

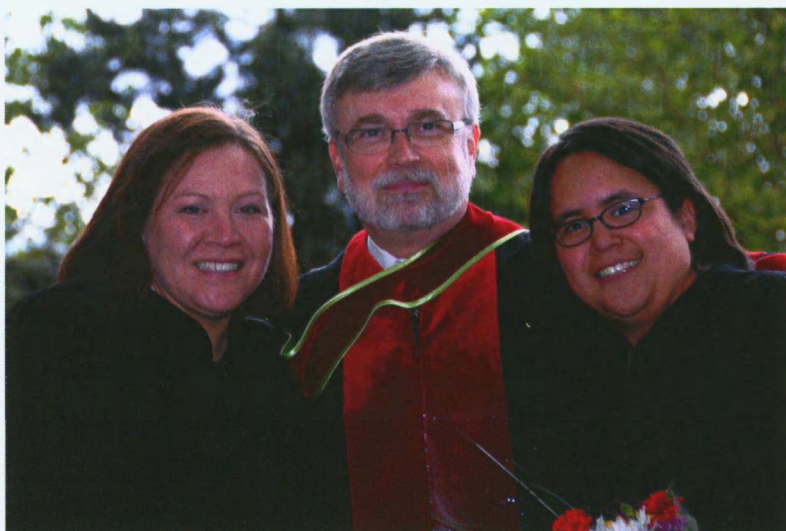


Douglas College



# Gathering Place

Aboriginal Student and Community Resource  
for the New Westminster Area



Partnership between  
Douglas College and  
Qayqayt First Nation

*Proposal submitted to:*  
Gathering Places  
Capital Funding  
BC Ministry of  
Advanced Education

July 2007



**Douglas  
College**



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BC Ministry of Advanced Education**

**JULY 2007**

***The "meeting place" – that's what the area of New Westminster was known as by all the River People long ago. It was a place to meet, to fish, to court and to return home after a successful summer of fishing/talking/marrying. We seek to re-create the spirit of such a place.***

Chief Rhonda Larrabee, Qayqayt First Nation



BRITISH COLUMBIA.—INDIAN CHIEFS AT NEW WESTMINSTER.

From *Canadian Illustrated News*, May 27, 1876

***We need a place where we can drum, dance, sing and celebrate who we are – our culture, our language, our heritage and our struggles. We need a gathering place where we can practice our spirituality; conduct cultural healing and wellness workshops; hold events and sensitivity workshops; as well as share our stories and our successes. We need a place that embraces who we are and who we are becoming. We seek the sharing of ourselves. Where better to do this than here in New Westminster where we have no gathering place for aboriginal people?***

Willamina Jim, Douglas College Aboriginal student  
and dancer

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Douglas College submits this proposal to the Ministry of Advanced Education for consideration under Gathering Places Capital Funding.

The College in partnership with the local First Nations Band seeks to develop a significant new addition to the New Westminster landscape. The College is keen to use this funding envelope, as well as funds from other sources, to improve on its current amenity space for aboriginal learners by providing larger and more culturally appropriate space. The Qayqayt First Nation – which does not currently have a land reserve itself -- is keen to enrich the experience of aboriginal students and provide a community focus for its people.

Both partners envision the proposed gathering place to be a multi-use facility that showcases aboriginal culture through its architectural design and artistic decoration, as well as being a community resource available for rental by aboriginal and other groups for meetings, workshops and presentations.

We propose a new structure to occupy existing vacant land on the campus in New Westminster in a prominent location at the corner of Royal Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. This would be a three storey facility connected to the main campus building as well as having external street access. The total area of the building would be 1,622 m<sup>2</sup> (gross) and 1,135 m<sup>2</sup> (net).

The facility would provide a large central area for ceremonies with seating for 75-100 people and which could be subdivided for smaller meetings and workshops. Other areas of the building would provide offices for aboriginal student services along with student lounges and computer lab space. Health and wellness workshops among others could be held in this centre. Display cases would present historical artifacts and other interpretive collections of aboriginal heritage. The building would also provide kitchen facilities, washrooms, an elevator and its own mechanical infrastructure.

Our proposal has a number of features which we believe position it as a superior candidate for funding consideration:

- Aboriginal identity in the New Westminster needs to be restored and celebrated.
- New Westminster was traditionally a "meeting place" for the Coast Salish people.
- Douglas College is named after the first provincial leader who negotiated treaties with First Nations but this is not showcased locally.
- New Westminster lacks public recognition of its aboriginal past and has cultural artifacts in storage which could be displayed in the proposed facility.
- Since local Bands have small populations, if Douglas College is to attract more aboriginal students it will need to provide facilities which evoke a "home away from home" for non-local aboriginal learners.
- The New Westminster area lacks facilities for aboriginal groups to meet and hold ceremonies. With its central location and access to public transportation, this proposed facility could be accessible throughout the Lower Mainland.

- A variety of stakeholders and supporters have pledged enthusiasm, funding and in-kind contributions to provide cost-sharing.
- The City of New Westminster is enthusiastically behind this proposal.

The proposal is for an estimated cost of \$6,957,585 and it would be built over a three year period with completion in 2009/10.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Douglas College in partnership with the New Westminster Indian Band – Qayqayt First Nation -- proposes to create a purpose-built centre to serve students of aboriginal ancestry and to showcase aboriginal heritage.

The centre would function as a "gathering space" for aboriginal students. The centre would house support services and student areas. The centre would assist the college to provide a more welcoming environment to attract and retain more aboriginal students.

In addition to providing a location on campus for culturally-relevant ceremonies and celebrations, the centre would provide a resource for aboriginal community groups to meet and hold workshops or other gatherings.

Such a facility would help restore aboriginal identity to the New Westminster area and provide much-needed meeting space for local First Nations people.

The centre would also present and explain through its design and exhibition space the history of local peoples and artifacts of their cultural expression.

The centre would be designed to be of "long house" style in general appearance but would blend a variety of West Coast aboriginal traditional motifs and iconography to reflect the ancestry not only of local students but of those of the whole province.

*We envision a welcoming environment at Douglas College for First Nations from all over British Columbia. This facility can provide a solid connection with First Nations elders and families in the community, and provide students with a positive connection to their heritage. This "meeting/gathering place" will enrich the urban experience for First Nations students and provide a community focus for our people."*

**Rhonda Larrabee, Chief  
Qayqayt First Nation**



INDIAN ENCAMPMENT AT NEW WESTMINSTER, B. C.

Drawn and engraved by B. Kroupa for *Canadian Illustrated News*, May 31, 1873

## **BENEFITS/LINKAGES**

The proposed centre would provide the following key benefits to the college and community – aspects that currently do not exist or are in need of considerable enhancement:

### **Restoring Local Aboriginal Identity**

The identity of First Nations people is now almost completely lacking in the New Westminster area. The Qayqayt First Nation of the Stolo traditionally occupied the land before the arrival of the Europeans and maintained a village of some 400 people. This area on the Fraser River had strong cultural identity as a traditional summer gathering place where people of the Coast Salish would congregate to fish, socialize and marry.

This identity was eradicated first by smallpox epidemic in 1904 and then through closing of the local reserve by federal agencies in 1916 when the remaining aboriginals were dispersed to other local bands. Descendents of the Qayqayt First Nation are now members of one of the only Bands in Canada without a traditional land base and their Chief Rhonda Larrabee continues to negotiate to secure a reserve in New Westminster.

The proposed centre would at least provide the Qayqayt Nation with a local gathering place for Band meetings and celebrations. The Band is very keen on being able to achieve at least this step forward in restoring a local identity.

*The Qayqayt First Nation does not have a land base at present, but has been recognized by all levels of Government and has a strong presence in New Westminster.... This facility can provide a solid connection with the First Nations elders and families in the community, and provide students with a positive connection to their heritage. This "meeting/gathering place" will enrich the urban experience for First Nations students and provide a community focus for our people.*

**Chief Rhonda Larrabee, Qayqayt First Nation**

*...the creation of an Aboriginal Gathering Space in New Westminster will enhance the cultural life of the city by focusing on the original inhabitants as well as encouraging First Nations groups from across the Lower Mainland to use the facility for their ceremonies.*

**Wayne McKay, Vice-President Marketing  
Westminster Savings Credit Union**

### **Showcasing Aboriginal Culture and Heritage**

Both the Douglas College campus and the local New Westminster area have rich connections with the history of early British Columbia and the cultural interaction of early settlers and local aboriginals.

