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A BUSINESS APPROACH TO CHARITABLE GIVING AND EDUCATION

Imperial's philanthropic strategy of supporting math and science education is more than just charity; it's about ensuring Canada's future success.

In the global competition to employ science graduates, Canada is beginning to falter. According to the OECD's new report, Education at a Glance, there are 1,163 science graduates per 100,000 people employed in Canada ages 25 to 34, a number that falls below the OECD average of 1,295.

Of course, global competition is not the only reason why business should get involved in investing in science education. But, ultimately, there's no experience more compelling than seeing the smiles on the faces of young people when they are involved in math and science programs that are engaging and fun.

Since 1993, Imperial has been a founding sponsor of the Learning Partnership, a national non-profit educational organization. A number of years ago, I had the opportunity to visit a senior high school in Toronto and see one of the Learning Partnership's programs in action. "Invest! Invent! Innovate!" (3I for short), an integrated science and technology program for students in grades 7 and 8.

From that visit, I remember the enthusiasm of the teacher and the students were to talk about their work, and how proud they were of their inventions. I also remember thinking that here was a program that was making a real connection to young people, encouraging them to solve problems, think like entrepreneurs and work as teams — very much the same qualities we need to encourage in all students to help them succeed.

It's important to build on education initiatives of this kind. It's also important to remember that innovation education initiatives do not happen by chance. They require companies and organizations to step forward and help.

I have travelled and lived internationally to a business executive, I've seen firsthand how well Canadian companies can compete internationally. We have a talent for innovation and technology and some of the richest natural resources in the world. This combination of brains, innovation and resources should provide Canada with an unbeatable natural advantage in the global marketplace.

The opportunity is clear: improving education remains one of our country's best investments. Give people the right education and training and you not only develop individuals, but build more prosperous communities. Young minds trained in math and science are a foundation for this success. By investing in Canada's students today, we're doing our part to inspire a generation of young minds that will ensure Canada remains a vibrant, prosperous country for years to come.

Shy John Templeton, the renowned investor and philanthropist, once said, "An attitude of gratitude creates blessings. Help yourself by helping others." These words guided his efforts to build some of the world's most successful investment funds. They also inspired his philanthropic undertakings, including the Templeton Foundation, which donates millions of dollars each year to support university research. His words are also a powerful reminder that community giving today should be more than charity.

In this issue of The Review, you'll read about Imperial's strategic approach to community investment (see "A New Approach to Giving," p. 20). This has involved selecting causes that are both relevant to our business and well suited to the resources and capabilities we possess.

Our diversity is strengthening support for education, particularly in math and science. Supporting math and science education is not just about helping select students — it's about enabling our country's future success.

It used to be that a country enjoyed a favoured position in the world if it simply had plentiful natural resources or access to technology or readily available investment capital. Today, however, there's growing evidence that competitive advantage in our global economy also lies in having a superior workforce.

In fact, Lester Thurow, economist and author of Head to Head: The Coming Economic Battle Among Japan, Europe and America, has suggested that "in the 21st century natural resources will be irrelevant. Capital will move around the world. The only strategic asset is the skills of the workforce."

Now you won't catch me saying that natural resources are irrelevant. Far from it. But when Thurow talks about the value of education, he's clearly on the right track. Certainly, in my view, the skills of our workforce are a highly strategic asset and key to defining our country's future.

Here in Canada we enjoy several advantages. First, there's our abundance of natural resources, including oil and natural gas. Next, there's the strong global demand for these commodities, which in turn has contributed to a strong economy (witness the parity of the Canadian dollar with U.S. currency). And finally, there's our significant human resources potential. We have a solid public education system. Our students perform well above the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average in areas such as mathematics. Nearly one out of two adult Canadians has a post-secondary education, a level of education that's one of the best in the world. Our well-educated workforce has contributed to our prosperity and conditions that make Canada an attractive place to live.

And while this is good news, we cannot afford to be complacent. Today's and yesterday's achievements provide no guarantee of tomorrow's successes. In a rapidly evolving world, Canada needs to stay competitive. Others are catching up, or in some cases passing us.

Other countries believe that the effectiveness of their human resources dictates how well their country will do on the world stage. They understand that education is critical to prepare their young people for a changing global economy. They recognize the urgent need to develop a technologically capable workforce for today's knowledge-intensive work environment. Many of these countries have made education in the sciences, especially math and engineering, a key strategic priority.

In Canada, about eight percent of undergraduates earn engineering degrees. Contrast this with Japan, Germany and Korea, where engineers make up about one-fifth of all graduates, and with China, where about 38 percent of all undergraduate degrees are in engineering.

Furthermore, science degrees in Canada (math, computer science, physical and biological sciences, and engineering) make up about 22 percent of all new degrees, placing Canada eight on the OECD average. In Korea, science degrees comprise almost double that of Canada at 38 percent.

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Of course, global competition is not the only reason why business should get involved in须 supporting math and science education among our young people. The global demand for energy continues to climb, in part because of rapid economic expansion in the developing world. And Canada, with its abundant energy resources, is well-positioned to help meet this need. Yet Canadians, rightly, do not want energy development to come at the price of environmental harm. Finding and developing new sources of oil and natural gas, all while achieving cleaner air, water and fuels, and addressing major environmental issues such as climate change, will require sophisticated technological skills that start with science education.

Clearly, improving the quality and effectiveness of science education is a priority for our country. Our country has little to do with charity. The fact is, our success, our competitiveness and our future depend on it.

Improving the math and science skills of our young people is an important step toward maintaining and enhancing our economic growth in the coming decades. Besides producing more technologically literate Canadians, a strong focus on science education will also increase the number of scientists, economists, engineers, and other professionals who drive innovation in our industry and economy.

So if this is the situation we face, what can business do?

One of the practical ways business can help is by providing a substantial measure of financial support to education-related organizations. At Imperial, for example, we've contributed about $20 million in education-related initiatives over the past five years.

This has included investments in a wide range of math and science initiatives, everything from programs that support scientists to volunteer and share their experience in local schools to computer science camps that encourage young women to study computer science in university. These are examples of money well invested.

