIDENT & CEO

## A word from the Dean

As I reviewed the entries for our second edition of *Fresh Perspectives*, I could not help feeling an immense sense of pride in the quality, range and scope of the applied research that is reflected in this booklet. As you flip through these pages you will see major research undertakings in the areas of health, immigrants, foundational learning, and teaching and learning.

These projects represent the four pillars of applied research at Bow Valley College. You will also see the wide representation of departments participating in research: The Department of Human Resources, The Executive Office, Learning Resource Services, The Business Department, The Aboriginal Centre, Counselling, ESL, TOWES, and Health and Community Care. You will see innovative research ideas from both novice researchers and those with more experience.

Finally, this booklet provides evidence of the highly collaborative nature of our research activities, both intra- and inter-departmental collaboration, and collaboration with external organizations and post-secondary institutes.

We have much to be proud of. The support of the staff of the Office of Applied Research has been instrumental in these achievements. They have supported and managed both the internal and external grants, and provided much input to all the researchers. I am grateful to all of them.



**Dr. Rena Shimoni**  
DEAN, OFFICE OF APPLIED RESEARCH  
& INNOVATION



I want my research to help immigrant women with their integration process, making things a bit easier for them. Then I will consider it a success.

– Kakoli Mitra

# Finding Meaningful Work

Shortly after immigrating to Canada in 2002, Kakoli Mitra accepted a job equivalent to her skill and education level. She was one of the lucky ones.

As she learned through her volunteer work with the South Asian women's community, many highly educated, immigrant women have to resort to jobs well below their qualifications. It was through conversing with these women and hearing their stories of struggle that Kakoli decided to see if there was research to support what she was seeing and hearing.

Their stories coincided with national statistics showing that Canada increasingly depends on educated immigrants as a way to fulfill its employment needs: 49% of educated immigrants are women. These findings also indicate that there is a significant trend of underemployment of foreign-qualified immigrant women in Canada; Kakoli conducted a literature review to see if the same statistics were true in Alberta's two major cities: Edmonton and Calgary.

By conducting an environmental scan of existing studies, data, and information, Kakoli concluded that the findings for Calgary and Edmonton corresponded with the national findings: namely that highly educated immigrant women in Alberta are underemployed and under-utilized. The literature also corroborated the stories she had been told throughout her volunteer work: that highly educated immigrant women who were gainfully employed in their home countries were working in service industry positions, or sometimes not at all, since their arrival in Canada.

Kakoli's commitment to her research did not stop at the submission of her final report. Earlier in 2011, Kakoli was invited to present her findings at the International Conference on Building Bridges: Negotiating Cultural Memories in Canada and India, held at Jadavpur University in Kolkata India. Moreover, based on what she discovered through her literature review, she plans on conducting a Phase II of this research, which aims to build on her findings by inquiring into the reasons for the underutilization of foreign-qualified women in the workforce.

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**RESEARCHER:**

Kakoli Mitra

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**DEPARTMENT:**

Human Resources

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**PROJECT:**

Trends in Employment of  
Highly Educated Immigrant  
Women in Alberta: Calgary and  
Edmonton—A Literature Review  
2000-2008



I embrace applied research because an important part of BVC's mandate is promoting community vitality. Having a role in that through my research area is a pretty fulfilling place to be.

– Brett Bergie

# Reaching Out with Regional Research

When Brett Bergie was asked to manage his first research project at Bow Valley College, he was daunted yet determined. But his interest in socially innovative and community-centred applied research made him the perfect person to manage this project.

The project included a regional survey of employers and the public-at-large to measure and assess current perceptions towards education delivery methods; attitudes on education and training, and labour market conditions and demand. In addition to the survey findings, the project team also developed community and human resource profiles for 11 of the most prominent communities situated in proximity to Calgary.

Partnerships and collaboration were critical to the overall success of this project. The community stakeholders were eager to help and there was a lot of support and human power that reaffirmed the value of this research. Working in partnership with the Canada West Foundation, the project has opened a lot of relationships that previously either did not exist or have since been enhanced, and the college is taking a strong leadership role in trying to implement its regional stewardship mandate. This may have influenced the emergence of a prominent project outcome: a consensus among stakeholders that the search for solutions must be seen as a shared responsibility. Since the completion of the project, the college has formally established a regional stewardship team, with representatives based in Cochrane, Okotoks, and Strathmore, that is continuing to update and enrich the collection of materials produced by the project.

Working for the Institutional Planning Department at Bow Valley College, Brett continues his research work, conducting projects on immigrant needs on language training and career development. Moreover, he credits his experience in conducting this research project as one of the main influences in his decision to pursue graduate studies. By having the opportunity to garner some exposure to applied research in a supportive environment, Brett is now confident that research is something he was meant to pursue.