Douglas College is named after Sir James Douglas, Governor of the Colony of British Columbia, who was the first to recognize the strategic and moral value of negotiating treaties with First Nations people. He married a Cree woman and was of mixed race himself. However, none of this historical connection is currently reflected in the campus of Douglas College and building the proposed centre would permit Douglas College to showcase and celebrate this linkage with the past.

In addition, the municipality of New Westminster lacks in either its public art or its amenity space any significant tribute to its original inhabitants or to their cultural expression. The proposed centre would go a long way to ameliorating this deficiency and the City of New Westminster is firmly behind this proposal, viewing it as an important cultural addition to the municipality.





*Sir James Douglas*



*Lady Amelia Douglas*

*The City Council heartily endorses Douglas College's grant proposal to build an Aboriginal Gathering Place in our community and will provide whatever support it can.*

***Mayor Wayne Wright  
City of New Westminster***

*As a life-long resident and active leader in the arts and cultural community of New Westminster, I believe the Gathering Place: Aboriginal Student centre proposal at Douglas College merits the wholehearted support of our community. We all need gathering places, places where we can join others to collaborate and share a common vision. This initiative is one that will strengthen and enliven our community.*

***Trudy van Dop, Vice-President  
Tourism New Westminster***

### **Improving Student Access and Retention**

Unfortunately, students of aboriginal ancestry often struggle to navigate their way into and through post-secondary educational institutions. The transition rates from high school for aboriginals are considerably lower than for non-aboriginals, and similarly the graduation rates of post-secondary aboriginal students typically are much lower than for non-aboriginals.

The research on student access and retention is clear that increases in these rates of participation/completion will require colleges to take specific and

deliberate action to make campus environments more welcoming for aboriginals by acknowledging and reflecting their culture and heritage in the environment of the institution. The literature is also clear that the provision of culturally-appropriate support services, study areas and meeting places is critical to aboriginal students to become more integrated into campus life and to receive the mentoring and other support to overcome barriers to successful completion of their educational programs.

As an educational institution, Douglas College is committed to assisting all students to achieve their academic, artistic, and personal potential. To date, however, limited resources and attention have been paid to making this a reality for our aboriginal students. As we seek to increase the number of aboriginal enrollments, we need to create a more aboriginal-friendly campus environment. This proposed centre will greatly enhance our ability to do that.

*We are very sensitive to the issues and difficulties facing [aboriginal] students and how they can negatively impact their ability to succeed. We therefore whole-heartedly support your desire to create an aboriginal gathering place as an extension to the Douglas College campus that would provide the support infrastructure that is essential for the retention of aboriginal students and improve student success.*

**Stephen A. Frasher, CEO  
Seaspan International Ltd.**

*There are significant hurdles that aboriginal youth must overcome in order to be successful that in most cases are not faced or understood by the non-aboriginal population. For many of those students it is their first experience away from their traditional lands and exposure to an urban environment and therefore the role of the gathering place to provide wellness support to these students during the pressures of studies is extremely important. Therefore we express our support for the creation of an aboriginal gathering place as an extension to the Douglas College campus that would provide the support programs that are essential for the retention of aboriginal students.*

**Ewan Moir, President  
Fraser River Pile and Dredge Ltd.**



***Current gathering place in Aboriginal Student Centre at Douglas College***

### **Providing Enhanced Community Connection**

We are informed by community agencies and other aboriginal organizations of the lack of local facilities in the New Westminister area for such groups to gather, meet, and celebrate.

While aboriginal community centres exist in Surrey there are no such facilities in the Lower Fraser Valley in the New Westminister and Tri-Cities area. In addition, there are no museums or other expressions of aboriginal art or architecture in the area.

Consequently, the proposed facility could be used as rentable space by community groups when they wish to hold meetings, workshops, ceremonies or other gatherings.

The facility could also be used to house local collections of aboriginal artifacts – such as those at Irving House in New Westminister – which are currently not on display due to a lack of space.

*The opportunities are endless for the kinds of cultural events and programs that could take place in a Gathering Place. The central location is an advantage as it is easily accessible by public transportation from anywhere in the Lower Mainland.*

***Rhonda Larrabee, Chief  
Qayqayt First Nation***

*...we do not have the facilities or funding for a "gathering place" where our clients could come together for community celebrations or workshops. There are very few opportunities in Vancouver or the suburbs for First Nations youth in particular, to be empowered by a facility dedicated to their needs.*

***Lou Demerais, Executive Director  
Vancouver Native Health Society***



***Collection of baskets stored in the basement of New Westminster Museum***

## **PARTNERSHIPS/STAKEHOLDERS**

Douglas College has sought out partners to assist with developing this aboriginal centre as a collaborative initiative. Letters of support received to date are included in Appendix E. Expressions of involvement or partnership have been secured in the following categories:

**Aboriginal**

- Local First Nation – New Westminster Indian Band, Qayqayt First Nation
- Regional Metis organizations -- North Fraser Metis Association
- Regional Aboriginal agencies -- Vancouver Native Health Association

**Municipal**

- City of New Westminster
- Local museum -- Irving House
- Local arts and culture tourism association – Trudy Van Dop

**Financial**

- Chartered bank -- BMO Bank of Montreal
- Local credit unions -- Westminster Savings and Community Savings
- Aboriginal financial institution -- All Nations Trust

**Cultural**

- Aboriginal artist -- Robert Davidson
- Aboriginal Student performer -- Williamina Jim
- Aboriginal speaker – Wally Rupert

*Additional support has been confirmed from a variety of local businesses, agencies, and foundations including:*

- Seaspans International Ltd.
- Fraser River Pile and Dredge Ltd.
- Minerva Foundation for BC Women
- Park Ambulance Service Ltd.
- VanBots Construction Company Inc.
- Douglas College Faculty Association

*Further support has been received from the following local members of the provincial legislative assembly and federal members of parliament:*

- Hon. Chuck Puchmayr
- Hon. Dawn Black
- Hon. Peter Julian

Further partnerships are being explored as the proposal is developed further. Additional partners may come from other regional Bands and/or Tribal Councils, First Nations agencies, municipalities, community organizations, business and industry, financial institutions, construction and/or development companies, foundations and philanthropic organizations, federal government departments, and other stakeholders.

Everyone we have so far approached for support with this proposal has been overwhelmingly interested in this project. For the reason outlined in this proposal, the idea of creating an aboriginal gathering place in New Westminster on the Douglas College campus has captured the imagination and excitement. The following remarks are typical of this community response to our proposal:

*The proposed Aboriginal Gathering Space is of particular interest to myself, my family and my company because it is an excellent opportunity to honor a recently deceased family member who was also a founding member of Park Ambulance Service Ltd. Her regard for post secondary education, her appreciation and respect of diverse socio-cultural groups and her personal experiences, as a United Church Minister, with First Nations peoples, makes this an ideal project for us to support.*

**D. Kenneth Muir, President  
Park Ambulance Services, Calgary**

## **COST SHARING**

The guidelines for the Gathering Places Capital Funding indicate that proponents should seek funding partners and that proposals should "demonstrate cost-sharing" in their presentation.

Douglas College has endeavoured to do this and intends to utilize at least 4 types of cost-sharing arrangement in the future development of this proposal:

### **Other Government Grants**

In addition to any funds secured through the Gathering Places Capital Funding, Douglas College will seek financial support from Indian and Northern Affairs, Western Diversification Fund, 2010 Olympics, and federal infrastructure funding for multiculturalism.

### **Corporate Sponsors and Donors**

Several current donors to the Douglas College Foundation have indicated their willingness to provide additional financial contributions specifically to support the Gathering Place proposal: Westminster Savings Credit Union, Minerva Foundation for BC Women, Vanbots Construction, and Park Ambulance Service. Additional support has been communicated verbally from BMO Bank of Montreal, All Nations Trust and Community Savings of New Westminster.

### **In-Kind Contributions**

A number of artists and companies have indicated verbally their willingness to provide either their time or their objects d'art at cost to help ensure the interior of the proposed gathering place is a suitably dramatic reflection of aboriginal culture. In addition, the City of New Westminster has contacted the Parks Department of the City of Vancouver to obtain permission to receive logs from

the recent destruction in Stanley Park for use in building the proposed gathering place.