In particular, we've donated more than $2 million to Let's Talk Science, a national science education organization. The Partnership Program, one of the four programs that Let's Talk Science manages, trains a growing network of science outreach volunteers, primarily graduate science students, to lead children from kindergarten through grade 12 in hands-on science activities in schoolrooms, university laboratories and communities. Our support has helped the program reach more than 67,000 children and youth directly.

So far, I've shared some of the strategic reasons why business should get involved in investing in science education. But, ultimately, there's no experience more compelling than seeing the smiles on the faces of young people when they are involved in math and science programs that are engaging and fun.

Since 1993, Imperial has been a founding sponsor of the Learning Partnership, a national non-profit educational organization. A number of years ago, I had the opportunity to visit a senior high school in Toronto and see one of the Learning Partnership's programs in action. "Invest! Invent! Innovate!" (3I for short), an integrated science and technology program for students in grades 7 and 8.

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The Athabasca River rises in the mountains of Jasper National Park, 1,520 metres above sea level, and spends its early life meandering and tumbling through one of the world’s most spectacular landscapes. Exiting the mountains near Hinton, Alberta, the Athabasca, one of the 10 longest rivers in the country, does not have a particularly large flow compared with other major Canadian rivers. But drawing on a drainage basin roughly the size of Greece, and fed by substantial tributaries like the Perland, McLeod, Pembina, Lesser Slave, and Clearwater rivers, the Athabasca carries the oil sands mining industry.

In a world where demand for energy is expected to grow by more than 50 percent during the next quarter century, driven largely by developing nations, Canada occupies an enviable position. Alone among the G7 nations, Canada has the potential to increase production of liquid hydrocarbons in the coming decades and not only meet domestic requirements but supply other markets, continuing a trend that has seen oil and gas exports account for more than half of the country’s merchandise trade surplus in recent years.

According to a 2006 report by the National Energy Board (NEB), all of this increase in production will come from the Alberta oil sands. By 2015, output is projected to more than double to three million barrels a day from current levels of just over one million barrels a day, which should more than offset a steady decline in conventional oil production. Achieving this level of growth will require an enormous investment, estimated by the NEB to be in the range of $100 billion between now and 2015, which will create employment opportunities and economic benefits in every region of Canada. Of equal importance, however, this level of

Oil and Water: Producing One, Protecting the Other

Imperial is carrying on a tradition of wisely managing and protecting the water within its leases.

After all, water is the lifeblood of the oil industry by Paul Miller
growth in oil sands production will require reliable supplies of water.

"Water is the lifeblood of the oil sands industry," says Stuart Lunn, a PhD in civil engineering from Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., who is an imperial Oil specialist on the subject of oil sands water use and quality. "Without our water, you don't have any oil sands plant. Fortunately, there's more than enough water in the Athabasca River to support the oil sands industry in the Fort McMurray area. The amount of water currently allocated for use by all users in the Athabasca River basin, including the oil sands industry, is 3.6 percent of the average annual flow. By comparison, about 35 percent of the flow of the North Saskatchewan River, which passes through Edmonton, is allocated for use.

However, as Lunn is quick to point out, the Athabasca is not yet a major Canadian river south of the 60th parallel that have never been dammed. That means water flows in the Athabasca are much more variable from season to season than they are, for example, in the nearby Peace River, which is dammed for hydroelectric power in the mountains of British Columbia. Peak flows in the Athabasca River occur in the early summer, when melting snow and rainfall swell it to banks of an average of 1,500 cubic meters per second at Fort McMurray. Existing oil tar the University of Alberta in Edmonton, with use projected to climb to 11 cubic meters per second by 2011. But the northern Alberta winter locks up flowing water as ice and turns rain into snow, reducing the Athabasca's flow in January and February to a fraction—about one-tenth—of its summer peak. The existing oil sands industry around Fort McMurray has managed to work within these variations. The Syncrude Canada operation, in which Imperial holds a 25 percent interest, has grown since it began production in 1976 to become not only the largest oil sands mining operation in the world and Canada's largest producer of synthetic oil, but also the most efficient facility as oil sands mining in terms of water use. The Syncrude plant now consumes 60 percent less water for each barrel of oil produced than it did in the 1980s. As a result, Syncrude's water requirement translates into just 0.2 percent of the Athabasca's average annual flow, or 1.3 percent of the river's lowest water flow rate.

We're still adhering to the same water withdrawal-licence limit granted to us in the 1970s, when our production was just over a quarter of our current rate," notes Dow Ney, general manager of regulatory and external affairs at Syncrude. "And looking ahead, we don't plan to request an increase in our water use for the next three years, nor will we seek additional licences for the Alberta government's existing licence, or the Waste Management Framework established by Alberta Environment and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

The plan, which was submitted to two government departments at the beginning of 2007 and signed by representatives from the largest existing and proposed oil sands operators, commits the industry group to develop a detailed cooperative agreement to meet the framework's requirements, which are intended to protect the aquatic ecosystem.

"Every signing company that holds a licence to withdraw water from the Athabasca River has agreed to monitor, take the necessary actions and report on its actual water use to meet the requirements of the framework during low water periods," says Eddie Lui, Imperial's vice-president of oil sands development and research, and a signatory to the plan. The companies involved, which include Suncor and Syncrude, are required to have a detailed program of actions to allow them to maintain their withdrawal limits during low-water periods, and to have a plan in place to reduce their water use during low water periods.

"In 2008, water use was about 25 percent of the rate.

At Cold Lake, where 3.5 barrels of fresh water were used for each barrel of bitumen recovered. By 2006, the freshwater requirement had been reduced by more than 80 percent to about half a barrel of water for each recovered barrel of bitumen.

The bitumen deposits at Cold Lake, unlike those in the Athabasca region, are too deeply buried for surface mining. Instead, Imperial has developed and is continuously improving a process whereby large amounts of steam—up to 530,000 barrels a day—are injected into the underground deposits to soften the bitumen so it can be pumped to the surface. When commercial operations began at Cold Lake, about 3.5 barrels of fresh water were used for each barrel of bitumen recovered. By 2006, the freshwater requirement had been reduced by more than 80 percent to about half a barrel of water for each recovered barrel of bitumen.

"Fresh water is basically the last item that we like to call up for the water needed in our operations," says Sandy Martin, operations manager at Cold Lake. "Our first and largest source is to recycle the water produced along with the bitumen." The Cold Lake Phase 1 operation recycles more than 95 percent of the water produced with bitumen. Since this water contains levels of minerals and other impurities that would foul the steam-generating boilers, Cold Lake operates one of the world's largest water-softening operations to support this level of recycling.

During periods when recycled water is not sufficient to meet requirements for steam, the company turns to its second choice, brackish water from deep saline aquifers. This water is not fit for human consumption, but is excellent for industrial use.

The final choice is fresh water either from Cold Lake itself, or water levels in the lake are above a specified level, or groundwater. In terms of absolute volume, however, fresh water is still used more than brackish water as parts of the operation can only run on fresh water.

"Reduced freshwater consumption since start-up of the commercial facilities in the mid-'90s provides confidence that long-term operations will not cause detrimental environmental effects due to freshwater consumption," says Martin. Another possibility over the long term is that technological developments could fundamentally alter the environmental impacts of oil sands extraction. Imperial is working to turn that possibility into a reality by, among other initiatives, providing $10 million in funding over a five-year period to the Centre for Oil Sands Innovation (COSIS) at the University of Calgary. The funds are being used to help recruit more than 50 faculty, graduate students and researchers, including interdisciplinary research and the application of nanotechnology to develop, in part, technology that will use less water in its oil sand production process.

"One of the two main issues our research is focusing on is the reduction of water use in oil sands mining," says Murray Gray, scientific director for COSIS. "This is fundamental research we're undertaking. We're not trying to fine-tune existing processes—we're starting with a blank sheet of paper.

Moving the results of COSIS's research out of the laboratory and into the marketplace has been a priority for Imperial's Calgary research centre, which is one of the leading oil-sands technology facilities in the world. COSIS's work has already resulted in a couple of very promising leads," says Myers. Our goal at the Calgary research centre is to take their work and use it as the basis for new oil sands processes which will be sold for scale-up and demonstration within the next two to three years."

While it's unlikely that any of this highly focused effort will result in a commercial-ready technology in time for the first phase of the Kearl project, which is due to start up in 2013, there is optimism that new technology will be available for subsequent phases, as well as for potential retrofitting of the initial phase.

"Technological innovation can't be scheduled," says Imperial's Lui. "Past successes and failures are not an indicator of what research efforts might focus on the issue of oil-sands water use, as well as the industry-wide commitment to a water management framework, I believe that proposed developments in the region can be accommodated, while continuing to ensure future viability of important waterways such as the Athabasca River."
ANNE SHIRLEY: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO CANADA?

A century after it was written, Anne of Green Gables continues to influence how people view Canada. Does Anne Shirley, the book’s heroine, deserve to remain a Canadian icon?

By Allan Lynch

In 2008, one of the best-known Canadians turned 100. And while she never existed, 135,000 people annually trek to her “home,” a national historic site. Such is the peculiar fame of Canada’s best-selling literary star, Anne Shirley, or as she is better known, Anne of Green Gables.

Since her story was first published in Boston and London in 1908, Anne Shirley has enjoyed a success and celebrity given to few other Cana-
dians, real or imagined. While many people dismiss this L. M. Montgomery tale as just a children’s book, its popularity is staggering. In Canada, a book is considered a best-seller when it sells 5,000 copies. In its first century, Anne of Green Gables has sold more than 50 million copies and never been out of print.

The early success of Anne of Green Gables encouraged Montgomery to write seven more Anne novels. In turn, Anne of Green Gables has inspired three Canadian-made-for-tele-
vision movies (including Anne of Green Gables, The Sequel and The Continuing Story), at least two Hollywood movies, the popular CBC television series Road to Avonlea, and Canada’s longest-running musical, Anne of Green Gables – The Musical, has been a mainstay at the Charlottetown Festival for 43 years and has been seen by more than 2.25 million people in Charlottetown and another million on tour in Canada, the United States, England and Japan.

While the character of Anne Shirley, the orphan girl with carrot-coloured hair and a temper to match, leads her life in the strict social confines and narrow geography of rural Prince Edward Island, Anne of Green Gables has gone on wider and wilder adventures. Its translation into Swedish in 1909 prompted Astrid Lindgren, the author of Pippi Longstocking, to spend a whole summer playing Anne of Green Gables with her sisters. Mark Twain described Anne as “the dearest and most lovable child in fiction since the immortal Alice in Wonderland.”

“During World War II, the Polish Resistance conducted a flourishing black market in copies of the book. At the same time, a copy of Anne of Green Gables left with a friend in Japan by New Brunswick missionary Lorenzo Shaw, who had to flee the country, was subsequently translated into Japanese. That was to prove providential to a generation of orphans in post-war Japan. According to Elizabeth DeBloss, director of the L. M. Montgomery Institute at the University of Prince Edward Island, the only academic institute for a Canadian novelist, Anne’s story has an “intimate connection with the Japanese people. After the war, when Japan was absolutely devastated, they were looking for works of literature to help inspire optimism and hope within the population, and that is when Anne of Green Gables was introduced. For so many Japanese, it holds a special place.”

Anne’s popularity didn’t stop with the war’s end. In the 1950s, Anne of Green Gables became entangled in an investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee. According to the Canadian actor, comedian and playwright Don Harron, he and composer Norman Campbell were working on a television musical based on the Anne books in Toronto. The program, which went to air in March 1956, almost didn’t. “During the writing, I kept going back and forth to New York doing television shows,” Harron recalls. At one point, I was there for an extended stay and I sent my lyrics through the CBC office in New York, which was in the United Nations building. The lyrics never got to Toronto. We found out through the CBC that the McCarthy Committee was investigating the UN and, as part of it, the CBC. When they heard about red soil and red hair, they blocked transmission of the lyrics. ‘It was ridiculous.’

Eight years later, in 1964, Queen Elizabeth II attended the opening of the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown. ‘Wayne and Shuster were doing a variety show,’ says Harron. ‘They asked Norman Campbell if they could use his song ‘Anne of Green Gables.’ When the Queen was backstage, she neglected to tell Johnny Wayne how funny he was. She just said, “That is a pretty tune. Where is the rest of the show?” So Mavor Moore, the artistic director of the Charlottetown Festival, phoned me in Califor-
nia and said, ‘That’s a royal command.’”

The stage musical was born. Anne’s popularity arises from the universality of the story, says DeBloss. “It’s in a sense, everybody can identify with something in Anne’s world. We’re not all orphans, thank goodness, but a lot of people can sympathize with the Anne character. It’s a universal story.”

“I never did see Anne as a goody two-shoes because any kid who takes a slate and slams it over somebody’s head because of their temper can’t be.”

-MEGAN FOLLANS

“When they heard about red soil and red hair, they blocked transmission of the lyrics. It was ridiculous.”

-Don Harron
with the things she's looking for in life because they're things everybody wants. She wants a home. She wants people to love her and the warm friends. Who doesn't want those things? It's a universal message.

While the message hasn't changed, some Islanders tend to think the character of Anne of Green Gables is a bit overdone. Two Island comedians, Rob MacDonald and David Moses, created a satirical sketch comedy show called Anokeliste. Originally entitled The Sad and Lovesome, Most Gracious, Horrible, Miserable Death of Lucy Maud, the satire pokes fun at all aspects of the Island's obsession with Anne. It includes "The World's Fattest Anne," which attempts to reproduce the popular musical, complete with songs, choreography, and costume changes, in less than five minutes, setting what many Islanders see as an inappropriate time limit to the story. Delays is aware of this indifference or disdain. "Some people say she's overdone, but perhaps she's been popularized the wrong way," she suggests. "It's about looking beyond the brash."

For Kevin Sullivan, president of Sullivan Entertainment, who produced the Road to Avonlea television series and has a new film set in the Pre-Greens period, Anne is "a cultural icon. She represents a time and a place people don't want to get. The world Montgomery created had boundaries to it. We live in a world with no boundaries — physical, moral, etc. — and the world Montgomery conceived up is an antidote to the world we live in today. People hold that, need that and cherish it, and that's why Anne has easily made her way across the world, because she's funny and unspoken, but she has an incredibly tender heart and is able to change people's lives."

As devoted as he is to the Anne story, Sullivan recognizes how passion for a beloved character can get out of hand. "The fact that she's endured has made her part of our vernacular. Anne has passed into the world as everybody's common denominator. Anne is on a par now with Joan of Arc, Cinderella or Snow White. She's a classic, and I suppose in some way when you have people like me making films about her it exacerbates the situation, I think there's a risk of turning it into a Mainstreet USA cliche. People see the copy of the copy of the copy in their heads of a cute little feisty girl with red hair."

It's this perceived cuteness that most bothers Anne devotees. "I never did see Anne as a goofy two-shoes because any kid who takes a plunge and steps on somebody's head because of their temper can't be," says actress Megan Follows. Follows, who at age 16 played Anne Shirley in the Anne of Green Gables TV movies, disagrees with those who diminish Anne of Green Gables as a pretty period piece. A self-described Wizard of Oz fan who only reads Anne of Green Gables when she auditioned for the role, Follows believes Anne's story tackles the challenges of gender and class. "It's easy to put a Pollyanna stamp on Anne, but I think it's a generalisation which does a disservice to what Lucy Maud wrote. The sense of the authoritative voice of the elders, or the rigid black-and-white environment that child comes into, is not romanticized. What that little girl does out of necessity, and for her survival, is create an extremely rich inner life... And it's a lasting grace. It saves her when she's up against a tremendous amount of rejection, and what she falls back on — and what I would imagine is what Lucy Maud herself fell back on — is her creative spirit and the fact that she could see a tremendous amount of beauty in times and environments that could have been quite stark."

Don Harron considers the book to be "a feminist statement. Anne is the loser who comes out on top," he says. "The fact that she doesn't take any crap from the boys makes her a feminist hero."

The former governor general Adrienne Clarkson, who is on the international advisory board of the L.M. Montgomery Institute, agrees. "I think it is a feminist book. Anne makes sacrifices in the book. Anne does not go straight to teachers' college because Murrilla is left alone when Matthew dies and she decides she'll stay home and help Murrilla. But that in no way holds her up because later on she goes to college after she's got everything settled. She manages to make that balance between the personal and the professional, which is still a lesson to everyone."

Clarkson says that at age 10, "I identified with her. To me she was somebody who helped me... and I think she helps a lot of innocent children... understand what Canada was like. To me it [the book] was kind of an ancestor... In her own book, Anne of Avonlea, Clarkson explains, "The Anne books gave me fictional parents and grandparents who belonged to the place I had come to as a stranger. They helped me to become Canadian. And all of the Anne books taught me a lot about what a young Canadian woman could be."

ADRIENNE CLARKSON

"They helped me to become Canadian. And all of the Anne books taught me a lot about what a young Canadian woman could be."

"She is a symbol for all the people who feel they have no place in the world and came here by error. She is one of those characters who can actually face that down and say, 'I'm here, deal with me.'"

ROBERT FULFORD
Their roads to success haven’t been easy. At times their paths have been paved in heartache, but these six Imperial employees from across Canada have beaten the odds against them and now draw on and share their experiences to make a difference in the lives of others. They are equally passionate about the value of staying in school and of doing their part to help their communities.

Their mantra? “If I can do it, anyone can.” They have succeeded, in part, by tapping into their cultural roots as a source of understanding and strength in order to influence and inspire others to follow their lead.
Dennis Collins

Two years ago, Dennis Collins made a proposal to the Aboriginal Affairs Division of Imperial Oil’s Cold Lake operation in Alberta to hire him as a second Native liaison officer for the company. "Let me walk into the community," he said. "People are going to listen to me.""

Collins, a Metis, grew up on the Métis settlement at Innisfail, Alberta. "I heard this by the time I was five," he said. "I was the only language that my grandmother spoke. I was her voice to the outside world."

He is proud of his heritage and continues to speak Cree at work with other members of the Native Network in order to keep their culture alive. "I'm focused and intention about work because I'm aware of its importance," he says. "I'm fortunate because I can walk the line between Aboriginal and mainstream – and I fully understand the barriers."

Perceived by some as an Aboriginal who divorces or eschews his culture, Collins has no problem speaking his mind on the subject. "Aboriginals want to work. They want to give back to society. But if you take an Aboriginal out of their lifestyle and culture, put that person into a corporate culture, that person could fail. Assistance and mentoring can help. I see it as a positive snowball effect. If you get five people to help, they'll teach five more people and so on."