## RESEARCHER:

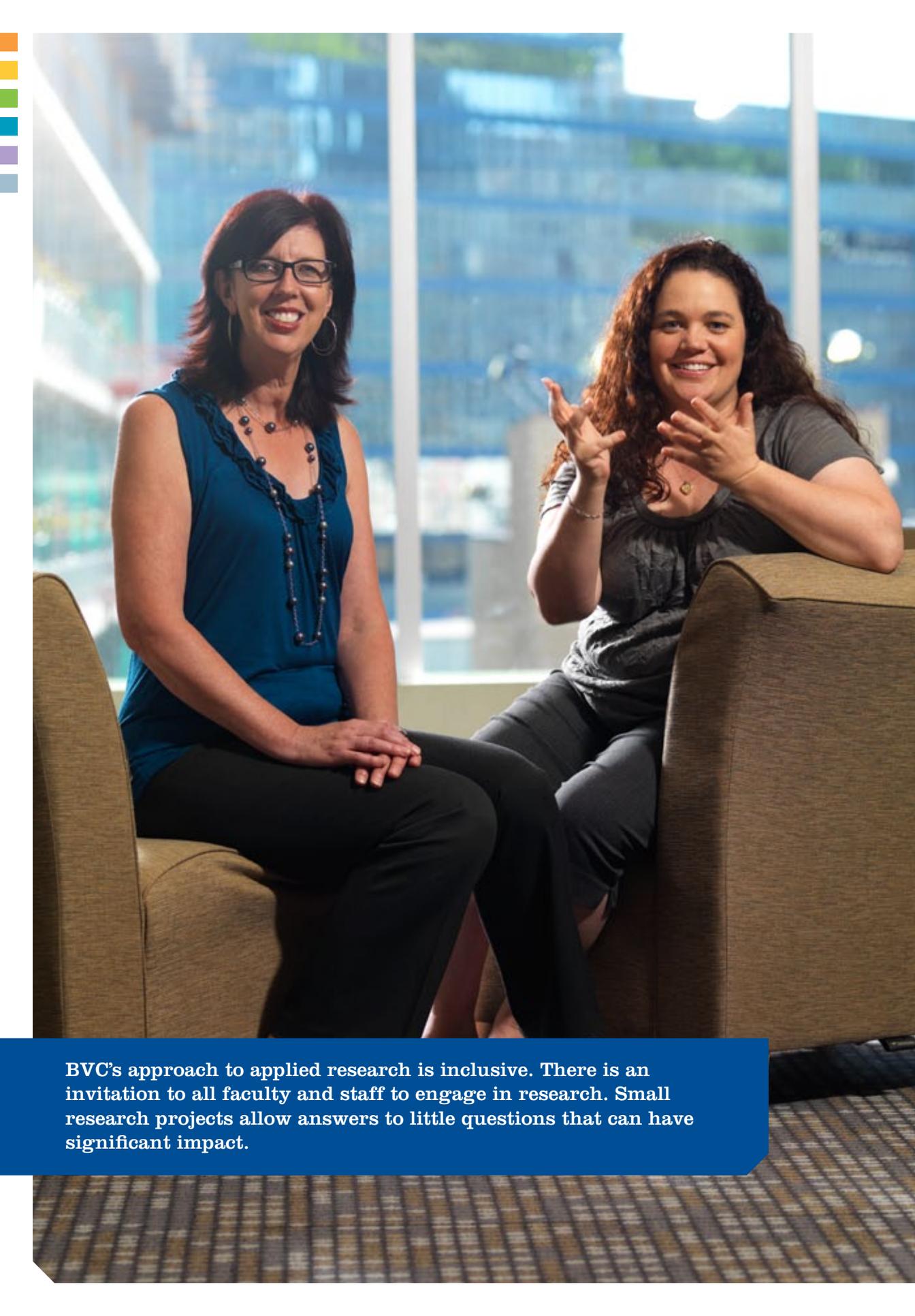
Brett Bergie

## DEPARTMENT:

Institutional Planning

## PROJECT:

Reaching Out: Access to Adult Education and Training in the Calgary Regional Communities



**BVC's approach to applied research is inclusive. There is an invitation to all faculty and staff to engage in research. Small research projects allow answers to little questions that can have significant impact.**

# Enhancing Services for Deaf Learners

There are currently more than 20 Deaf and Hard of Hearing students enrolled at Bow Valley College, a number which is only expected to increase. Because of the College's focus in this area, it is now considered an asset to the Deaf community.

Some of the resources available to Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) students include a Deaf instructor, four Deaf interpreters, four Deaf tutors, six Sign Language Interpreters as well as courses in many levels of American Sign Language (ASL) and English Literacy Courses.