### **On-Going Revenue**

Since the proposed gathering place will be available for use by community groups and organizations, we anticipate generating on-going revenue from facility rentals and bookings, primarily in evenings and on weekends although some multi-day workshops or conferences are likely.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Centre will function as a multi-purpose facility. Its architectural design will feature a dramatic expression of aboriginal culture that is achieved using a mixture of traditional and modern building materials. This design will blend with the existing exterior features of the New Westminster campus.

### **Purposes**

The centre will be used for the following activities:

#### *Ceremonies*

- Honours ceremony (graduation)
- Student performances
- Cultural celebrations
- Welcome Feast (new student orientation)

#### *Student Support*

- Aboriginal student services
- Cultural commons and lounge area
- Student study space
- Wellness activities

#### *Community Resource*

- Aboriginal agency meetings and gatherings
- Cultural events and activities
- Historical exhibitions and educational displays
- Business conferences and training events

### **Contents**

The centre will contain the following components:

- Central gathering arena with audience seating for up to 100 people
- Exhibition corridors with wall and secure cabinet displays

- Student lounge seating
- Study carrels and computer stations
- Aboriginal health services, including Elder in Residence
- Kitchen facilities, washrooms and elevator



*Proposed location for gathering place on college campus in New Westminster*

### **Location**

The centre would be built on existing land owned by Douglas College on its campus in New Westminster at the corner of Royal Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Planning permits have been discussed with the City of New Westminster Planning Department.

### **Design Features**

The centre will showcase West Coast aboriginal culture and artistic heritage. The design of the building will incorporate the following features:

- Large entranceway with cultural motifs such as totem poles
- Central gathering space using carved cedar and native designs
- Student areas with aboriginal colouring and cultural symbols
- Outdoor garden area emphasizing West Coast natural environment





*Creative expression of aboriginal artist Robert Davidson*

[www.robertdavidson.ca](http://www.robertdavidson.ca)

*I see great value in the concept of the proposed development [Douglas College/Qayqayt First Nation] and would like to express my support. It will provide a great opportunity for students as well as artists of the Northwest Coast.*

**Robert Davidson, Eagle of the Dawn Artist Ltd.**

## **PROJECT COSTS AND PROJECTIONS**

Douglas College has prepared this capital funding request to the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education under its "Gathering Places Capital Funding" initiative. This proposal has been constructed in accordance with the guidelines and criteria provided by the Capital Unit, Funding and Analysis Branch.

The total proposed project cost (including GST) is \$6,957,585.

This is composed of the following budget components:

Planning and design	1,077,700
Construction	4,500,000
Reserves	600,000
Completion	799,885

For a break-down of the budget components in accordance with the Ministry's "Project Budget Summary" please see the document prepared by LEC Quantity Surveying Inc. and presented in Appendix B.

## **SPACE SUMMARY**

The proposed gathering place would be new construction and not renovation of existing space. However, it would permit the re-location of the existing Aboriginal Student Services Centre from its current inadequate space.

The proposed building would be a three storey structure with the first floor (3,000 square feet) housing mechanical needs and foundation into the slope of the terrain. Note: this first storey would connect to the "Second Floor" of the college building.

The second storey (7,137 square feet) would provide offices, seminar/meeting space and student lounge/computer space. This storey would be connected to the main college building by two links from its 'Third Floor'.

The third storey (7,137 square feet) would provide the main ceremonial space, designed to be circular for seating purposes but also be space which could be subdivided for smaller-scale meetings and activities. This storey would have a land-bridge to street level on Royal Avenue from the building's main entrance.

The total area of the proposed building would be:

Gross area	1,622 m <sup>2</sup>
Net area	1,135 m <sup>2</sup>

***Note: Artist's renderings showing a possible conception of the proposed gathering place and its features is provided in Appendix A.***

## **PROPOSED SCHEDULE AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Douglas College would be ready to begin development and planning as soon as possible after initial Ministry approval is received. Much depends on the timelines of that approval process.

The proposed cash flow for this project would be planning this year, tender in late March-early April 2008 with an 18 month completion schedule:

2007/08	\$800,000
2008/09	\$4,105,057
2009/10	\$2,052,528

## CONCLUSION

There is a famous photograph of a lone aboriginal canoe in the Fraser River at New Westminster taken in 1875 when the settlers had extensively developed the surrounding area and much displaced the indigenous population. This photograph is a symbol of the restitution we seek to achieve through the development of an aboriginal Gathering Place in the same New Westminster over a century later.



*Aboriginal canoeing on the Fraser River at New Westminster, 1875*

Through this proposal, we seek to restore the traditional role for aboriginal people of the New Westminster territory as a "meeting place" and we seek to use that space to celebrate aboriginal culture so as to welcome and retain aboriginal students and thus increase their participation and graduation rates.

Our case is best summarized by Wayne Wright, Mayor of the City of New Westminster, when he says:

*The existing Aboriginal Centre [at Douglas College] is becoming increasingly cramped and a new long house would more effectively meet those needs as well*

*as provide educational programming space for the community. Furthermore, the New Westminster First Nations band has no space of its own and this project would be an opportunity to supply them with such as well as offer ceremonial space to other First Nations groups. While meeting these community cultural needs, it is also anticipated that the project would become a welcome addition to tourism in New Westminster.*

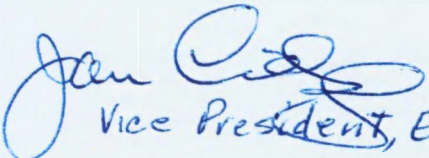
And the overall potential impact is well articulated by Denise Coutts of the Minerva Foundation who says in her letter of support:

*Not only will this [facility] help aboriginal students and their families, but it will support them in building capacity, resulting in self-reliant communities, contributing to the economy and health of British Columbia.*

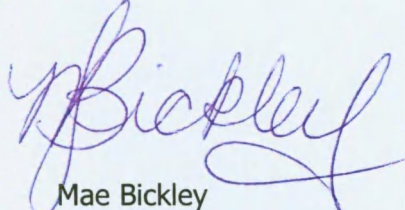
We could not agree more, and we encourage the Ministry of Advanced Education also to appreciate the unique merits of this proposal.

## **SIGNATURES**

These signatures confirm that the signatory has reviewed and approved this proposal for a Gathering Place at Douglas College:

  
Vice President, Education

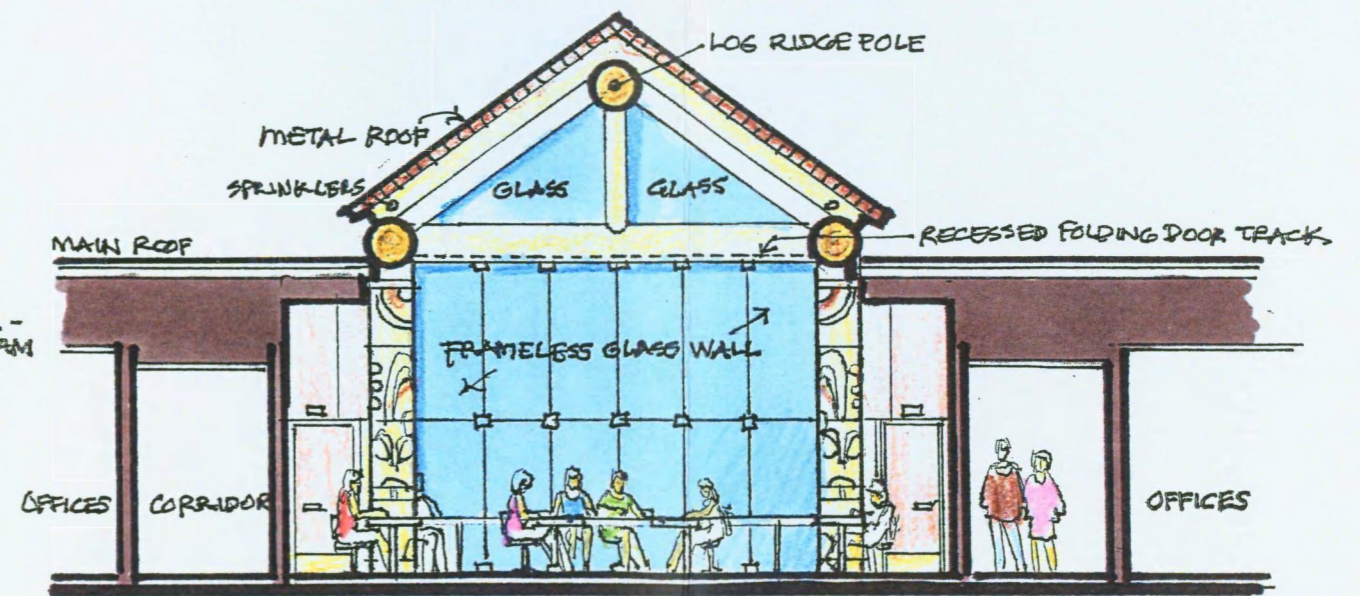
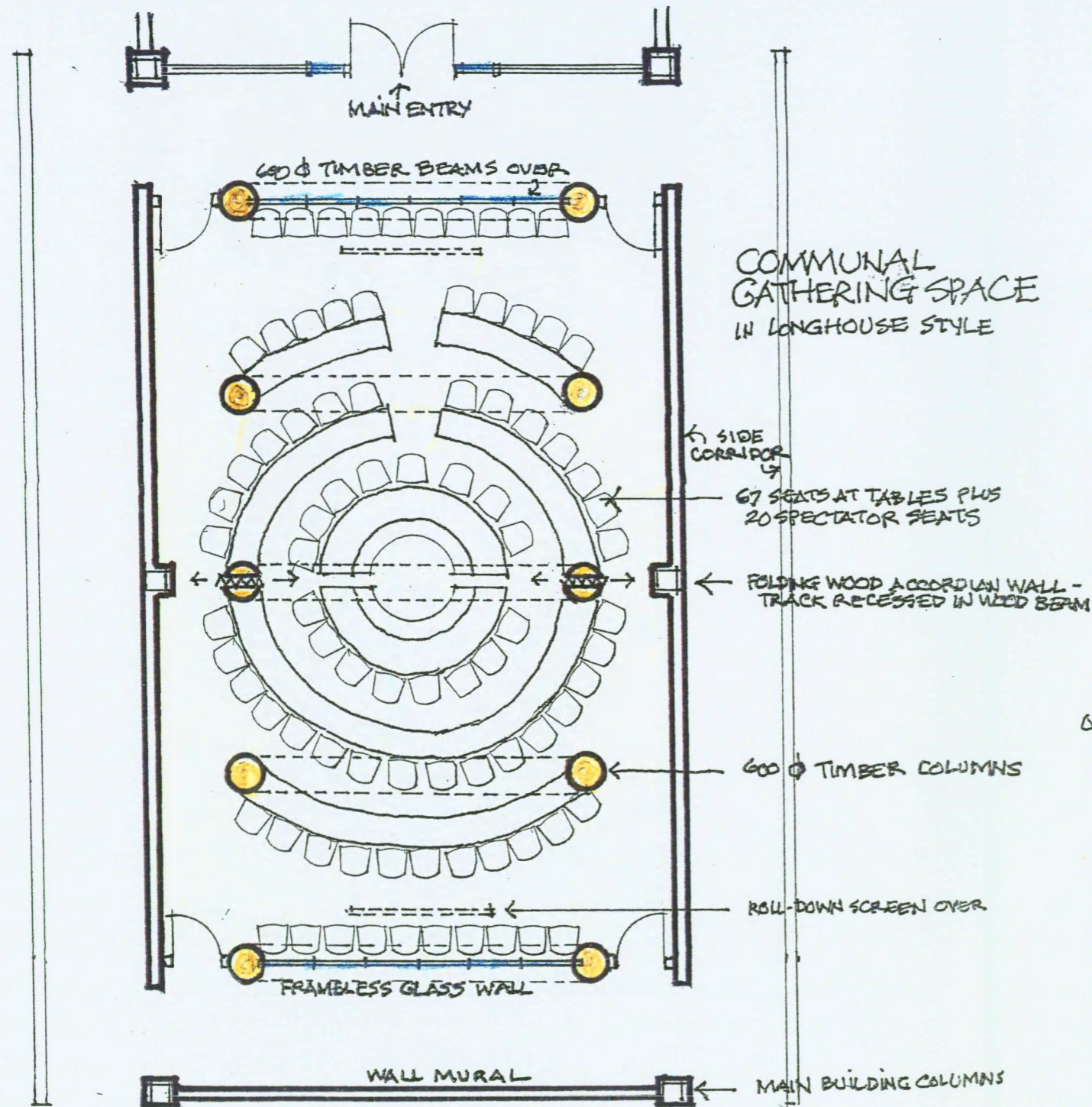
per Susan Witter  
President  
Douglas College



Mae Bickley  
Aboriginal Advisory Committee  
and Aboriginal Education  
Coordinator