When Collins goes into a classroom, he doesn't shy away from giving students cold, hard facts. "I start with the basics: Kids are materially driven. If you want material things, you have to show up for work because no one else is going to step up to pay your bills."

The most rewarding students to speak to, he says, are those entering grade 10. "Schools on reserve are surrounded by oil. If a student wants to continue in school, it means attending a mainstream school in town. Collins says this is a critical age when many kids choose to drop out. He knows the temptation well.

"When I was in grade 9, it was very difficult to continue. My parents had quit and I was faced with moving to town. That summer I worked as a gas station attendant. My manager knew what was going on in my head. He cut through it all and said, 'You will be going back to school.'"

Today, at 45, Collins works as the Cold Lake operation's maintenance planner. He is proud of his accomplishments but takes greatest pride in his work as a liaison officer. "If I can have an influence on something or someone, I don't sit back."

Vinnie Saddleback

Vinnie Saddleback appears at the gates of Imperial Oil's Bonnie Glen gas plant outside Wetaskiwin in central Alberta wearing a welcoming smile. His manner is carefree and high-spirited as he begins the tour. He explains that he manages the plant's environmental systems, and in an effort to break the ice, he flashes a white-clothed grin and says jokingly, "I'm the mayor of the boneyard, call me the sultan of scrap."

However, it doesn't take long to realize that behind his easygoing manner is a serious side. Saddleback is a firm believer in second chances. Outside of work, he talks to kids failing in school, to troubled teens in gangs, and to prisoners in correctional facilities. No one is a lost cause.

How does he connect with people in such different situations? "I share my insight in how I made it in the world outside of the reserve," he says. "I start with my life story."

When Saddleback was an infant, his parents gave him up temporarily for adoption. The new family from the Frog Lake Band, south of Cold Lake, was loving, but the stable home life didn't last. When he was five, his father returned for him. It was the beginning of a difficult childhood and the first of several attempts by his father to take him back, only to give up again. Shuffled between families, Saddleback recalls making a promise to himself as a child: "I'm going to be somebody and I'm going to have a happy home."

In a chance encounter weeks after he made that promise, Saddleback met up with his foster mother and asked if he could come home. She and her husband, a mechanic, gladly took him in. His foster dad taught Saddleback how to fix cars and the two of them repaired vehicles on the reserve in exchange for what people could afford, usually belt buckles or other homemade gifts.

When he turned 15, Saddleback moved to Wetaskiwin to finish high school. He then studied heavy-duty mechanics and landed a job with a local company. His good fortune didn't last, however. The company was sold, Saddleback lost his job, and his biological father and brother, whom he had reconnected with, died almost simultaneously from alcohol-related diseases. Feeling as if he had lost everything, Saddleback went on a drinking binge, "It took five days of being in the dumps before I realized that no one was going to pick me up on myself."

On his road to recovery, Saddleback – now a confirmed rectoral – started to explore his roots. Learning Native teachings and traditional dancing. He found his job at Imperial and learned another important lesson: "You can't change the world, but you can change the way you look at things, and then the world will follow you."

At 26, he was already considered over-the-hill to dance competitively, but to everyone's surprise, he placed second in his first competition. He went on to travel coast-to-coast in various competitions, placing ninth at the Men's Northern Fancy Dancing World Championships in 2000 and 2003 in Hartford, Connecticut. He was later chosen to dance at the opening of the 2001 World Championships in Athletics in Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton in front of more than 45,000 spectators. In the last few years he has given up competing to mentor and teach dance to kids in Hobbsville in central Alberta: "Dancing was a healing ceremony given by the creator," says Saddleback. "The
colours I wear, are used to draw on spirits to heal. When I dance, I give medicine to the community."

Today, Saddleback lives in the Siksika Cree First Nation in central Alberta with his wife, four-year-old son and seven foster children between the ages of six and 13. "I remember what I went through as a kid and the promise I made," he says. "By taking on the foster kids, I'm giving back to the creator."

Michelle Van Every

Michelle Van Every sits in a chair on the log porch of the Beat's Inn on Six Nations in southwestern Ontario and recounts how she came to work for Imperial. The 36-year-old speaks frankly. "I didn't think I could do it," she says.

Five years ago, Van Every took advantage of a science education program sponsored by Imperial to help her gain employment at the nearby Nanticoke refinery. She completed a pre-technology course offered at the Six Nations Polytechnic that was designed to allow students to upgrade in physics, chemistry and math. She continued her education in the three-year chemical production and power engineering technology course at Lambton College in Sarnia and spent her two eight-month co-op terms at the Nanticoke refinery.

This past May, Van Every was hired on at Imperial. Her education continues both on and off the job. Her goal is to meet the requirements for third- and second-class operating engineer tickets in the next five years. Each ticket requires 2,000 hours of steam time – practical experience she can get at the refinery. After work, when her kids are in bed, she studies for her ticket through a correspondence program offered by the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology.

Van Every is thankful that Imperial helps pay for her education but it hasn't been easy. As a single mother of two children (now between the ages of six and 10), she found the experience of juggling family responsibilities and school work "harder than I thought it would be."

The most difficult times, she says, were moving away from home and, in her trial year, needing her parents to take charge of her youngest in order for her to complete the Lambton College course.

As a mother and role model to her children, Van Every is motivated to do well. "I'm always on them to finish school," she says. "I even made my kids go to my graduation. They were proud of me and that means a lot."

Van Every has volunteered to talk at post-secondary information sessions about the merits of education. She told students about her personal battle to stay in school and of the people who thought she couldn't do it. "I'm proud of where I am right now," she says.

Fred Cardinal

When Fred Cardinal was 28, an event happened that changed his life. On New Year's Eve, he and his wife returned home from a function with family and friends to discover that their new house had been ravaged by fire.

"Thankfully, no one was hurt," recalls Cardinal. "My two boys and their grandparents made it out of the fire safely, but we lost everything. We were a few payments away from owning our home and contents, and we had no house insurance. I had a lump in my throat for days. I thought I might have to give up on my dream of being a power engineer. What did I have to do to make ends meet for my family? I couldn't go back to school."

