

University of Victoria hosts Canada's largest academic conference

Researchers to address issues affecting those who are at the margins of society

May 31st, 2013 – Victoria, BC – Today marks the kick-off of the 2013 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences. This year's Congress, hosted by the University of Victoria and organized by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, includes more than 7,000 delegates from nearly 70 associations in Canada's largest interdisciplinary academic gathering.

The Congress brings together scholars, students, policy-makers and leaders involved in a broad spectrum of disciplines including political science, literature,, sociology and education.

The 2013 Congress theme “@ the edge” “ not only reflects the University of Victoria's geographical position in Canada and on the Pacific Rim, but, as well, the need to integrate the periphery both institutionally and socially,” says Andrew Rippin, Congress 2013 Academic Convenor. “Key issues include the social challenges of inequality, the need for inclusivity and the acceptance of diversity.”

“We're living in uncertain times that present important social and economic risks that affect all of us, and especially the most vulnerable living at the “edge.” Congress presents an opportunity to discuss these issues head-on, to bring new ideas and findings and to stimulate public debate”, said Antonia Maioni, President of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Congress consists of eight days of meetings, panel presentations, keynote speeches, and more than 4,500 academics who will present their latest work and research at more than 2,500 events. Beyond the academic focus, a wide array of performances, celebrations and exhibits will be free and open to the public.

“Congress is a highlight of UVic's 50th anniversary year,” says Catherine Mateer, Congress 2013 chair and associate vice-president, academic planning. “We look forward to welcoming delegates to share their research and build relationships, and members of the public to enjoy the performances, lectures and displays.”

Big Thinking Lectures

The *Big Thinking* lectures take place throughout the Congress, and will include such noted speakers as:

- Louise Arbour, President of the International Crisis Group
- Dany Laferrière, well known novelist and recipient of the Grand Prix du livre de Montréal
- Margaret McCain, former Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick and Chair of the Margaret & Wallace McCain Family Foundation

- Judith Heumann, the Special Advisor for International Disability Rights at the U.S. Department of State
- Daniel Weinstock, a well-known Canadian political philosopher at McGill and a Trudeau Foundation fellow
- Joy Kogawa, critically acclaimed novelist and writer-in-residence at the University of Toronto
- Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, President of the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates
- Doug Saunders, award-winning author at the Globe and Mail
- George Dyson, author and historian of technology

About the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences

Organized by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Congress is the largest interdisciplinary conference in Canada. Described as a “conference of conferences,” Congress involves nearly 70 academic associations that represent a rich spectrum of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, including literature, history, theatre, film studies, education, music, sociology, political science, , social work, and many others. For more information, go to www.congress2013.ca.

About the University of Victoria

The University of Victoria is one of Canada's leading research universities and provides innovative programs and real-life learning experiences for 20,000 students in a welcoming and diverse West Coast environment. UVic is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2012-2013 and was recently ranked #11 globally and first in Canada among universities less than 50 years old.

For more information, story ideas or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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