Liz and her team want to enhance this resource pool by providing psychoeducational assessments for DHH students, as there is literally nowhere else for them to go. Currently in Alberta, there is only one psychologist that uses ASL and no Deaf psychologists, creating a high demand for this service.

The standardized protocols for psychoassessment of hearing adults is problematic when used with DHH adults as they rely heavily on verbal statements and verbal cues that do not translate well into Sign Language. Furthermore, some of the implied assumptions of the standard protocols rely heavily on oral language conventions that are not found in Sign Language. Development of adjusted protocols will need consultation between assessors and Sign Language and Deaf interpreters.

This research project proposes the best way to train interpreters, and uses a model of 'Peer Learning', allowing for students to learn from each other. This allows the sharing of each individual's strong skills among participants to promote the development of a composite of skills across all participants.

It is expected that the results will be significant in the planning for future training of new and established professionals in the field of counselling, interpreting, and psychological assessment of Deaf and Hard of Hearing adults in Alberta.

## RESEARCHERS:

Liz O'Shea  
Ruth Ayer

## DEPARTMENT:

Learner Success Services,  
Specialized Support

## PROJECT:

Using a Reflective Rating Scale to Assess Peer Training in the Psycho-Educational Assessment of Deaf Adults



Numbers aren't the only way to measure success. By engaging in our classes, learners in rural sites felt a sense of community and connection, removing their feelings of isolation. That's success.

– Hana Taleb Imai

# Building Bridges

Bridges for Rural Immigrants was a multi-phase, externally funded project that worked across departments and institutions to deliver responsive ESL programming through mediated facilitation. The project started as a bridge to bring ESL instruction to rural locations that lack this capacity. There has been very little research conducted that can inform practice related to using technology for ESL instruction.

Bow Valley College partnered with Halifax's Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services and Nova Scotia Community College in the first stage. The main question was: does videoconferencing work for ESL instruction? Then a literature review and site visits were conducted, gaining an understanding of the technology and delivery methods from the perspective of the instructors and the students. This research helped to inform the development of a delivery model that was to be piloted as Phase II of the project. The findings of this project helped to influence another externally funded project aimed at integrating the use of Blackboard among distributed learners.

This current project, Language for Work, explores the teaching of language through an intercultural lens and the use of technology. A series of learning objects are being created which will be housed on Blackboard, and the course will be delivered through a blended model. Currently, there is a strong push to put ESL classes online, and this research addresses the different ways it can work to its full potential.

Bow Valley College is the largest provider of ESL programs in the province. It is also known in the community for providing mentorship and sharing expertise. All researchers are committed to knowledge transfer, sharing the results with the larger community through national and provincial conferences and workshops in rural areas. By sharing what they've learned, both institutional stakeholders and ESL learners can play a role in the idea-sharing process to help envision what works best from both perspectives.

## RESEARCHERS:

Hana Taleb Imai  
Diane Hardy

## DEPARTMENT:

English as a Second Language

## PROJECT:

BVC Connects ESL Learners  
through Mediated Instruction



I am excited to be able to demonstrate the utility of TOWES, especially within a program that is making a positive impact on the careers and lives of women.

– Alisa Foreman

# Testing TOWES with Not-for-Profits

Alisa Foreman is carrying on the tradition and history of applied research of TOWES at Bow Valley College. TOWES (The Test of Workplace Essential Skills) has over the years developed a rich body of tools and resources to improve learners' likelihood of success.

As one of BVC's own major success stories, TOWES is a shining example of how applied research can be commercialized and used nationally. From what began with an internal grant, TOWES now has over 43 distributors across Canada and over 70,000 test cases in their database.

Alisa has partnered with The Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre, a 16-week pre-employment/pre-apprenticeship program that provides training for underemployed or unemployed women within the construction industry. The program includes classroom instruction and hands-on experience in order to provide women with the skills required for success within a traditionally male-dominated field of work. Alisa is conducting an in-depth case study to demonstrate the utility of TOWES in this not-for-profit community organization dedicated to improving the careers and lives of women.

Many TOWES case studies profile large corporate clients. This case study will take a different perspective by focusing on why and how TOWES is also beneficial within smaller community programs. This is an exciting opportunity to learn how TOWES contributes to program success and ultimately the success of the learners. This study is also based upon previous research demonstrating that having the required skills during apprenticeship training leads to successful program completion. The case study will support the idea that having the required Essential Skills and identifying skill gaps are just as important at any point of training.

The case study will include qualitative data from open-ended interviews with program coordinators and instructors and an analysis of qualitative data such as comparing pre- and post-test scores and reviewing demographic data collected from participants. Alisa is hoping to demonstrate how TOWES supports and informs training, supports learner success while showcasing this unique community program that is providing women with the "tools" for success.

