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Metchosin “adds” nearly 200 residents this fall

Pearson College UWC international students on campus for the new year

Pedder Bay – September is back-to-school month for most young people in Greater Victoria, but that takes on an entirely different meaning when it is applied to the arrival of nearly 200 students from around the world and across Canada at Pearson College UWC’s [campus](#) on Pedder Bay.

“I think it’s fair to say that we’re not like any other independent school in Canada,” says President and Head of College Désirée McGraw. “Each and every one of the students who come to Pearson – one of 17 United World Colleges around the world and the only one in Canada – are welcomed on merit, not on ability to pay.”

The College, founded in Metchosin in 1974 and inspired by the vision of former Prime Minister and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Lester B. Pearson, takes a deliberate diversity approach that means the pre-university, global education-based school draws 16-to-19-year-olds from Greenland in the north to Swaziland in Southern Africa and from nations and territories such as the Republic of the Congo, Paraguay and the Gaza Strip in Palestine.

Deliberate diversity also means that the school adds a rich, international flavour to the rural community, with many Greater Victoria families welcoming students into their homes during term breaks through the College’s [Host Family Volunteer Program](#).

The vast majority of students – mostly chosen by UWC volunteer national committees in 160 countries -- attend on full or partial scholarships, opening the door wider for those with refugee backgrounds or whose families may not have the economic resources to make this type of education possible.

In addition to a demanding academic curriculum and a rigorous outdoor-oriented expeditionary education, students perform community services jobs and independent projects that will see them working across the Capital Regional District and beyond.

650 Pearson College Drive, Victoria BC, Canada, V9C 4H7

P: +1 250 391 2411 E: info@pearsoncollege.ca

www.pearsoncollege.ca



News Release

Students, as well as the entire Pearson campus, are building more foundational and long-lasting relationships with the area's original inhabitants, specifically the Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation, as part of the College's commitment to reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous peoples. The College is located on the unceded territory of the Scia'new First Nation.

About Pearson College UWC

Founded in 1974, Pearson College UWC (www.pearsoncollege.ca) purposefully recruits a deliberately diverse student body, including young people from regions of conflict and challenging socioeconomic circumstances, to encourage young people to learn and live together to bring about meaningful changes in their communities and across the globe. Officially known as Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific, it is one of 17 United World Colleges across the globe. With an enrolment of about 200, the College draws 16-to-19-year-old leaders and changemakers from 160 countries and every province and territory of Canada. Pearson's two-year, pre-university curriculum is based on the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and features a strong emphasis on experiential education at the residential campus on Pedder Bay near the southern tip of Vancouver Island. The College opened in 1974 and was named after former prime minister and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Lester B. Pearson.

Photo Caption

This month, nearly 200 students from across Canada and around the world were welcomed to Greater Victoria's Pearson College UWC campus. The excitement of happy student reunions and first-years seeing their new home for the next two years was infectious!

For more information, please contact:

Nikola Mende
Communications & Marketing Officer
nmende@pearsoncollege.ca
Office: 250 391 2479

Brian Geary
Director of Communications
bgeary@pearsoncollege.ca
Office: 250.391.2419

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