

SFU Press Releases Collection

These archival copies have been generated from web press releases maintained and originally written by SFU Communications and Marketing. Where possible, an effort has been made to preserve the public comments left on the website as well as any included photos or other images. All textual content should be faithful to the original press releases; contact numbers have been removed but they have not otherwise been altered in any way. However, this collection of documents spans multiple generations of web authoring software and not all formatting will be exact.

L-r: Marilyn Sanford, founder and CEO of LincEdge, Ian Hand, executive director of VentureLabs, Jia Chen, founder and CEO of Talenful, Jim Derbyshire, entrepreneur-in-residence at VentureLabs and mentor-in-residence at Venture Connection, Eddie Hung, director of R&D at Invionics Software, and Pook-Ping Yao, founder and CEO of Optigo Networks. The company founders are some of Derbyshire's many mentees.

MEDIA RELEASE

Jim Derbyshire awarded 2017 SFU Chancellor's Distinguished Service Award

August 15, 2017

[Tweet](#) [Facebook](#) [Pinterest](#) [Email](#) [Print](#)

Contact:

Ian Bryce, University Communications, 604.773.8134, ian_bryce@sfu.ca

Simon Fraser University has announced that the 2017 SFU Chancellor's Distinguished Service Award will go to Jim Derbyshire in recognition of his exceptional work and commitment to the University.

A serial entrepreneur, Derbyshire has shared a lifetime of international business acumen with scores of SFU student, faculty and alumni entrepreneurs.

As founding program director and mentor-in-residence for SFU's [Coast Capital Savings Venture Connection](#) he helped establish the business incubator's student entrepreneurship program in 2009. More recently he helped develop [VentureLabs](#), a business accelerator for established entrepreneurs.

Derbyshire will be presented the award at the SFU Chancellor's Fall Convocation Dinner in October.

"Jim Derbyshire's passion, business expertise and generosity in sharing his time have been invaluable to the success of the Venture Connection and VentureLabs programs, and to the entrepreneurs who participate," says SFU Chancellor Anne Giardini.

"Thanks to his programming vision and design, Venture Connection has inspired and trained more than 6,000 aspiring entrepreneurs, and mentored 500 student teams, and there are many more to come."

Originally an electronics engineer, Derbyshire has spent 43 years in the global information technology, semiconductor and communications industries, where his career path diverged from engineering to management to serial entrepreneur.

He founded and grew five start-ups into highly successful companies before selling them, and established numerous profitable business partnerships with major companies in Asia, Europe and North America. Today, he is an angel investor, mentor and board member to a variety of high-tech companies, many of them started by SFU students, faculty or alumni.

Derbyshire's many student mentees include Milun Tesovic, of MetroLyrics, a music lyrics website acquired by CBS Interactive; Terry Beech, of HiretheWorld, who is now a federal MP; Matias Marquez, COO of BuyaTab, a recognized global leader in electronic gift solutions; and Ben Britton, CEO of Ionomr. This high-growth SFU spinout venture features a new product that could revolutionize next-generation green technology.

In addition to helping successful entrepreneurs with their business issues, Derbyshire says much of his contribution has

been helping students to understand what entrepreneurship practically entails, and whether or not entrepreneurship is really for them.

“I’m very pleased that Venture Connection and VentureLabs have helped so many students and others,” says Derbyshire. “I enjoy listening to my mentees as they describe their goals and, years later, seeing their achievements. When I feel that in a small way I have helped make it happen for them, that’s my payback.”

WHY IT MATTERS:

The Chancellor’s Distinguished Service Award is an annually given to an individual or organization who has contributed significantly to Simon Fraser University. Priority is given to recognizing individuals, but organizations may be honoured when they act as a corporate citizen. The purpose of the award is to recognize individuals and organizations for their outstanding commitment and service to SFU.

FAST FACTS:

- Venture Connection has trained more than 6,000 aspiring entrepreneurs and mentored 500 student teams.
- Venture Connection has contributed to more than 170 early-stage startups.

LEARN MORE:

- [Coast Capital Savings Venture Connection](#)
- [VentureLabs](#)
- [SFU Chancellor’s Distinguished Service Award](#)

ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded more than 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada’s leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia’s three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 145,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

- [For the Media](#)
- [For Faculty and Staff](#)
- [About SFU](#)
- [SFU News](#)

[Admission](#)
[Programs](#)
[Learning](#)
[Research](#)
[Community](#)
[About](#)

[Maps + directions](#)
[Library](#)
[Academic Calendar](#)
[Road Report](#)
[Give to SFU](#)
[Emergency Information](#)

CONNECT WITH US

[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)
[Twitter](#)
[YouTube](#)

CONTACT US

Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, B.C.
Canada V5A 1S6