

## **My Co-op**

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This was my first Co-op education work term. I spent the first four months of this year in Ucluelet, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, providing research support for the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT). The position was funded by the Clayoquot Alliance for Research, Education and Training (CLARET), a partnership between the CBT and the University of Victoria. I have two supervisors: Dr. Rod Dobell, Professor of Public Administration, UVic, and Stan Boychuk, Executive Director of the CBT.

My first assignment was to update and maintain the CBT website. As is the case with many websites, it hadn't been updated for some time. By performing web site clean-ups, I have provided a new look for the CBT website. Check it out at <http://www.clayoquotbiosphere.org>. Another related project was to complete the Long Beach Model Forest Library document archive. To make this archive of Clayoquot region forestry documents available to researchers outside the area, I also provided a web-based database.

My second assignment was to review six projects funded by the CBT last year and write a report for their Annual General Meeting in March. In order to get first hand information, I traveled around the region and interviewed all the project contact persons.

During my third work month, I have served as a contact person for the Ucluelet office and carried out daily administration work. I arranged for community support letters to aid in the preparation of a competition grant application by contacting about 30 government branches, not-for-profit organizations and university researchers. By the end of March, this assignment was successfully accomplished.

In April, the Organization for Temperate Rainforest Studies (OTRS) project has become one of CLARET's main projects, and I assisted with project development and business plan preparation, mainly with fundraising and marketing research and website construction.

My four months at CBT have been invaluable and enjoyable period of learning and professional development. I have been immersed in Canadian public policy and the interface with various partner organizations. I have gained experience with the current ecological and social issues of Clayoquot Sound, and also regionally within British Columbia and Canada. I arrived as a novice, and I believe that today I can claim that I am a 15% professional—primarily as a result of the personal attention and tutoring I have received from my supervisors and the fine example set by both my superiors and my peers. I also liked working in Ucluelet because the people are so friendly and the beaches are so beautiful! After this Co-op term, I will stay with the OTRS project as a research assistant for another eight months. I'm so fortunate to have found a job that made the best connections for my career. Many thanks for the experiences I have gained, and best wishes for the future of the Trust.