

BARK

BUILDING ACADEMIC RETENTION THROUGH K9'S

Annual Report
YEAR 8
2019/20



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Okanagan School of Education



Director's Message

Dr. John-Tyler Binfet

It's been another busy year in B.A.R.K. and as we wrap-up YEAR 8, it's a good time to reflect on highlights. Our on-campus Drop-in and BARK2GO continue to be popular and well-attended. We heard from students this year that they arranged their class schedule to maximize their access to B.A.R.K. programs! Attendance at sessions remains high and we continue to support a large number of students at UBC Okanagan. Beyond our students here at UBC, we participated in a pilot session at Missionwood Retirement Resort, and continued into our 3rd year of programming with the RCMP. It merits mention that none of our on-campus or community-based programs could run without the master organizational skills of B.A.R.K.'s program coordinator, Freya Green. In addition to coalescing handlers and dogs for sessions, Freya helps oversee and support the many student volunteers who help run B.A.R.K. Thanks to Freya and all the students who put in tireless hours to keep things running.

In terms of the academic work undertaken in B.A.R.K. this year, a highlight is the completion of Nicole Harris's Master of Arts degree that saw Nicole successfully defend her thesis research in which she examined students' perceptions of participating in the after-school program Building Confidence through K9s - a program run in cooperation with the Okanagan Boys & Girls Club. Nicole's research along with research by graduate students Freya Green and Camille Rousseau were all accepted for presentation at the annual conference of the International Society for Anthrozoology in Liverpool, England (Sept. 2020). Congratulations to these hardworking students! Additionally, we were pleased to see a manuscript on the RCMP canine stress reduction program published in the Human-Animal Interaction Bulletin (Binfet, Draper & Green, in press). Last, in collaboration with Dr. Elizabeth Kjellstrand-Hartwig from Texas State University, I was pleased to see the publication of our new book on Canine-Assisted Interventions that we hope will guide and inform others interested in working with therapy dogs to enhance well-being.

As always, we are appreciative of the financial support from UBC's AVP Students, Okanagan School of Education, and from VEDA Exclusive Living who continue to be tireless advocates of the work we undertake in B.A.R.K.

Dr. Binfet

Associate Professor, Okanagan School of Education



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Mission Statement

Now in its eighth year, Building Academic Retention through K9s (B.A.R.K.) is a research-driven program designed to support the emotional well-being of university students grappling with challenges around homesickness, social isolation, and integration into the university community. B.A.R.K. programming consists of both intervention studies and community drop-in services.

B.A.R.K. upholds the following core beliefs and values:

1. Community members play a key role in enhancing research initiatives on campus. B.A.R.K. volunteer dog handlers contribute enormously to both student enrichment and research studies carried out through the B.A.R.K. lab.
2. B.A.R.K. research and drop-in programs provide a framework for mentoring student scholars and volunteers.
3. B.A.R.K. is committed to supporting diversity and strives to create working climates where everyone is welcome, recognized, and invited to contribute.
4. B.A.R.K. is committed to community partnerships and supports the efforts of local animal-welfare groups (e.g. Paws it Forward, Kelowna SPCA).
5. B.A.R.K. is committed to upholding the highest standards of research. This includes adhering to both Human Behavioural Research Ethics Standards and to Animal Welfare Ethics Standards, using experimental designs that include the randomization of participants into treatment and control conditions, and including follow-up assessments of treatment effects as part of methodological designs.
6. B.A.R.K. is committed to giving back to the university community and pledges to have an active presence in student and university initiatives.



"The BARK program is the best program this university came up with because it brought and is bringing support to students if not the whole UBC community. It appeals to their hearts and minds, the whole being. Then you are open to learning using your intellect and your heart. They belong together. That's what the dogs are telling you. Thanks to all supporters of BARK, their volunteers and fans."

- UBC Staff, Jan. 2020



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Program Report

On-Campus Sessions

By hosting two regular on-campus programs and attending numerous events, B.A.R.K. tracked over 3600 interactions between students and handler-therapy dog teams. We welcomed thirteen new therapy dogs and handlers to the team. This increased the total number of therapy dogs participating in the program to 62.

BARK2Go expanded this year, adding a third location for students to interact with therapy dogs in UBC's new Commons Building.

In addition to regular BARK2Go sessions on Wednesdays and Drop-in Sessions on Fridays, B.A.R.K. participated in numerous campus events and initiatives. These included, but are not limited to: Jumpstart, CREATE, THRIVE, UBC Homecoming and Relay for Life. This helped to extend the reach of the program and raise awareness of the work we do in B.A.R.K.



B.A.R.K. DROP-IN

B.A.R.K. offers regular drop-in sessions on Friday afternoons from 4:30-6:00pm in EME 1123, the Faculty of Education's Innovative Learning Centre. There are typically 14 to 17 dogs and their handlers involved in each session, along with 15 student volunteers. On average 101 UBC students visit the lab each Friday and interact with therapy dogs and handlers for approximately 30 to 45 minutes per visit.

- Total sessions offered **13**
- Average number of participants per session **101**
- Total number of visits to the drop-in **1317**

BARK2GO

B.A.R.K. also offers regular BARK2GO sessions, which sees therapy dog-handler teams, and a student facilitator situated in high-traffic locations on campus. Held on Wednesdays in Fipke foyer, the Library's flex space, and now the Commons Mezzanine, BARK2GO sees 180 UBC students, on average per session. Students typically spend between 5 and 20 minutes per visit.

- