

## VIUFA Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee (HRISC) 2022-23 Report

2022-23 saw colleagues continuing to adjust to a variety of teaching conditions--in-person, blended, synchronous, asynchronous. Though masks are no longer mandated, COVID variants remain a concern to those who may be vulnerable or whose loved ones are.

A common refrain made by those who work in human rights or DEI is that racism never sleeps. The weekly HRISC potpourri list of resources reminds us of the numerous communities impacted by discrimination, hate and, too often, violence. The searchable database created last year now sits on the [VIUFA website](#), readily available to all. Resources include webinars, opinion pieces and more—a range of social justice topics from climate change to misogyny to anti-racism. As a reminder, most newspapers and magazines behind a paywall can be accessed through the VIU Library. Laura Buechler, VIUFA Office Manager, will be updating the database using the lists.

In the summer, Jack Gin, film director, contacted me, as well as Stephen Davies, History, to inquire whether there was interest in screening his short documentary (fine cut), [Finding Fred Lee](#). HRISC supported it, along with History and the Canadian Letters & Images Project, in its screening on October 27, at the Nanaimo campus. It has since [screened internationally](#).

Spring was a highly active and visible time for HRISC. Guest speakers and panellists for the screening of two documentaries: [Incorrigible](#) (2022) and [Unarchived](#) (2022) were purposely scheduled for Global Citizens Week (GCW). GCW, in part, sponsored these films, with *Unarchived* also supported by NFB. Nanaimo Archives and the Nanaimo Historical Society both provided refreshments and actively promoted the Nanaimo screening.

HRISC's screening of *Unarchived* in Duncan (also a premiere) was the lone event for Global Citizens Week on the Cowichan campus. Screenings and panel discussions of *Unarchived* attracted 35-40 attendees to each event. Thanks to SOCI 215, Issues in Canadian Society, there is one more screening on April 14, with support from HRISC and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR).

After hosting these events, HRISC donated its remaining funds (\$375) to support three student scholarships: VIU International Refugee Newcomer Award - Continuing WUSC Students, VIU Resilience & Determination Award, and the Academic and Career Preparation (ACP) Award. They were selected to reflect the values and goals of HRISC.

HRISC ended the VIU spring semester celebrating student creativity and scholarship, in collaboration with CREATE. Remaining HRISC funds (\$300) from 2021-22 supported a CREATE award; the anti-racism award has been renamed the Pro-Diversity Award. Due to the number of entries and their quality, only half of the amount was used, leaving \$150 to be awarded in 2024. This year's Pro-Diversity Award went to a project entitled *Indigenous Women in Politics; Enough is Enough: It is our time to use our voices*, from a student in Political Studies. The presentation discussed the historical under representation and marginalization of Indigenous women in politics through an intersectional lens. Examples of powerful women illustrated their ability to overcome systemic barriers and their ongoing challenges in the political field.

As Chair of HRISC, I represented VIUFA at the FPSE (Federation of Post-Secondary Educators) virtual meeting held February 4-5, 2023. For the in-person meeting of October 21-22, 2022, Eliza Gardiner kindly stood in when I was unable to attend. With only two formal meetings a year, a number of FPSE locals met virtually to continue HRISC work, especially with the organization of the Speakers Series 'Tour,' which consisted of two events in March: one

hybrid and one virtual. The topics were timely: [international students and academic freedom](#). These were recorded and will eventually be available on the [FPSE website](#).

Besides organizing the annual Speakers Tour, HRISC locals met to follow-up on resolutions initially proposed during the fall in-person meeting. One that generated much conversation (and continues to do so) is the [International Solidarity Fund](#) (ISF). Union members' dues support ISF: *"The fund rests on the belief that we share experiences, needs, and values with all members of the global community. We affirm that what we desire for ourselves, we wish for all others around the world."* I mention this to remind members that a "little can go a long way" in making a difference in primarily the Global South. This year VIUFA submitted one proposal (baking school in Uganda); props to Eliza Gardiner for shepherding it through the process. The ISF has supported past VIUFA sponsored projects: Corazon de Oro [Heart of Gold] (Costa Rica) for one year, and Alianza Prenatal Program (Guatemala) for five years.

As a VIUFA Executive member, I sat on two committees: Union Activism Award (adjudication of applications) and Job Action (on-going, pre-emptive planning). As well, in my HRISC Chair role, I have advised VIU Communications on antiquated or inappropriate language used online or in its VIU Digest.