Cardinal, who was born and raised on the Goodfish Lake First Nation in northwestern Alberta, was three months away from finishing a training course in power engineering in Lac La Biche. He was seriously considering leaving school immediately to make some money for his family. In the end, it took only a few simple words from his instructor to show Cardinal his path: "You are an excellent student. I see potential in you. I recommend that you stay."

It was the encouragement Cardinal needed to complete his education. That summer, he was offered a job at Imperial in its Cold Lake operation. The opportunity, however, meant moving his family off the reserve and away from extended family and friends. "Yes, I'm going," he said. "What do I have to lose?"

Cardinal sees the house fire as a defining moment in his life, one that encouraged him to take a chance. Today, he shares his story with students and passes on his life lessons. "Number one, I tell them to get dwelling insurance," he says with a laugh. "On the reserve, things like insurance and financial planning just weren't talked about in that era. I always teach that you have to be able to adapt to change."

Cardinal, a 19-year veteran with Imperial, has devoted his career to working as a power engineer and serving as Imperial's Native liaison with the 11 Aboriginal communities surrounding the Cold Lake operation. In 1991, Cardinal and other employees were asked for some ideas to improve relationships with those communities. Out of that brainstorming came a number of special programs to promote careers for Aboriginals in the petroleum industry. The committee started Imperial's Native Network, an Aboriginal advisory group that represents Imperial Oil at career fairs and local schools to promote education, employment and training of Aboriginals. Later, in 1997, the same committee began a Native Internship Program, in which local people of Aboriginal descent receive up to 24 months of paid on-the-job training.

Cardinal, a born coach and motivator, is truly passionate about his role. "When I talk to people, everything comes from here," he says, putting his hand over his heart. "People recognize when you speak from the heart. It takes you miles. My key message to youth is set your goals and put them into action."

Fred Cardinal. coach and motivator, speaks from the heart when talking with young people.
Morris Jacobson

While touring around the Norman Wells operations in the North-west Territories, 160 km south of the Arctic Circle, Morris Jacobson says, "Our company is the site of the historic Old Field oil discovery of 1920 and is still Canada's most northerly oil producing field. In 1985, near the beginning of Jacobson's career, the area underwent a major expansion in which wells, placed into six man-made islands on the Mackenzie River, were drilled to feed a new central processing unit built near the banks of the river."

"I built, ran and managed that plant," he says with pride. "I don't think there are too many people who can claim that."

For Jacobson, a Métis from the Deh Cho region, the North-west Territories is home. He grew up in Fort Simpson and went to school in Fort Smith and has spent the better part of his career working in Norman Wells. Despite his attachment to the territory, Jacobson knew early on that if his career was going to progress, he'd have to - temporarily at least - move south.

With support from his manager, Jacobson worked his way up the ranks at Imperial, first as a plant operator, then as operations team leader. Before he could become a foreman at Norman Wells, he had to agree to move away from his home to Cold Lake and then Drayton Valley in Alberta to expand his knowledge of the business.

His ability to adapt and plan for the future has helped him succeed. Today, he works as a business development adviser for the Mackenzie Gas Project, helping Aboriginal and northern business to qualify and effectively compete for work on the project. He is co-chair of the Pipeline Operations Training Committee, a multi-stakeholder run project that offers apprenticeship opportunities and technical education workshops to northerners. He is also Imperial's representative on the Arctic and Northern Skills Employment Partnership. This $11.3 million northern development project, which began in 2004, is expected to help the business and employment training to about 1,400 NWT residents so they are prepared to work when the project comes on stream.

The greatest barriers for Aboriginal people of the North to get meaningful employment, says Jacobson, are a cultural need to stay in their home communities and a lack of education and skills.

"A big part of my job is to make people look into the future," he explains. "Take the Mackenzie Gas Project. Construction will only last four years. After construction we'll need people who are trained to help maintain the operation over its 25- to 30-year life. My role is to convince them they need some expertise in order to sustain themselves in the future."

Jacobson is humble about acknowledging his accomplishments. "I suppose I am a success," he says, "If my story helps others achieve, that's what matters."

Roloxane General

Standing on a vibrating sand walkway 14 stories above Imperial's Naquockey refinery, Roloxane General surveys her domain. "Up here, you have the best view of the refinery, she shouts above the equipment humming beneath her feet. It's a perfect panoramic view of the awesome machinery below, the farmer's fields enclosing the refinery, and the shores of Lake Erie to the south.

General stops to take in her surroundings for only a moment because she has a lot on her mind these days. A general mechanic at the Naquockey refinery, she is also the chief steward of the union in the midst of conciliation. Voted in six years ago, General doesn't want to let anyone down.

"My co-workers - all men - saw the confidence in me that I didn't see," she says. "It's hard to imagine a time when General might have been considered shy. At 52, she is aware of the power of her voice and the influence she has on others. She also knows that she can get results. "When I talk with management, everyone is equal. That's how I go into a meeting."

With a confidence that can't be rattled, General speaks of an earlier time when she had to fight barriers as a young woman and as an Aboriginal. "At work, I had to prove myself twice," she says. "I used to run into men who just didn't want me there, but that has changed. I get a lot of respect from the guys."

For General, it's especially important to mentor the women who are hired at the refinery. "A lot of women say they can't do it. Women don't realize they can do the job here and that the jobs are easy."

An elder from Six Nations and a grandmother of six, General started her career 20 years ago, working at times as a carpenter, painter, driller and general machinist. The work wasn't steady, and she considered getting a more traditional woman's job. It was while she was in the employment office looking for an administrative position that she came across the opportunity to work for Imperial.

"I've been in a man's job all my life," she says. Points to some of her handwork - a neatly threaded pipe that snakes along the ground, a boiler she cleaned last week and brought back to service. "I could never do a desk job."

Outside of work, she speaks to students regularly about the opportunities in skilled trades. She'd like to see more opportunities for the next generation, more apprenticeships and expanded training in order to meet an almost inevitable future labour crunch in the industry.