#### RESEARCHER:

Alisa Foreman

#### DEPARTMENT:

TOWES

#### PROJECT:

YWCA and TOWES



The scale and depth of this study is amazing. I love the multidisciplinary approach that is sure to provide us with a better understanding of the work of LPNs in Alberta.

– Sarah VanDusen

# Measuring the Impact of LPNs

The goal of this research study, funded by Alberta Health and Wellness in partnership with the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta, is to provide, objective, research-based evidence that focuses on Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in live settings, and evaluates their impact on quality of care.

The principal investigators in this study are Dr. Rena Shimoni, Dean of Applied Research, and Dr. Gail Barrington, the President of Barrington Research Group Inc. Vi Smith, Bow Valley College's former Director of Nursing, who returned to lend her expertise in the field of nursing, and who is also a Licensed Practical Nurse herself, is managing the project.

The research will entail six case studies that examine in-depth the roles of Licensed Practical Nurses, and their impact on the quality of patient care. The study will highlight what we can learn about LPNs' work teams and systems within their organizations that promote or inhibit their ability to practice to full scope. A multi-method approach to data collection will be used, including surveys, interviews with LPNs and managers, and focus groups with multidisciplinary teams. The findings of the study will inform decision makers in health, managers and educators and will ultimately impact the quality of patient care within the Alberta health system.

This project could have significant impact on the health care system, not only for LPNs, but for the entire health care team. The study will highlight the role of the LPN, and their contribution to quality patient care. It will help create a better understanding of the LPN role, and make an important contribution to the knowledge base upon which staffing decisions can be made. Ultimately, patients in the health care system will benefit from optimal utilization of all nursing professionals.

## RESEARCHERS:

Dr. Rena Shimoni  
Dr. Gail Barrington  
Vi Smith  
Sarah VanDusen  
Nikki Gorembalem

## DEPARTMENT:

Office of Applied Research  
& Innovation

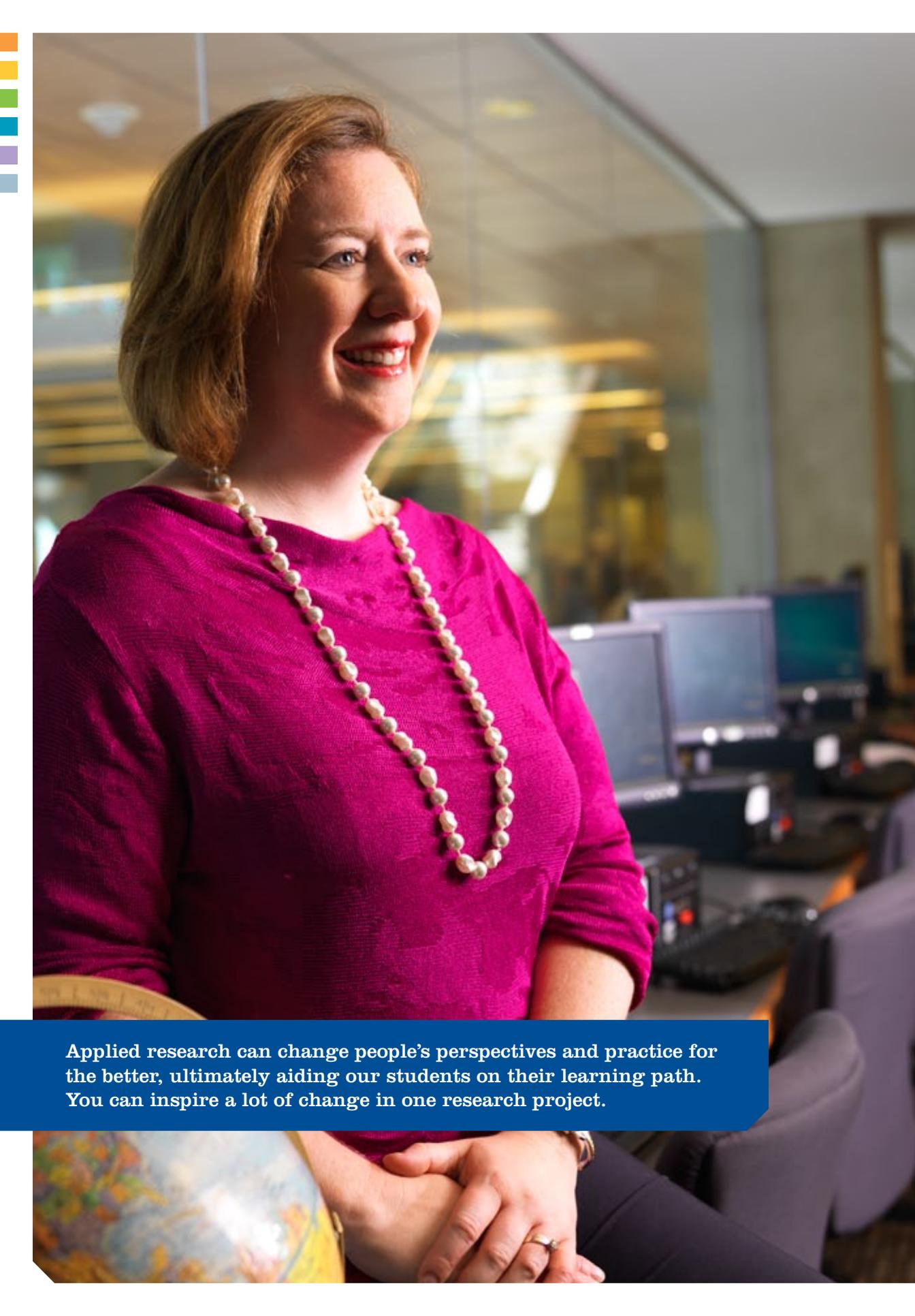
## PROJECT:

Understanding Licensed  
Practical Nurses' Full Scope of  
Practice

**I always envisioned research to be so isolating, so this has been a great experience because there's been great interactions with people and it's been a real team effort.**

**– Nikki Gorembalem**

◀ Nikki Gorembalem (L)  
Sarah VanDusen (M)  
Vi Smith (R)



Applied research can change people's perspectives and practice for the better, ultimately aiding our students on their learning path. You can inspire a lot of change in one research project.



# Adding the Right Tools to the e-Toolkit

Two years ago Karen Fiege was asked if she would be interested in conducting a literature review on Best Practices in Supporting Students in Distributed Learning. This review was the background for two studies that were led by Dr. Rena Shimoni, Dean of Applied Research, and Russ Wilde, Director, Learning Resource Services at Bow Valley College, and Dr. Gail Barrington, of Barrington Research Group.

The first phase, funded by eCampusAlberta and Advanced Education and Technology, provided an in-depth understanding of both the needs of diverse learners with respect to distributed learning, as well as the practices of the post-secondary institutions in supporting these learners. The study attempted to look at the policies and resources within institutions that led to the provision of quality service. Seven post-secondary institutions partnered with Bow Valley College in these studies: Olds College, NAIT, NorQuest College, Northern Lakes College, Red Deer College, Lethbridge College, and Portage College.

A key deliverable of the research project was the development of an electronic toolkit (or e-toolkit), <http://etoolkit.ecampusalberta.ca/> that can be used by post-secondary institutions across Alberta to enhance the services they provide to learners. The e-toolkit is meant to take something theoretical, like the findings of the literature review, into something practical that institutional leaders can take and amend to suit their students' needs. Furthermore, the Steering Committee encouraged Bow Valley College to lead an applied policy study, where institutions would examine their policies to identify gaps or changes needed in order to ensure equitable support for online learners, and then revise, adapt or create new policies as required. Dr. Dean Wood was contracted by BVC to lead this phase of the project.

Involved in this project since its conception in 2009, Karen's role has changed from gathering the information in a literature review, to using the knowledge from the research, as well as from the study findings, to actually co-creating this e-toolkit. Moreover, her perception of her job has also changed, as now she finds herself thinking more and more of the online student and his/her needs in addition to the on-campus student's needs.

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**RESEARCHER:**

Karen Fiege

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**DEPARTMENT:**

Learner Resource Services

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**PROJECT:**

Phase II: Diverse Learners  
Adding the Right Tools to the e-Toolkit



Research in practice makes you consider who the research is really about—the students. You're a better practitioner when doing research, and you're a better researcher when you incorporate it into practice.

– Audrey Gardner

# Setting Benchmarks for Adult Literacy

Bow Valley College continues to exercise outstanding local and national leadership in the field of foundational learning by fostering innovation and making significant contributions to practice and knowledge. An example of this can be found in the Centre for Excellence in Foundational Learning (CEFL), under the direction of Academic Foundations Dean Charles Pankratz, and led by Audrey Gardner.

The CEFL has a strong focus on adult literacy and has conducted several projects related to the improvement of overall literacy of BVC students and beyond. One of the research projects undertaken by CEFL is the Read Forward Project, a national project that created a unique and innovative resource for reading assessment in literacy and basic education classrooms and has been distributed to all regions of Canada.