*RENDERINGS*



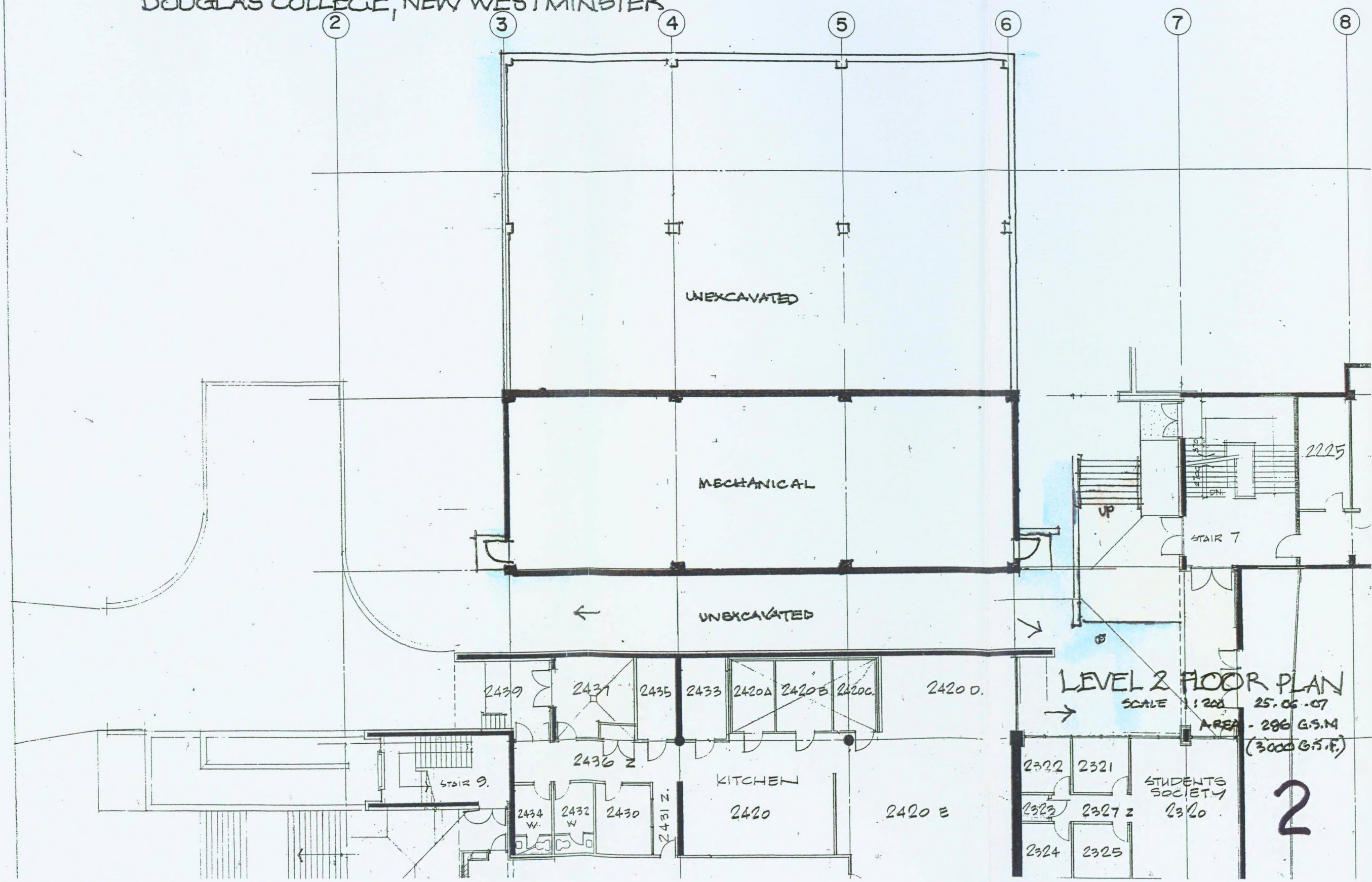
CROSS SECTION

**GATHERING PLACE** ABORIGINAL STUDENT CENTRE  
 DOUGLAS COLLEGE, NEW WESTMINSTER CAMPUS

CJP - SCALE 1:100  
 DATE - 28-06-07

118.8 M.S.M  
 (1,278 M.S.F)

**GATHERING PLACE** ABORIGINAL STUDENT CTR.  
DOUGLAS COLLEGE, NEW WESTMINSTER





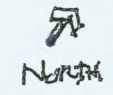


**GATHERING PLACE** ABORIGINAL STUDENT CENTRE  
DOUGLAS COLLEGE, NEW WESTMINSTER

SIDEWALK LEVEL 4

LAND BRIDGE TO ROSAL AVE

SLOPE



TRANSFORMER

SIGN

SIGN



EXISTING TREES

DECK

ENTRY

LEVEL 4 DECK

WALK @ LEVEL 3

EX. DECK @ LEVEL 4

RECEPTION

BTGD LAB

E.D.W. / CLASSR 421

TERRACE BELOW @ LEVEL 3

OFFICES

GATHERING SPACE

OFFICES

4221

4221 A

4236A

4220

GLASS

73 SEATS

SCREEN (PULL DOWN)

EXIT BELOW

S.D. CLASSROOM

4223

4226

4228

4229

WOMEN

W.C.

STAR.

MEN

EXIT COURTYARD BELOW

STAIR 7

LOADING BELOW

COURTYARD @ LEVEL 3

EXISTING ROOF

EXITS BELOW AT LEVEL 2

4240 Z

LEVEL 4  
SCALE 1/32  
25.06.0

AREA - 603 SQM  
(7137 G.S.F.)

4

STAIR 9

4365 Z

4370 A 4370 B

4360 A 4360 B 4364

4363

4333

4335

COMMERCE & BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



*PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY*

**FIRST NATIONS GATHERING PLACE  
DOUGLAS COLLEGE , COQUITLAM, BC**

**LEC** Quantity  
Surveying Inc.

**BUDGET COMPONENT**

**Estimated Cost**

\$

**A PLANNING & DESIGN**

Pre-Planning	80,000
Planning and Design Fees	732,000
Project Management	151,000
Other (Owner's Contingency)	114,700
	<u>1,077,700</u>

**B CONSTRUCTION**

New Building	4,000,000
Renovations	-
Building Supplementary Costs	-
Site Development	500,000
Site Supplementary Costs	-
Parking	-
Off-Site Costs	-
	<u>4,500,000</u>

**C RESERVES**

Construction Escalation (July 2008)	440,000
Equipment Escalation (July 2008)	40,000
Construction Contingency (3%)	120,000
	<u>600,000</u>

**D COMPLETION COSTS**

Furniture & Equipment	400,000
Permits, DCCs	120,000
Legal	10,000
Insurance	64,000
Interim Financing	-
Commissioning	32,000
Re-Zoning	-
Site Acquisition	-
Payable GST (Excluding land)	153,885
	<u>779,885</u>

**TOTAL PROJECT COST (Incl. GST)**

6,957,585



*QAYQAYT BAND HISTORY*

## HISTORY OF THE NEW WESTMINSTER INDIAN BAND QAYQAYT FIRST NATION

In the last century, there was an Indian Village that ran along side of, what is now, Front Street in New Westminster. It's name was Qayqayt (pronounced Ke-kite). In 1859, New Westminster City Council wanted the Indians moved out of the City core, so three (3) reserves were created: 32 acres at Scott Paper's current location, the 27 acres of Poplar Island and the 105 acres across the Fraser River called Brownsville (now Bridgeview).

A smallpox epidemic killed numerous Natives in 1904. The City did not want the survivors to bury their dead in "white man's cemeteries" so the Indians were buried on Poplar Island. Then, in 1916, the McKenna McBride Commission closed the New Westminster Reserve and told the residents to move. Numerous reserves all over British Columbia were being closed at this time, and there is no record of any of the Bands being given any compensation to help them move, nor were they given any land to move to. Most of the Indians from New Westminster were married into, or adopted by other Bands. In 1945, the Federal Government sold Poplar Island, but in 1995 the Province declared it a "Legacy Park". No members of the Band were notified of the sale in 1945, nor were any Natives consulted in the 1995 declaration of a Legacy Park.

The New Westminster Band scattered to other Bands such as Musqueam, Squamish and Washington State, and were simply forgotten. Recently, thanks to the efforts of Chief Rhonda Larrabee, the New Westminster Indian Band is experiencing a reincarnation. They've received funding from the Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs to run an office out of Chief Larrabee's home.

In spite of the years of injustice, the New Westminster Indian Band has the well-being of the entire community as it's prime concern. Therefore, they welcome a partnership with the New Westminster School Board in developing educational needs; the City of New Westminster for it's physical need – perhaps an expanded recreation services building that will benefit all the citizens of New Westminster, the downtown Businessmen's Association that would benefit all in New Westminster and create employment opportunities and the citizens of New Westminster for its social and cultural needs.

The Band would provide cultural, health, educational and social services to First Nations people, while at the same time preserving the environment, heritage, access, land use and community responsibility. Rhonda says "I envision a Reserve that emphasizes education – that is the mandate of our family – land with a learning centre".





*FOCUS ON STUDENT  
WILLAMINA JIM*

## ABORIGINAL STUDENT PROFILE

### WILLAMINA JIM *STI TA SIL WIT*



*My English name is Willamina Jim. My Indian names are 'Sti ta sil wit' means the daughter of Sti ta sil tun from Kwantlen First Nation (shared with my niece Karli Thomas, 'Coocwa' means grandmother from Skatin First Nation (shared with my aunt Karen Charlie), and 'Omxanuck' is the daughter of Omxanuck shared with my niece Connie Thomas). I carry these names in pride always loving, respecting, caring and understanding 'Ucwalmicw' -people. I have a mixture of nationalities being part Irish, Scottish, French, Haida, Eskimo and Interior Coast Salish.*

*I love my beautiful mother Florence Thomas who has always been by my side through traditional cultural teachings reminding me continuously of who I am and encouraging me to continue my education and not to forget my culture. I have 3 sisters and four*

*brothers. Every year my family coordinates the Fraser Valley Pow-wow located in Fort Langley B.C. on the Kwantlen First Nation.*

*I am now working for the 'Spirit of the Children Society' as the Cultural Worker which is a non profit Society funded through the Ministry of Children and Family.*

*I am proud lady who takes pride in participating in my culture and teaching what I know to our future generations. I have learned many skills like cedar harvesting, gather medicinal herbs, fish, berry pick, sing, dance, bead, travel, work with children and families. I love to be with my family and friends and be happy. I love to learn new things to challenge my horizons, meet new people, go to school and take care of my well-being.*

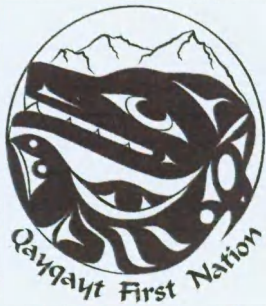
*I am an undergraduate in the Two Year Accounting Diploma offered through Douglas College to be completed 2008. I am also interested in entering into an Early Childhood Education Program.*

*My dancing is an important part of my life and culture. I have been dancing for 30 years, since I was a little girl. I have danced at many Pow-wow's and am a jingle dress dancer. Dancing gives me strength and reminds me of my belonging.*

*We need a place where we can drum, dance, sing and celebrate who we are – our culture, our language, our heritage and our struggles. We need a gathering place where we can practice our spirituality; conduct cultural healing and wellness workshops; hold events and sensitivity workshops; as well as share our stories and our successes. We need a place that embraces who we are and who we are becoming. We seek the sharing of ourselves. Where better to do this than here in New Westminster where we have no gathering place for aboriginal people?*



*STAKEHOLDERS' LETTER  
OF SUPPORT*



# NEW WESTMINSTER INDIAN BAND QAYQAYT FIRST NATION

#105 - 3680 Rae Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5R 2P5

Phone: (604) 451-0531 Fax: (604) 451-9231

e-mail: [qayqayt@shaw.ca](mailto:qayqayt@shaw.ca)

June 29, 2007

Mr. Ted James  
Dean, Student Development  
Douglas College  
P.O. Box 2503  
New Westminster, B.C. V3L 5B2

SUBJECT: Douglas College Aboriginal Gathering Place

Dear Mr. James:

This letter is to inform you that the New Westminster Indian Band - Qayqayt First Nation fully supports the Proposal for the Gathering Places Capital Funding Project (GPCF).