With the next generation in mind, she plans to step down from the chief steward role once negotiations are complete. "I've enjoyed it and I know I'll miss it," she says. "But it's time for some of the young guys to get in."
A NEW APPROACH TO GIVING

By encouraging senior employees to become involved in the charitable organizations it funds, the Imperial Oil Foundation is taking a strategic approach to philanthropy. By Brian Bergman

The oil industry and environmentalists are often viewed as adversaries, but given the chance, they can work together for the benefit of the environment, says Eric Briotow, Imperial Oil's corporate environment and safety planning manager. In 2006, Briotow volunteered to be a member of the grant review committee of the Alberta Ecotrust Foundation, an alliance of industry and environmental groups that provided organizational assistance and raises and distributes funds for grassroots initiatives. Briotow found that, in the vast majority of cases, corporate representatives and environmental advocates agreed quite easily on the projects that deserved support and those that did not.

Along the way, the would-be adversaries came to appreciate each other.

"When you sit across the table from a person you've gotten to know, neither of you are in a position where you want to be unreasonable," says Briotow. "It makes you listen more carefully to what the other person has to say and break down the mistrust that might otherwise exist."

Briotow's words are echoed by Jim Pasot, executive director of Defenders of Wildlife Canada and a member of the same grant review committee. "What happens is that we get to know each other as people -- not as headline news items," says Pasot. "And that's always a good start to at least investigating common ground."

This kind of constructive engagement is one of the key reasons why Briotow, along with several other Imperial Oil managers, was recently approached about volunteering with organizations supported by the Imperial Oil Foundation, the company's philanthropic arm. The participation of these senior employees is also part of a larger shift in direction by the foundation, which in 2006 donated $6 million to some 400 non-profit organizations across Canada.

In essence, the foundation is seeking to make its donations more focused and effective, that means concentrating support in a few priority areas -- most notably education and the environment -- and in parts of the country where Imperial Oil has significant numbers of employees or business interests. It also means getting people like Briotow involved so they can lend their business expertise, help ensure the effectiveness of Imperial's donations, and more directly engage with the people and issues the foundation is seeking to address.

"What we're talking about here is strategic philanthropy," says Moni- ics Suttor, president of the Imperial Oil Foundation. "It's about hav- ing a better alignment between the interests of our business and those of the organizations we choose to support."

Strategic philanthropy is an emerging trend in the corporate sector, one that has been written about extensively by Michael Porter, a man- agement guru at the Harvard Business School, and Mark Kramer, man- aging director of Boston-based FSG Social Impact Advisors -- a firm Kramer and Porter created in 1999 to work directly with corporations, foundations and non-profit organizations.

"Porter and Kramer argue that corporations need to do a better job of applying business principles to their philanthropic efforts. Among other things, this means corporate foundations should use their expertise to fund organizations that are the most effective or address urgent or over- looked problems and should be ones that are linked to their field of busi- ness. They should also attempt to improve the performance of grant recipients by getting involved with the non-profits they support and providing advice and management assistance."

"There's a tendency to think of philanthropy simply as giving away money," says Kramer. "We think the point is solving social problems. And corporations have tremendous resources they can bring to bear on a social problem through their employees, network relationships and expertise. These are things you can't achieve just by writing a cheque."

It's equally important, adds Kramer, for corporate foundations to decide what they are not going to do. "Having a strategy is all about mak- ing choices," he says. "You can only help all of these corporate resources to bear by focusing on a short list of priorities."

Since 2006, the Imperial Oil Foundation has been putting these theo- ries into practice. Traditionally, the foundation spread its support across every province and territory, with the bulk of the funding going to arts groups and civic organizations.

The foundation is now shifting both its geographic and philosophic focus. Geographically, the priority will be areas where Imperial has a major or emerging presence -- namely Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. Philosophically, there will be an increased emphasis on supporting issues and causes that have a direct link to Imperial's business activities.

For example, the foundation plans to strengthen its support for education initiatives, particularly in math and science. "The trend of kids not choosing a career in the sciences is very worrying," says
As a voluntary member of Alberta Ecotrust Foundation, Eric Bristow found that the oil industry and environmentalists can work together.

It was not support to the elders program in whatever way I can to make sure it's successful.

Encouraging students to excel is also the role of Junior Achievement of Canada. Imperial's support of this organization is longstanding and ongoing - in 2006, the foundation committed $1 million over five years to fund Junior Achievement activities across Canada.

Richard Rodgers, manager of safety, health and environment for Imperial's resources division, is currently a board member for Junior Achievement of Southern Alberta. Prior to that, Rodgers spent nine years as a volunteer Junior Achievement teacher. Junior Achievement provides classroom and after-school instruction that focuses on business basics and the importance of staying in school.

"We know that 20 percent of those who enter high school in the Calgary area drop out before they finish," says Rodgers. "That's huge. We think people who finish and go on to post-secondary education have more to offer, and that's certainly the group we like to help."

In this way, says Rodgers, Junior Achievement accords with the foundation's new direction. He points out that in southern Alberta alone, there are more than 130 Imperial employees who volunteer as Junior Achievement teachers. "So we are supporting education not only through our donation, but also in terms of people's time and talents."

While the foundation is scaling back, on support of civic and arts organizations, many still qualify because of the critical community role they play and the types of activities they promote. In the city where Imperial Oil is now headquartered, two obvious examples of this kind of organization are the Calgary Zoo and the Glenbow Museum.

After he moved from Toronto to Calgary as part of the company's headquarters relocation in 2005, Richard O'Farrell, government relations and issues manager with Imperial's public affairs department, discussed with Sampie how he might get more involved with the community. The Calgary Zoo, with the foundation's support for years, seemed a natural fit, given that O'Farrell has an undergraduate degree in zoology.

"The zoo is a big deal in this city," says O'Farrell, who joined the zoo's board of trustees in 2006 after the foundation had supported it for years. The zoo has strong programs for schoolchildren and a clear commitment to wildlife protection. The company's support has supported in recent years are the creation of the zoo's Canadian Wildlife section and construction of the Imperial Oil Tiger Amphitheatre.

O'Farrell is impressed with how efficiently the non-profit organization operates and the commitment of zoo employers and managers. "I'm just amazed at their dedication," he says. "It's pretty inspirational."

George Beause, Imperial's director of corporate planning, expresses a similar sentiment about the people who work at the Glenbow Museum, where he now serves on the board of governors.