Currently CEFL is leading a multi-year research project to create Reading Benchmarks for the Alberta foundational learning field. The Centre commissioned a research project on literacy benchmark frameworks in other Canadian provinces and select international jurisdictions. This initial scan led to the development of easy to use benchmarks that are referenced to international measures of adult literacy levels. The project also researched useful and relevant learning resources and assessment tools among the wide diversity of programs and learners across the province. Aboriginal resources, tools and ways of learning were researched and are shaping the next phase of the project which is to implement the Alberta Reading Benchmarks in community literacy and college basic education programs. Implementation activities include training on how to use the Reading Benchmarks in relation to instructional methodology, learning resources, and assessment.

This focus on improving adult literacy is the epitome of applied research. These two large-scale projects are just some of the examples of the applied research at the CEFL. The Centre supports individual practitioners to wade into applied research with small-scale projects. It also partners with other organizations near and far to share knowledge about research and development in foundational learning.

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**RESEARCHER:**

Audrey Gardner

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**DEPARTMENT:**

Academic Foundations

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**PROJECT:**

Research on Literacy Benchmarks



As a teacher you hope there is an opportunity to impact change. This research changed a lot about what I previously assumed and how much each thing can affect the larger picture.

– Trevor McIvor

# Agreeing to Disagree

Disagreements, when conducted in a proper and respectful manner can produce positive results and, moreover, can be used to shape ideas in the classroom and workplace.

Most social groups (e.g., cultures) have their own tacit grasp of the appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues in keeping a discussion professional, and how to best avert an emotional confrontation. Often these cues are so ingrained that they become a script. Because Bow Valley College is comprised of such a diverse population of learners, often these cues are as diverse as the learners themselves. Moreover, some learners come from settings where education is seen as a one-way learning experience, where learners' opinions are not valued or encouraged. Other learners may not have had good role models in their own social environments in terms of this skill. This can create a difficult experience for some learners upon entering into the Canadian educational system, where professionally sharing contrary opinions is an expected skill.

The purpose of this research is to pilot a workshop that teaches learners the value and the skills in sharing contrary opinions in a professional manner focusing on the learner-facilitator and learner-learner relationships. The workshop covers the importance of sharing contrary opinions in a classroom setting. It also teaches how to identify situations and cues when participants are asked for their real or for token opinions, and ultimately, to properly execute some strategies in sharing contrary opinions in a respectful and constructive manner.

The content of the opinion is not really the point in this research; it is how the participant can influence the tone and direction of a discussion with the use of appropriate phrases. Through scripted role-playing with semi-controversial topics, learners can practice voicing their contrary opinions in a safe environment, where they can be provided with feedback, in hopes that participants can continue building on their confidence and skills.

## RESEARCHERS:

Trevor McIvor  
Dr. Aggie Legaspi

## DEPARTMENTS:

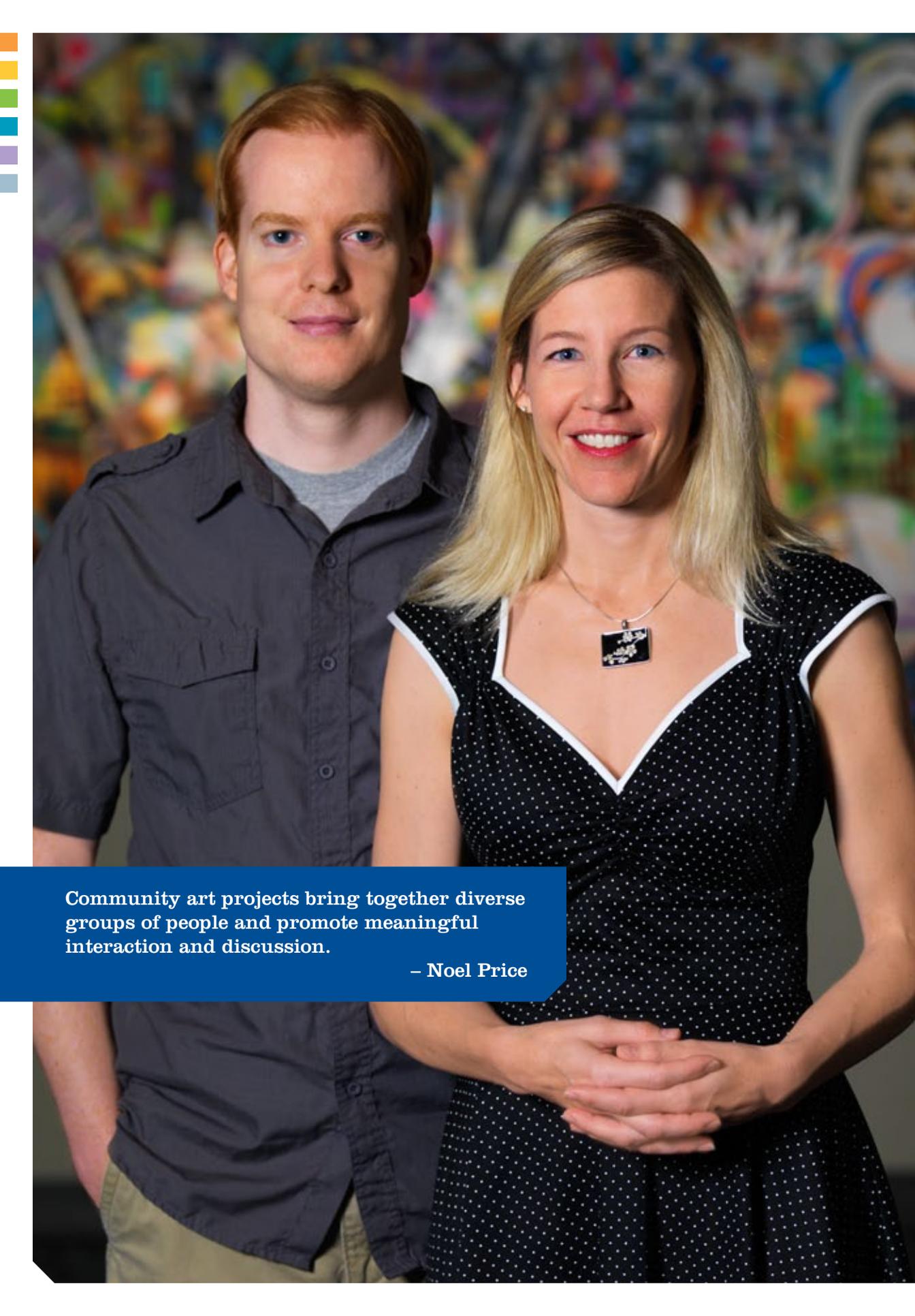
Business and Industry  
Learner Resource Services