I reached out to Monique McKay, Director, Office of DEHR, her office, together with Library Commons will host *150 Years and Counting: Fighting for Justice on the Coast* for Asian Heritage Month (May). If you did not see [it in 2018](#), now is the time to do so! Luke McLeod has started a book display list to support the exhibit.

Much gratitude to this year's HRIS Committee members: Gillian Anderson, Mak Ergasheva, and Yu Xie.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Chair of HRISC; this is my last term, as I will not be standing again.

Respectfully submitted,

Imogene Lim, Chair, HRISC

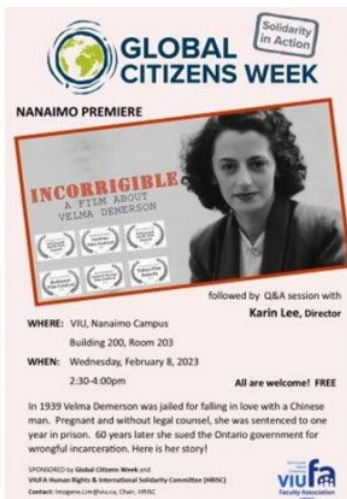


**Special Screening**  
**FINDING FRED LEE**  
with guest speaker, Jack Gin

*Finding Fred Lee* is the story of a young man from Kamloops who joined the Rocky Mountain Rangers in 1916 when anti-Chinese discrimination was rampant. Killed during the battle of Hill 70, a walkway is now named after him at the Hill 70 Memorial in France. This is also Jack Gin's story of years of research to recover Fred Lee as part of Canadian history.

**Nanaimo Campus, B556, R109 (lecture theatre)**  
Thursday, October 27—4:00-5:30pm

Sponsored by VIU History, Canadian Letters & Images Project, VIUFA HRISC



**GLOBAL CITIZENS WEEK**  
Solidarity in Action

**NANAIMO PREMIERE**

**INCORRIGIBLE**  
A FILM ABOUT  
VELMA DEMERSON

followed by Q&A session with  
**Karin Lee, Director**

**WHERE:** VIU, Nanaimo Campus  
Building 200, Room 203

**WHEN:** Wednesday, February 8, 2023  
2:30-4:00pm

All are welcome! FREE

In 1939 Velma Demerson was jailed for falling in love with a Chinese man. Pregnant and without legal counsel, she was sentenced to one year in prison. 60 years later she sued the Ontario government for wrongful incarceration. Here is her story!

SPONSORED by Global Citizens Week and  
VIUFA Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee (HRISC)  
Contact: Imogene.Lim@viu.ca, Chair, HRISC



**SCREENING**  
followed by Q&A session with  
**Dr. Satwinder Bains, UFV**  
**Dr. Aaron Devor, UVic**  
**Dr. Imogene Lim, VIU**

**UNARCHIVED**

**WHERE:** VIU, Nanaimo Campus  
Building 355, Room 203

**WHEN:** Tuesday, February 14  
6:30-9:00pm

All are welcome! FREE

In community archives across British Columbia, local knowledge keepers are hand-fabricating a more inclusive history. Through a collage of personal interviews, archival footage and deeply rooted memories, the past, present and future come together, fighting for a space where everyone is seen and everyone belongs.

History is what we all make of it.

Contact: Imogene.Lim@viu.ca, Chair, VIUFA HRISC

SPONSORS: VIUFA, NFB, IFC, GLOBAL CITIZENS WEEK, NANAIMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



**HRISC  
EVENTS  
2022-23**



**SPECIAL SCREENING**  
**SOCI 215—Issues in Canadian Society**  
invites you to join them in this screening  
All are welcome — FREE

**UNARCHIVED**

**WHERE:** VIU, Nanaimo Campus  
Building 250, Room 123

**WHEN:** Friday, April 14  
9:30-11:30am

SPONSORS: VIUFA, NFB, IFC, GLOBAL CITIZENS WEEK



**DUNCAN PREMIERE**  
followed by Q&A session with  
**Dr. Satwinder Bains, UFV**  
**Dr. Tzu-I Chung, RBCM**  
**Dr. Imogene Lim, VIU**

**UNARCHIVED**

**WHERE:** VIU, Cowichan Campus  
Building 700, Room 140

**WHEN:** Wednesday, February 15  
1:00-3:30pm

All are welcome! FREE

In community archives across British Columbia, local knowledge keepers are hand-fabricating a more inclusive history. Through a collage of personal interviews, archival footage and deeply rooted memories, the past, present and future come together, fighting for a space where everyone is seen and everyone belongs.

History is what we all make of it.

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