The Qayqayt First Nation does not have a land base at present, but has been recognized by all levels of Government and has a strong presence in New Westminster. We have been working for many years with School District #40 and have participated in many events ceremonies and celebrations which honour the Aboriginal students from Grades K - 12. The former Urban First Nations Community Society, which provided much-needed cultural, health and social services for the First Nations youth, parents and elders is no longer operating. The lack of First Nations Services in New Westminster has really been felt by the community.

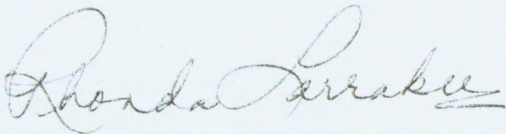
The Qayqayt First Nation is very interested and would welcome working with Douglas College to develop a "Gathering Place" on this capital funding proposal. The Halq'eméylem word for New Westminster means "meeting place" and it is our Vision to help create a place that reflects our heritage where meetings, celebrations and ceremonies could be held in our traditional territory.

We envision a welcoming environment at Douglas College for First Nations students from all over British Columbia. This facility can provide a solid connection with the First Nations elders and families in the community, and provide students with a positive connection to their heritage. This "meeting/gathering place" will enrich the urban experience for First Nations Students and provide a community focus for our people.

The opportunities are endless for the kinds of cultural events and programs that could take place in a Gathering Place. The central location is an advantage as it is easily accessible by public transportation from anywhere in the Lower Mainland.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future with a favourable progress report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rhonda Larrabee". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Rhonda Larrabee  
Chief



# Vancouver Native Health Society

---

July 5, 2007

Ted James, Dean  
Student Development  
Douglas College  
PO Box 2503  
New Westminster, BC  
V3L 5B2

Dear Dean James:

As a First Nations organization providing health care for Aboriginal children and families, we recognize the need for a gathering space and support services for our community members. Although our mandate, through various programs, addresses aboriginal health issues, counseling, and support services, we do not have the facilities or funding for a "gathering place" where our clients could come together for community celebrations or workshops.

There are very few opportunities or space available in Vancouver or the suburbs for First Nations youth in particular, to be empowered by a facility dedicated to their needs.

One of our programs, the "Aboriginal Child and Family Support Services", recognizes the needs that would be fulfilled by such a proposed centre. We would embrace, and be delighted to assist in, the development of Douglas College's aboriginal student centre

Yours sincerely,

VANCOUVER NATIVE HEALTH SOCIETY

Lou Demerais,  
Executive Director





MAYOR'S OFFICE  
511 ROYAL AVENUE  
NEW WESTMINSTER, B. C.  
V3L 1H9

TELEPHONE  
(604) 527-4522  
FAX  
(604) 527-4524

July 5, 2007

Hazel Postma  
Associate Vice President External Relations  
Douglas College  
P.O. Box 2503  
New Westminster, BC V3L 5B2

Dear Ms. Postma:

Re: Douglas College Grant Application to build an Aboriginal Gathering Place

At a meeting on June 25, 2007, the Council of the City of New Westminster, received information about the Douglas College proposal to construct an Aboriginal Gathering Place on the college site. The existing Aboriginal Centre is becoming increasingly cramped and a new long house would more effectively meet those needs as well as provide educational programming space for the community. Furthermore, the New Westminster First Nations band has no space of its own and this project would be an opportunity to supply them with such as well as offer ceremonial space to other First Nations groups. While meeting these community cultural needs, it is also anticipated that the project would become a welcome addition to tourism in New Westminster.

The City Council heartily endorses Douglas College's grant proposal to build an Aboriginal Gathering Place in our community and will provide whatever support it can. I am pleased to provide you with Council's motion of support on the matter:

*THAT the City send a letter of support for the Douglas College grant application to build a long house at the corner of Eight Street and Royal Avenue.*

On behalf of City Council, I encourage the responsible Provincial Grants Committee to approve a capital funding grant to Douglas College for development of an Aboriginal Gathering Place which will bring benefits to the community, to Douglas College students, and to First Nations groups in and around New Westminster.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Wright".

Wayne Wright  
MAYOR

Copy: Ted James, Dean of Student Development ✓  
Paul Daminato



421 Richmond St.  
New Westminister, BC  
V3L 4C4  
Tel (604) 521-7887  
Fax (604) 540-1062  
trudy@vandopgallery.com

July 5, 2007

As a life-long resident and active leader in the arts and cultural community of New Westminister, I believe the Gathering Place: Aboriginal Student Centre proposal at Douglas College merits the wholehearted support of our community. We all need gathering places, places where we can join others to collaborate and share a common vision. This initiative is one that will strengthen and enliven our community.

Sincerely,

Trudy Van Dop

Vice-President  
Tourism New Westminister

Owner and Publisher, Van Dop Gallery & Arts and Cultural Guide to BC

Ted James, Dean of Student Services  
Douglas College  
PO Box 2503  
New Westminster  
V3L 5B2

To Whom it May Concern,

Westminster Savings Credit Union (WSCU) is pleased to support the concept of an Aboriginal Gathering Space at the New Westminster campus of Douglas College.

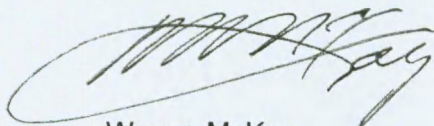
WSCU has been a solid supporter of Douglas College since its inception in 1970 and provided funding for the Women's Centre at the College's Coquitlam campus. WSCU also has a Bursary Fund with Douglas College that is now in excess of \$20,000. WSCU is recognized as a community leader and we strive to respect, celebrate, and recognize the diversity within our communities.

As aboriginal students move into post-secondary education, a gathering place will be an essential component in their success, providing a refuge from the busy college campus as well as a place to meet and share experiences.

As well, the creation of an Aboriginal Gathering Space in New Westminster will enhance the cultural life of the city by focusing on the original inhabitants as well as encouraging First Nations groups from across the Lower Mainland to use the facility for their ceremonies. We also understand that the general student population as well as residents of New Westminster from a variety of cultural backgrounds will be able to meet in the Gathering Space.

Westminster Savings Credit Union is pleased to note the many persons who will benefit from this facility, and we support the concept of an Aboriginal Gathering Place. While this letter does not tie WSCU to future financial support we would entertain a request for funding once detailed budgets and architectural drawings are in place.

Sincerely,



Wayne McKay  
VP, Marketing

# Community Savings™

Reaching New Horizons

July 6, 2007

Mr. Ted James  
Dean of Student Services  
Douglas College  
PO Box 2503  
New Westminster  
V3L 5B2

Dear Mr. James:

**Subject: Aboriginal Gathering Place**

Community Savings Credit Union is pleased to support the concept of an Aboriginal Gathering Space at the Douglas College, New Westminister Campus.

As aboriginal students move into post-secondary education, a gathering place will be an essential component in their success, providing a refuge from the busy college campus as well as a place to meet and share experiences.

As well, the creation of an Aboriginal Gathering Space in New Westminister will enhance the cultural life of the city by focusing on the original inhabitants as well as encouraging First Nations groups from across the Lower Mainland to use the facility for their ceremonies. We also understand that the general student population as well as residents of New Westminister from a variety of cultural backgrounds will be able to meet in the Gathering Space.

Community Savings Credit Union supports the concept of an Aboriginal Gathering Place and while this letter in no way ties CSCU to future financial support, we would entertain a request for funding once detailed budgets and architectural drawings are in place.

Yours truly,  
**Community Savings Credit Union**

Bruce Cook  
President & CEO

Reply to: Corporate Office  
Suite 1600, 13450-102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Surrey, BC  
V3T 5X3

BC/da



EAGLE OF THE DAWN ARTIST LTD.  
ROBERT DAVIDSON

July 4, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Gathering Place: Aboriginal Student Centre

This letter is written in support of the application for funding to assist with the development of the proposed Gathering Place: Aboriginal Student Centre.

I see great value in the concept of the proposed development and would like to express my support. It will provide a great opportunity for students as well as artists of the Northwest Coast.

Sincerely,

  
Robert Davidson

16541 Beach Road  
Surrey, BC  
Canada V3S 9R7  
604-536-2949 | Fax: 604-536-6255



July 3, 2007

Ted James  
Dean, Student Development  
Douglas College  
700 Royal Avenue  
New Westminster, B.C. V3M 5Z5

Dear Sir:

**Subject: Support for a Douglas College Aboriginal Gathering Place**

Rhonda Larrabee, Chief of the New Westminster Indian Band (Qayqayt First Nation) has made us aware of the initiative of Douglas College to seek funding through the Ministry of Advanced Education to establish an aboriginal gathering place.

The purpose of this letter is to express our company's support for this initiative.

As you are aware, Seaspan International Ltd. is one of the leaders in marine transportation and shipbuilding on Canada's West Coast with more than 2000 skilled employees and a century-old tradition of navigating the waters of the Fraser River that flow through New Westminster.

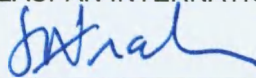
All industrial sectors in Canada are faced with the issue of an ageing workforce and the need for renewal. We therefore see significant future employment opportunities for aboriginal youth in the marine industry.

Our company recently entered into a partnership with the Haisla First Nation in Kitimat that will see a number of their youth receiving training and qualification in boat handling and seamanship in the Lower Mainland. Upon completion, these students will be able to return to Kitimat to re-establish their native maritime traditions and support the future economic growth that will take place in their home region. For many of these students, it will be their first experience away from their traditional lands and exposure to an urban environment. We are very sensitive to the issues and difficulties facing these students and how they can negatively impact their ability to succeed.

We therefore whole-heartedly support your desire to create an aboriginal gathering place as an extension to the Douglas College campus that would provide the support infrastructure that is essential for the retention of aboriginal students and improve success rates.

Yours truly,

SEASPAN INTERNATIONAL LTD.

  
**Stephen A. Frasher**  
Chief Executive Officer

---

*Seaspan International Ltd.*

10 Pemberton Avenue • North Vancouver, BC • Canada V7P 2R1 • 604-988-3111 tel • 604-984-1613 fax • [www.seaspan.com](http://www.seaspan.com)

*A Washington Marine Group Company*

**FRASER RIVER PILE & DREDGE LTD.**

June 27, 2007

Ted James  
Dean, Student Development  
Douglas College  
700 Royal Avenue  
New Westminster, B.C. V3M 5Z5

Dear Sir:

**Re: Support for a Douglas College Aboriginal Gathering Place**

Rhonda Larrabee, Chief of the New Westminster Indian Band (Qayqayt First Nation) has made us aware of the initiative of Douglas College to seek funding through the Ministry of Advanced Education to establish an aboriginal gathering place.

The purpose of this letter is to express our company's support for this initiative.

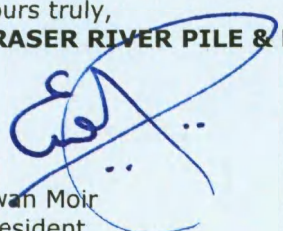
Fraser River Pile & Dredge Ltd. is Western Canada's largest marine contractor specializing in marine construction, land foundations and dredging. Fraser River Pile & Dredge Ltd. (FRPD) was incorporated in British Columbia in 1987, and is the successor company to Fraser River Pile Driving Company which was founded in 1911.

As active members of the broader marine community that includes marine transportation, shipbuilding and port activities, we are faced with a growing shortage of skilled workers and therefore we see opportunities for aboriginal youth that can attain the necessary qualifications for these highly skilled jobs.

There are significant hurdles that aboriginal youth must overcome in order to be successful that in most cases are not faced or understood by the non-aboriginal population. For many of these students it is their first experience away from their traditional lands and exposure to an urban environment and therefore the role of the gathering place to provide wellness support to these students during the pressures of studies is extremely important.

We therefore express our support for the creation of an aboriginal gathering place as an extension to the Douglas College campus that would provide the support programs that are essential for the retention of aboriginal students.

Yours truly,  
**FRASER RIVER PILE & DREDGE LTD.**

  
Ewan Moir  
President



**MINERVA**

foundation

June 27, 2007

Hazel Postma  
Associate VP External Relations  
Douglas College  
PO Box 2503  
New Westminister, BC V3L 5B2

Dear Hazel,

It is with pleasure that the Minerva Foundation for BC Women submits this letter in support of the development of an Aboriginal Gathering Place at Douglas College in New Westminister.

The Minerva Foundation has had a relationship with Douglas College since 2003, whereby we distribute four education awards of \$1,250 each annually. More recently we have been working with Douglas College to expand our relationship to further support education awards for Aboriginal women in conjunction with a new initiative we have developed called Combining Our Strength™ – A Partnership of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Women. Our objective is to enhance the accessibility and increase the number of Aboriginal women who complete post-secondary education successfully by offering education awards. We anticipate that \$5,000 in awards to Aboriginal women will be distributed annually between 2008 and 2012.

The Minerva Foundation is committed to assist Aboriginal women meet the challenges currently facing their community and open the door for future generations. We see our role as one in which we support creating systemic and sustainable change.

Our partnership with Douglas College would be enhanced as would the opportunities for Aboriginal women through the development of an Aboriginal Gathering Place at the college. Not only will this help Aboriginal students and their families, but it will support them in building capacity, resulting in self-reliant communities, contributing to the economy and health of British Columbia.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Denise Coutts".

Denise Coutts  
Executive Director





## Park Ambulance Service Ltd.

Box 55121 Temple P.O.  
Calgary, Alberta, T1Y 6R6  
(403) 226-0884 or 1-800-661-1133  
Fax: (403) 226-0936 or 1-800-313-1765  
kmuir@parkambulance.com

June 25<sup>th</sup> 2007

Douglas College  
700 Royal Avenue  
New Westminster BC  
V3M 5Z5

Attention: Hazel Postma  
Re: Aboriginal Gathering Place

Dear Mrs. Postma

I would like to offer this letter in support of the proposed Aboriginal Gathering Place at Douglas College. I am interested in learning more about this proposed project and, subsequent to that, I am willing to consider contributing financial support or gifts in kind, such as First Nations artifacts. Not only do we appreciate the need for a space for aboriginal students to gather, but we also recognize the need for a place where all Douglas College students can find sanctuary from the daily stresses of student life.

As a current supporter of and donor to the Performing Arts at Douglas College I am confident that the proposed project will be carried forward with the utmost efficiency, care and respect. The proposed Aboriginal Gathering Space is of particular interest to myself, my family and my company because it is an excellent opportunity to honor a recently deceased family member who was also a founding member of Park Ambulance Service Ltd. Her regard for post secondary education, her appreciation and respect of diverse socio-cultural groups and her personal experiences, as a United Church Minister, with First Nations peoples, makes this an ideal project for us to support.

Please keep me informed as to the progress on this project.

Yours Truly,

D. Kenneth Muir R.N.  
President

June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007

**Douglas College**  
700 Royal Avenue  
New Westminister, B.C. V3M 5Z5

Attention: Ms Hazel Postma

**Re: Aboriginal Gathering Place at New Westminister Campus**

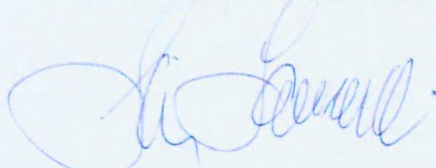
Dear Hazel,

As you are aware, Vanbots Construction has been a large supporter of Aboriginal communities in both Ontario and British Columbia. We have recently established a bursary with Douglas college to support higher education for Aboriginal students and understand that the College is now considering an expansion for a gathering place, perhaps in the form of a longhouse at the New Westminister campus.