## PROJECT:

Valuing Contrary Opinions in  
the Classroom

**This research gives me greater appreciation of our learners' diverse backgrounds and how they draw from their experiences to be successful in their studies and careers.**

– Dr. Aggie Legaspi



Community art projects bring together diverse groups of people and promote meaningful interaction and discussion.

– Noel Price

# Picturing the Positives of Public Art

A community arts project is the collaborative creation of a work of art by community members. Community arts projects have been used as a tool to promote civic engagement, develop skills and creativity, and build social capital. Although community arts projects are not a new phenomenon, there is little research on community arts projects and specifically, arts projects in post-secondary institutions.

Noel and Lynne were initially inspired by the changes to the first and second floors of BVC, especially the new artwork in the seating areas. Drawing on their personal interests of economic theory and art in relation to the formation of community identity, the researchers hope to demonstrate how – through collaborative art – a sense of ownership, ritual and beautification can contribute to student retention and student success.

Examples of community arts projects and the pros and cons associated with their execution will be explored. Calgary area post-secondary institutions will be surveyed to determine the form public art takes in settings comparable to Bow Valley College. The research will provide a framework for understanding various forms of community art projects and their outcomes, assist Bow Valley College in decision-making related to art in public spaces, and provide a foundation and rationale to pursue funding sources and community partnerships.

#### RESEARCHERS:

Noel Price  
Lynne Thorimbert

#### DEPARTMENTS:

Learning Resource Services  
Health and Community Care

#### PROJECT:

Building Social Capital:  
Community Arts Projects

**Having art in common areas is a statement in itself that the College values the student experience, and sees the student as more than a number in a classroom.**

**– Lynne Thorimbert**



Bow Valley College is part of educational change that is occurring and we are contributing towards the preparation of First Nations to be part of the workforce through the connection to e-learning.

– Noella Wells

# Enhancing Aboriginal Access to Education

Accessing college programs can present challenges to Aboriginal adult learners in rural areas. Some of these challenges include: inadequate academic preparation, technology challenges, and the struggle to experience a sense of belonging within a mainstream/traditional college environment.

Moreover, as the literature confirms, many mainstream college programs reflect a lack of in-depth understanding of Aboriginal peoples' ways of knowing, lived experiences, values, traditions, and cultural norms. By researching how to 'bring' adult education programs to rural Aboriginal communities, in a manner that is culturally sensitive and conducive to the learning styles of Aboriginal adult learners, the researchers hope to address some of these present challenges and meet some currently unmet needs in rural Aboriginal (First Nations) communities.