Beause observes that the recently opened Mavericks exhibition, a $12 million homage to 48 individuals who made a distinctive mark on Alberta's history, came in on time and on budget - no small feat in a period of labour shortages and skyrocketing construction costs. "What impresses me is how far they can make a dollar stretch," says Beause, "and the enthusiasm of the people who work there. It's very exciting to be part of that."
COASTING ON SUNSHINE

Putter along sandy beaches, meet interesting townsfolk, and visit the art studios, resorts and restaurants that pepper the countryside along B.C.’s Sunshine Coast. By Margo Pfeiff
"YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE, MY ONLY SUNSHINE," an old-timer in dungarees and a red plaid shirt yodels into the mike at the Powell River Open Air Market. When he isn't yodeling, he is puffing into his harmonica. Folks are tapping their fingers in time to the music on the picnic table where I've set my coffee cup and warm cinnamon bun from the Women's Institute booth. My tea bug bakes with homemade curried cucumber relish and bread baked that morning in a Nobo coffee can in the market's communal outdoor brick oven. As always, the crowd that arrives each weekend in this forest clearing is a collage of the coastal town's eclectic population – farmers, the pierced and tie-dye-clad organic set, tattooed francophone mill workers and a few urban refugees. What we have in common is a love for this unpianmented and earthy part of British Columbia and an appreciation of how lucky we are to be here.

Powell River is 155 kilometres north of Vancouver, near the top end of the Sunshine Coast, where rainforest spreads down the Coast Mountains to the high waterline of empty pebble beaches and 100 islands scattered between the B.C. mainland and Vancouver Island. Only by plane or ferry can this remote expanse be reached. That relative isolation, as well as the funky towns, weathered cottages and festivals celebrating everything from chamber music to wood ducks, gives the coast a quirky island feel. And it is bathed in 2,400 hours of sunshine – an impressive 200 days annually, according to Environment Canada. As a result, this stretch along two peninsulas from Gibsons north to the hamlet of Lund is sunnier and drier than anywhere else on soggy, coastal British Columbia.

Although I grew up and lived most of my life in Vancouver, I never ventured up the Sunshine Coast. But when friends bought a house in Powell River several years ago, I visited and discovered one of British Columbia's best-kept secrets. So well kept, in fact, that until very recently, the Sunshine Coast even escaped the province's skyrocketing real estate prices. While British Columbia boomed, this coast remained a working-class backwater: an affordable haven for artists and retirees, and a playground for those who love the wild outdoors, whether on a mountain bike or kayak, or clad in a wetsuit or hiking boots. While I usually take a 30-minute flight from Vancouver, I decided instead to take two days by land and water to make my way to Powell River.

A bold eagle plucks a salmon from Howe Sound and my trip begins with a 40-minute sail between the B.C. Ferries terminal in West Vancouver and Langdale, just six kilometres north of Gibsons, on the Sechelt Peninsula on the western end of the Sunshine Coast. It is early morning in Gibsons, and like the bold eagle, almost as soon as I am off the ferry I start trawling for my own breakfast at Molly's Beach, once the sound stage for The Beachcombers. Between 1972 and 1990, the television series introduced the world to the fishing village with its colourful houseboats tethered in the marina. Arts and crafts erupt on the main street, and even roadside electrical boxes have been transformed with underwater artwork into mini-galleries by local artists Grete Gunkel and Jan Porter.

The Sunshine Coast has one of the highest percentages of artists per
On my journey north I meet many wanderers and misfits who discovered on the Sunshine Coast a place of peace, creativity and unbridled community spirit where they could finally set roots. One of them is an artist who goes by the single name Moosko. She grew up in Japan dreaming of a life as a traditional painter, but family pressures forced her into an unhappy career as a dietitian. Rex Baum, a tugboat captain, swept her off her feet and brought her to his home in Pender Harbour. He encouraged his new bride to follow her heart and she is now a professional contemporary artist. “I was always the black sheep of my family,” she says. “But here I can truly be myself.”

The historic mid-1930s Halfmoon Bay General Store with its creeking plank floors is a sharp contrast to the luxury subdivisions sprouting amid the rustic cottage country of Pender Harbour, where I decide to spend the night. As more people fall in love with the coast, development is taking off, but happily some coast lovers are only sightseeing on the pristine environment. When breathing new life into a rundown seaside lodge at Secret Cove, Kevin Toth and his partner, Peter Rubes, used a cedar boardwalk instead of a road to link their hillside forest suites. “We’re green guys,” says Toth, “and we didn’t want to disturb landscapes like the delicate old pillows of lichen.” In the end, nature dictated the route of the 680-metre boardwalk and the location of the 13 five-star canvas suites – tree houses for big kids, really. Only seven trees had to be removed during construction of the renamed Rockwater Secret Cove Resort.

Giorgia Cognassè feels just as passionately about the wilderness within his family’s Ruby Lake Resort. “Places like this are disappear-
The Review turns 90

That early success helped shape The Review into what it is today. Each of its 655 issues since 1917, The Review has told the story of Imperial Oil Limited, reporting on the petroleum industry and Imperial's place in it. But, perhaps thanks to that first experiment with the Linoloid essay, its scope of interests broadened. Along with the oil industry, producers came to expect a eclectic mix of Canadians in both art and writing. Its readership also changed. In 1994, the magazine became available to the public. Today, it is read by shareholders, politicians, journalists, teachers, as well as a host of individuals who receive it at home, access it on-line or read it at their local public libraries.

Readers have focused on the environment and community engagement—subject areas that are profoundly important to the company and the country. Each issue also includes a story on what the company's charitable arms, the Imperial Oil Foundation, is doing to improve community life.

And, finally, The Review reflects the fact that its heritage is both two-pronged—light-hearted and unconventional Canadian pieces, such as the current issue's story on a Canadian icon Anne Shirley, continue to be a mainstay.

It has been said that everything that has ever appeared on the pages of The Review reflects the character of Imperial Oil. An editorial written by James Knight some 40 years ago says it best: "If the piece is amusing, it's because Imperial has a sense of humor; if it's historical, it shows Imperial's respect for tradition; if it's cultural, it shows our commitment to the aesthetic spirit; if it's banal, it shows we know the value of a buck."

If this is your first read of The Review, welcome. We hope you enjoy it. To our long-time readers and friends, thanks for coming along. —Catherine Treadwell