I would like to advise you that Vanbots supports this initiative and we would be willing to contribute some support to this very important cause either through fund raising or the offering of some of our services. Kindly keep us informed of your initiatives and if we can help in any way contact me anytime.

Yours truly,

**VANBOTS CONSTRUCTION INC.**



Jim Laurence  
President

*Building Partnership  
and Vision*

4320 Viking Way

Suite 210

Richmond

British Columbia

Canada V6V 2L4

Tel 604-273-3301

Fax 604-273-3399

6 July 2007

Ted James  
Dean, Student Development  
Douglas College  
New Westminster, BC  
V3L 5B2

Dear Ted,

As President of the Douglas College Faculty Association (DCFA), I am writing to express faculty's full support for an Aboriginal Gathering Place here at the New Westminster campus.

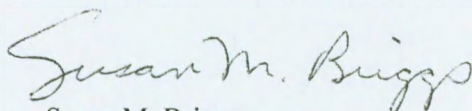
Faculty at Douglas College are committed to facilitating access to education and to creating safe and inclusive learning environments. Our involvement with initiatives such as Institutional Based Training (IBT), community education courses, and Criminology and English courses at Vancouver's Native Education Centre demonstrate our desire to create opportunities for students with which to build the confidence, self-esteem, skills, insight, and courage they need to create better futures for themselves and others. Moreover, the contributions of individual instructors such as Professor Emeritus Alan McMillan who devoted his career to increasing our understanding of aboriginal peoples and their cultures, also speak to Douglas College faculty's commitment to diversity and student success.

The Faculty Association sees the creation of an Aboriginal Gathering Place as a critical element in our goal of ensuring all students have equal and easy access to education. It is time to expand educational opportunities for aboriginal youth and building this space will further that aim.

The DCFA is proud to be a part of Douglas College's bid to build an Aboriginal Gathering Place, and I offer my association's aid in creating such a haven here in New Westminster.

Should you wish to speak to me about the DCFA's support for the Aboriginal Gathering Place, please do not hesitate to contact me at my office on 604.527.5282 or by e-mail at [briggss@douglas.bc.ca](mailto:briggss@douglas.bc.ca).

Sincerely,



Susan M. Briggs  
DCFA President



July 09, 2007

C/O Mae Bickley  
First Nations Coordinator  
Douglas College  
New Westminster, BC

**Re: Aboriginal Gathering Place in New Westminster**

To all whom this concerns,

I am writing to support the development of a gathering place for Aboriginal and First Nations peoples in the City of New Westminster. Over the last number of years I have been invited to be a guest speaker at Douglas College's courses for the *Child, Family and Community Studies Program*.

Over the years I have spoken to hundreds of students regarding my personal and professional journey as an Aboriginal man in the social work profession. Specifically, the focus of these sessions has been the impact of colonization, the Indian Act, the Residential School system and the Child Welfare system, and the effects on today's aboriginal children, families and communities.

As someone who has worked in this field for over thirty-five (35) years, I have developed an in-depth understanding of our people's present day needs. Recognition, support and a renewed relationship with and from mainstream organizations for the healing and welfare of our people is healing in itself. Building healthy, welcoming environments where culture and dignified pride is nourished and can flourish is a blessing to many of our people who are building a new place in our society, for themselves, and more importantly, for their children.

I heartily support the efforts of all those who are working to make this concept a reality.

All My Relations

Wally Rupert  
Transformation Manager  
Vancouver Coastal Region  
Ministry for Children and Family Development

604 660.1082  
Wally.Rupert@gov.bc.ca



**Dawn Black, MP**  
**New Westminster**  
**- Coquitlam**



House of Commons

### Community Office

1116 Austin Avenue  
Coquitlam, BC V3K 3P5  
Tel: (604) 664-9229  
Fax: (604) 664-9231

### Ottawa Office

Room 223, West Block  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Tel: (613) 947-4455  
Fax: (613) 947-4458

E-mail:  
blackd@parl.gc.ca

Website:  
www.dawnblack.ca

July 6, 2007

Ted James  
Dean of Student Services  
Douglas College  
PO Box 2503  
New Westminster, BC  
V3L 5B2

Dear Mr James,

I am pleased to offer this letter in support of the proposed Aboriginal Student Centre at the New Westminster campus of Douglas College.

It is quite fitting that such a space be located at the campus. Douglas College plays an important role in New Westminster and has always been a space committed to diversity.

Though the communities served by Douglas College have a surprisingly significant population identified as First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, there is a noticeable lack of locally-based services catering to their needs. Aboriginal Centres such as the one proposed are crucial to the success of aboriginal students, and their success will help to strengthen our community. I am also pleased that the Centre could serve multiple functions for the broader community, as a space for public meetings, gatherings, workshops and ceremonies; even potentially functioning as a gallery for First Nations artwork.

There is a real opportunity here in the partnership you have built with the leadership of the Qayqayt band, and I am pleased you are working together in the development of this meeting space. More than just a room with four walls, this centre would provide New Westminster with something it has been lacking – a genuine space designed, developed and nurtured collaboratively by members of the Qayqayt band and the college.

I am pleased to support your efforts in obtaining this addition to the community and am really excited about the project. Please keep me updated on the progress of the Aboriginal Student Centre. As always, don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Dawn Black, MP  
New Westminster - Coquitlam

cep 232

**Chuck Puchmayr, MLA**

(New Westminster)  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 1X4



Province of  
**British Columbia**  
Legislative Assembly



Chuck Puchmayr, MLA  
(New Westminster)

**Community Office:**  
1170 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
New Westminster, BC  
V3M 2R6  
Phone: (604) 775-2101  
Fax: (604) 775-2121

June 29, 2007

Mr. Ted James,  
Dean of Student Services  
Douglas College  
(Via facsimile: 604-527-5095)

Dear Mr. James:     **RE: Gathering Place: Aboriginal Student Centre**

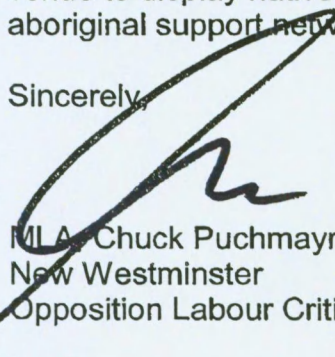
It is with pleasure that I write in support of funding the **Gathering Place: Aboriginal Student Centre** at Douglas College.

The current space that the Gathering Place occupies is insufficient for the operation of the organization, the capital funding that is being requested would provide for the building of a long-house style structure at the college. This structure would provide students of aboriginal heritage as well as benefit the community as a whole.

Partners are being sought for this venture from Bands and/or Tribal Councils, First Nations agencies, municipalities, community organizations, business and industry to name a few.

The facility itself would not only provide meeting space for important Aboriginal programs, but a venue to display native artwork and artefacts. I believe any opportunity we have to facilitate aboriginal support networks is money well spent. Therefore, I am in full support of this project.

Sincerely,



MLA Chuck Puchmayr  
New Westminster  
Opposition Labour Critic

CAP/elo  
Bcgeu 104/107

July 6, 2007

**Ministry of Advanced Education**

**To Whom It May Concern,**

**RE: Gathering Place: Aboriginal Student Centre Funding Proposal**

I am writing in support of the funding application for the Douglas College Aboriginal Student Centre.

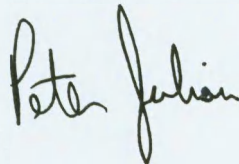
Douglas College proposes to create a *purpose-built* centre that will serve its students of aboriginal heritage as well as benefit the communities in which they live and work. In addition to providing a location on campus for ceremonies and celebrations, the centre would house support services and a student lounge area. There are 400 aboriginal students enrolled to date.

The current space that the Gathering Place occupies is insufficient for the operation of the organization. The capital funding would provide for the building of a long-house style structure at the college.

Partners being sought for this venture are from Bands and/or Tribal Councils, First Nations agencies, municipalities, community organizations, business and industry. As well, Douglas College will receive guidance and support in the development of this proposal from the College's Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

I trust you will give due consideration to such a valuable community project. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Julian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Peter Julian, MP  
Burnaby-New Westminster

