

Creatures of Habitat

Community School Interviews - Guests

Dr. Marissa Bentham

Marissa Bentham is a chiropractor and a true advocate for health & wellness. Marissa & her husband, Craig, have a vision for educating and empowering their community to make healthier lifestyle choices. Together, they opened their first wellness centre in the San Francisco Bay Area where Marissa was also a member of the San Francisco 49ers "Gold Rush" cheerleaders. Looking to make a shift in their lives, the Benthams moved from California to North Saanich in 2005, where they opened a new wellness centre and started a family. Marissa believes in the importance of dreaming big and following your heart and looks at each experience in life as a chance to learn more about yourself. Her greatest joy in life comes from being a mom and being inspired by her kids.

Themes

Living a wellness lifestyle

Overcoming obstacles

Celebrating your uniqueness

Justin Blanchfield --Mechanical Engineer

One of two Mechanical Engineers on staff. His expertise includes hydrodynamics, thermodynamics, and modelling. Justin's involved in the design of water supply systems and outfalls. He is currently modelling the Skeena river in Terrace to design a bank protection system to stop erosion and flooding. He is also on a team of engineers designing the water system for a \$2 billion coal gasification plant in North Dakota (which includes carbon sequestration).

His business development activities include developing the renewable energy department for WorleyParsons Canada. His renewable energy expertise includes ocean energy, small hydro, geoexchange and energy from waste. Justin also gets involved with a great deal of "green" development projects including Dockside Green and several new communities in BC.

[<What students said about Justin>](#) [<view his interview>](#)

Themes

Sustainable and renewable energy systems.

Triple Bottom Line

Looking for like-minded people

Developing the skills that help the environment

Ian Bruce --Biologist

Ian Bruce is a consulting biologist who has had a varied and interesting career working with salmon, ecosystems, and people all around the BC coast. He has worked on the water, under the ocean and in the forests and fields. He has made money and lost money doing this but has no regrets.

Themes

Challenges faced and overcome

Lessons learned from the First Nations

Mixing theatre and biology in a career

Inspirations and motivations

Anne-Marie Daniel --Environmental Advocate

Anne-Marie Daniel is a mother, an artisan, a mediator, a facilitator and a researcher. As a mediator she was responsible for the first five human rights cases in Vermont. In 2000 she moved to the Isle of Skye, Scotland to work with youth in developing their leadership abilities and also helped create a museum in the environment which has helped locals and tourists to learn more about the place they live and feel connected. Overall she's an idea person, bursting with projects she'd like to take to the next step. Her major concern is closing the loop on garbage so that we can keep our land, air and water healthy for generations to come. She continues to look for new ways to keep important issues in the public eye by creating fun opportunities for people to learn about themselves and their planet.

Themes

Leveling the playing field

Revolution in a generation

Following through on dreams

Getting an idea and going for it: passion

Tanis Douglas --Biologist with the Capital Regional District and the Bowker Creek Initiative

Tanis is a biologist with a passion to protect the environment. She has traveled to many places and thinks about the big picture as she works on the details in her job with Capital Regional District. One of her main projects is the restoration of Bowker Creek. She helps local governments and other institutions work together to improve the environment.

Themes

Living more sustainably

Importance of nature to those living in cities

Changing the way people think and live
Restoring a creek in a city
Big picture thinking
Lessons learned from the travelling
Challenges and victories

Jordan Fisher --Sustainability Consultant

Jordan Fisher is an adventurer at heart and when he's not in the great outdoors he's working as an independent sustainable development consultant. He advises companies and governments on how to build communities that are healthier for people and the planet. Jordan has a diverse background and has worked as a wilderness guide and naturalist, a first-aid instructor, green building consultant, and a development manager. Jordan grew up in Ontario where he developed a passion for canoeing and hiking, which led him to move to Vancouver Island. His love of the outdoors led to a love for nature and an interest finding ways to help people live in balance with it. He's learned that in order to do that people need to be in balance with one another, and much of Jordan's work and life is focused on helping people to work together collaboratively.