The research is a collaborative and cooperative effort, funded by ARDN and eCampusAlberta. Three Bow Valley College departments: The Office of Applied Research and Innovation, The Aboriginal Centre, and Learner Success Services are working to ensure that the needs of Aboriginal learners are best reflected in this project. Dr. Colleen Kawalilak of the University of Calgary has been invited to become the principal investigator, as she brings with her an extensive and rich experience in qualitative research with Aboriginal populations. In partnership with NorQuest College, the research has expanded to include a document analysis of archival data, a series of networking events, focus groups, and individual interviews with key stakeholders, including prospective Aboriginal adult learners, staff, and board members from selected rural communities in the Bow Valley College and NorQuest Service Regions.

Research findings will support the development of a pilot program designed to respond to the identified learning needs of Aboriginal adult learners in rural communities. It is anticipated that this pilot program will align to one of the career programs currently offered through Bow Valley College and NorQuest College. In essence, this applied research initiative will directly impact rural Aboriginal communities served by the two colleges. This goal will be achieved through a deepened understanding and appreciation of the needs of Aboriginal (First Nations) adult learners residing in rural communities.

## RESEARCHERS:

Noella Wells  
Lynn Connell  
Kate Beamer

## DEPARTMENTS:

Aboriginal Centre  
Learner Success Services  
Office of Applied Research  
& Innovation

## PROJECT:

In Support of Expanding  
Educational Access via  
e-Learning to Rural Aboriginal  
Communities

# External Funding for On-Going Research

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Below is a sampling of ongoing externally funded research projects at Bow Valley College representing key areas: assessment, technology, teaching and learning, intercultural and immigrant studies, and health.

## Read to Succeed: Literacy and Essential Skills Assessment and Instructional System Development Project

Working with an internationally recognized team of assessment and literacy experts, TOWES is developing and piloting a new, web-based adult literacy and essential skills diagnostic, assessment and instructional system, for use in Literacy, Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, French as a Second Language and Essential Skills programs. The project has engaged several partners for funding: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (Office of Literacy and Essential Skills) (\$1.3 million); Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes (AACTI) (\$80,000); Nexen Inc. (\$40,000); Peter Hayvren (\$5,000 – matched by Access to the Future Fund); BVC (\$500,000), plus in kind contributions from Data Angel Policy Research Inc., Polymetrika Inc, and Performance by Design.

## Language for Work: A Blended Approach

This project endeavors to combine the unique attributes of face-to-face (videoconferencing) and online (learning management system and digital learning objects) media to deliver computer-supported learning instruction for ESL learners within Alberta. It is a partnership between the ESL Department at BVC, BVC's Learning Resource Centre, and a community college in a small urban centre. The pilot will test the effectiveness of a blended learning approach in ESL delivery. The project is funded by Alberta Employment and Immigration (\$406,351).

## ReadForward Project

ReadForward is a practical assessment tool for adult reading classrooms that is an application of research and methodology from the International Adult Literacy Survey. It is funded by The Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, HRSDC (\$390,000).

## Understanding Licensed Practical Nurses' Full Scope of Practice

This project is designed to address the current lack of comprehensive and reliable studies on Licensed Practical Nurses' (LPNs') scope of practice and consequently a lack of evidence upon which to make policy and staffing decisions. The findings of the study may impact employers as there will be greater clarity on the factors that promote and/or inhibit utilization of LPNs to full scope of practice. Further, the study will impact policy makers who have expressed the need for evidence upon which to make staffing decisions. The Funder is Alberta Health & Wellness (\$397,950).

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# Applied Research at Bow Valley College

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Vice-President, Learning, Anna Kae Todd, is responsible for applied research at Bow Valley College. The commitment to the continuous growth and development of applied research is shared by her team of Deans, and Directors, who lead the research initiatives in all the academic departments.

With her colleagues on the executive team, and participation of faculty and staff College-wide, the expansion of the role of applied research, and the evolution of a culture of research, has become a priority, as evidenced in the Bow Valley College Business Plan.

The Office of Applied Research and Innovation (OARI) serves as a support and a focal point for monitoring research activities in the College; maintaining the support systems available for researchers, and developing and maintaining the repository of all research activities in the College.

The support services provided by the OARI include drop-in mentoring and support to faculty and staff who wish to engage in research and capacity development activities such as workshops on research methods and knowledge transfer. **Dr. Aggie Legaspi** is pleased to lend his expertise as BVC's Lead Researcher. **Scottie Ray**, the Applied Research Officer, oversees the distribution of relevant research information throughout the college and is responsible for the administration and project management of a number of projects. The Bow Valley College Research Ethics Board, chaired by **Liz O'Shea**, is subject to BVC's research ethics policies, which have been approved by the Tri-Council.

For more information, contact **Scottie Ray**, Applied Research Officer, at [sray@bowvalleycollege.ca](mailto:sray@bowvalleycollege.ca)

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**For more information, contact:**

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