



On behalf of your [chapter executive](#), I am pleased to launch our first Chapter newsletter! When we originally decided to create a newsletter for our PEA UVic Chapter, we never suspected the first one would be sent during a worldwide pandemic. We hope that all of you (and your families) are doing well, despite the constantly changing reality we continue to face.

During these challenging times, it feels more important than ever that we stay connected. This was the original goal of this newsletter - to help our chapter members stay informed about important issues and events at UVic, while also celebrating the diversity within our chapter. We intend to share this newsletter with you on a regular (term) basis, and will be also be sending a few communications that focus specifically on time-sensitive issues and frequently asked collective agreement questions.

We welcome your feedback and are always available, should you need support.

Sheryl Karras
UVic Chapter Chair

Critical Skill Adjustments

Per the terms of our Collective Agreement, on 1 July 2020 we expect a new infusion of Service Improvement Allocation funds available for a limited number of positions. In order to receive a Critical Skill Adjustment, the position must meet all of the following:

- A labour market disparity exists;
- Recruitment and retention issues persist; and
- The position directly impacts the student experience.

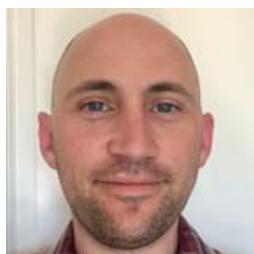
While some managers may have already requested funding for specific positions, we would encourage you to initiate a discussion with your supervisor if you believe your job meets these criteria. The funds are limited, however, and not all positions may meet the criteria set by the PSEC mandate. We acknowledge that this is an imperfect solution to the recruitment and retention issues across campus, but we hope more PEA members will be helped by these adjustments.

Local Rep Update

Our Local Reps held a virtual meeting earlier this month to share issues they are hearing from members concerning their working conditions in response to COVID-19. Katy Chan and Vincent Connor, co-chairs of the Local Reps committee, reported many members have transitioned well to working from home. To capture this success, we are planning to share a teleworking survey with members in May to gather feedback and stories. If you need guidance about working from home, please refer to [this information](#) from HR.

Many members expressed concerns about balancing work and childcare and job security. Please know that your Chapter Executive is working with the PEA to address these issues with our employer. If you need family accommodations due to COVID-19, please talk to your supervisor but know that you can also reach out to your [Local Rep](#) or our PEA Labour Relations Officer, [Sam Montgomery](#), if you need support.

Member Profile



Jeff Albert

Senior Unix Systems Administrator
Research Computing Services, University Systems

Years at UVic: 16

Building: Clearihue basement usually but currently remotely at full capacity.

Job overview: designing, building, and operating large-scale and high-performance computer infrastructure for scientific researchers both at UVic and, through UVic's partnership with the Compute Canada Federation, across the country and around the world.

Daily work overview: very few days look the same, which is why I love my job. Here's just a quick sample of what I'm up to in any given day:

- Learning new techniques and technologies
- Collaborating on the design of new systems
- Physically installing server computers and automating the installation of hundreds of new nodes
- Creating common interfaces for our researcher clients to access new systems
- Continuous operation and maintenance to ensure our systems are performing

Unlike many IT systems, ours are often built of experimental components and tuned for the highest possible performance, so it's more like being a mechanic for a race car than a commuter sedan - exciting, busy, and sometimes very intense!

Best part of the job: I'm fortunate to work on systems that are used by people doing important, fascinating, profound exploration that extends the boundaries of human knowledge and makes real change in the world.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak began, my team has worked together to rapidly stand up a new virtual cluster employing GPUs to accelerate the work of protein-folding analysis that may help scientists in designing potential treatments. It's a wonderful feeling to be able to contribute to projects like these.

Key Dates

National Day of Mourning

April 28

Central Pro-D Fund Application

Deadline - May 31

PEA Scholarship and Bursary

Deadline - June 30

Use the links below to contact your Local Rep or Chapter Executive.

[UVic Local Reps](#) | [UVic Chapter Executive](#)

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Victoria, BC V8W 2E7

Canada

Toll free: 1-800-779-7736

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