Themes

Sustainability to Thrivability
Helping companies and governments build healthier communities
Finding a balance between work and play
Life's adventures

Frank Gee --Interpretive Guide

Frank loves the outdoors! His play has included caving, ski touring, wilderness exploring and search and rescue. His work has been sharing his passion for the interesting, unusual and fragile side of nature. Frank's philosophy on life: explore, learn, and respect, but always have fun.

Themes

Environmental stewardship,
Range of jobs for guides,
Speaking your mind
Keys to survival in dangerous times

Matthew Kemshaw

Matthew is a passionate community activist who (with lots of his friends) is working with local schools, governments and city park officials to encourage the application of design principles that mimic natural systems and support functional productive ecologies. This means that Matthew is always trying to plant useful trees, shrubs, herbs and vegetables in public places where everyone can benefit from them. He gardens in: 14 schools, 3 Mental Health and Addictions Facilities, 1 Adult Education Center, 1 big community Food Forest, and in some places where you're not actually supposed to plant things (don't tell anyone). <Matthew talks>

Themes:

Copying Natural Systems
Living off (or with) the Land
a Revolution Disguised as Gardening
Everything is One

Jim McIsaac --Environmental Advocate with T Buck Suzuki Foundation

is a father, a fisherman, a philosopher, an environmentalist and a realist. Overall he's a solutions person, always strategizing and looking for the next step. His major concern is pollution and the next generations, we are killing the planet and need to leave it healthy for our children; "If we wait for all the studies to come in before we act there will be nothing left." As an environmentalist Jim was tasked with tackling the impasse over Victoria's lack of sewage treatment. Jim has been working closely with Stephen Salter to promote integrated resource recovery as a cornerstone for sewage treatment in the region.

Themes

Keeping our water clean
Working for change
Reusing our waste
Fitting everything in

Suzanne McMillan --Designer, Entrepreneur

Suzanne McMillan experienced being on top of her career as an event manager in Germany, followed her heart and dreams, traveled around the world, connected to nature, found the love of her life in Australia, moved to another continent, created her own artistic company with her husband in Canada and the biggest, gave birth to her children. Her passion in life is health and nature, which comes in all different shapes and sizes. She loves to get others motivated and excited for taking a stand for what's important to them, especially kids. Because one day all the big leaders in the world.... were a child. Something a lot of people don't

know... She is also a face painter who turns kids into eagles, wolves, cats and butterflies and gets inspired by their true love for life and imagination.

Themes

Follow dreams

Courage to change

Using personal talents and gifts for a bigger purpose than myself

Creating community and the power which comes with it.

Briony Penn: --Activist, Writer, Professor

Briony loves nature and her community. She loves gumboot dancing, drawing, and hiking on the coast with two boys who are 13 and 17. She is an activist/politician/writer so that she can be a voice for these things she loves.

She is something like the canary in the mine, in terms of knowing what issues are on the horizon but no one can see. She written about them and drawn them. She's been involved with beginning of the Land Conservancy and the Galloping Goose Trail She is on the vanguard of important community initiatives.

<[What students said](#)> <[see her CSI Interview at Arbutus Global School](#)>

Themes

Vision for the future

Grassroots environmental work: important projects in her career

Getting people's attention

The power of a network

Inspiring people and event

Philippe Rouget -- Marine Biologist

Philippe Rouget is the executive director and co-founder of the Coastal Wildlife Research Foundation. He has a long-standing interest in marine ecology and conservation biology with an emphasis on marine mammal studies. He completed a master's degree in behavioural ecology at the University of New Brunswick, where his research focused on the underwater vocal behavior of Weddell seals in Antarctica. In 2001, he served as the resident wintering scientist at Mawson Station, the Australian Antarctic Division's research base in Eastern Antarctica, as part of the 51st Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition. More recently, his role as a research scientist for several marine mammal monitoring and mitigation projects around the world have led him to work with several of the world's most endangered whales, including blue, bowhead and humpback whales. In total, he has completed over 20 expeditions to the Antarctic and has lectured on his work at a number of zoological symposiums, conferences and universities worldwide.

Themes

Adventures with science

Magic of whales

Lessons after being left for dead

Challenges and rewards beyond the edge of civilization

Maria St. Amand --Teacher

Maria St. Amand juggles being a mother, a teacher, and an environmentalist. In 2007, she watched Al Gore's movie, *The Inconvenient Truth*. This really shook her up when she realized that the life style we all enjoy could be seriously altered due to global warming. She rallied her students from McTavish school and had them attend a School Board Meeting where they presented to the Board 25 reasons why it would be a good idea to make District 63 an Idle Free Zone. The trustees agreed and implemented an Idle Free Zone policy. Then in 2008, Maria's students entered a contest with Quantum-Shift. It was very exciting as people got to vote for us on line and we won! Our video showed how we recycled all kinds of plastics\plastics that are not accepted in the blue box. This reduced our garbage tremendously. We even opened up a depot where folks can bring their plastics once a month. Maria continues to work on environmental projects at her school. . <Maria St Almand's story>

Themes

Taking on big projects (eg, The Monthly Depot)

HOPE for the future

Power of one

Making learning real

Kees Schaddelee --Innovator, Bio fuels expert

Kees is a father of two, an environmentalist, a surfer, a swimmer, a pioneer of the BC biodiesel industry, and more recently a healthy eating activist. Kees is a Victoria native who gained much of his knowledge through life experiences such as travelling to Central and South America for two years. His background with biodiesel started 5 years ago when he and two partners started a biodiesel consulting firm performing feasibility studies and market development projects. More recently Kees joined Island based Columbia Fuels as their biofuels expert to help them become Canada's largest biodiesel distributor. Kees' interest in sustainability continually challenges him to pursue the most sustainable fuel options available. Kees has been producing and running pure biodiesel made from used cooking oil in his own vehicle for 5 years.

Themes

The ins and outs of biofuels

Value of life experiences

Pursuing your passions

You are what you eat - the raw food diet

Alicia Taylor --Food security

To understand the places Alicia has gone and the work she has done, it might be important to know that she is above all, curious: curious what makes the world go round, and curious how to live more lightly on the earth. She spends many hours at a Fair Trade Organization understanding how to ease poverty in developing countries through Fair Trade and spends just as many hours learning how to grow her own food and how to educate and communicate environmentally responsible behavior. She is a grad student at Royal Roads University, an employee of Level Ground Trading, and a member of many food security and community organizations.

Themes

food security

growing your own food

fair trade

value of curiosity

Robin Tunnicliffe --Farmer

Robin is an organic vegetable farmer in Saanich. During her 10 years working the land, she's learned to love all veggies, even Brussel sprouts; she's learned to hate the WTO and transnational corporations that control the food system, and she's learned to look to her community for fun and to work for change. When she's not pulling carrots out of the ground, or turning compost, she's studying for her MA in Food Policy from UVic...or she might be riding her bike with her dog running beside. **<Robin italks>**

Themes

Working for change

Controlling the food system

Lessons from travelling

The new farmers

Sarah Webb

Sarah Webb is an activist, a mom and a Sustainability Professional. She works with students, faculty, staff and community members to help make the University of Victoria a leader in sustainability in teaching, research, operations and partnerships. Sarah has a diverse background in both the non-profit and private sector working on issues that relate to green, healthy communities. After moving to Victoria from Whistler in 1998, Sarah fell in love with the region and its inspiring communities. She loves the outdoors, is an avid commuter cyclist, and aims to live simply in a complex world.

Themes

Helping people to understand complex issues like climate change.

Creating effective partnerships to help make the world a better place.

Getting work experience and expanding skills.

Creating change in the community.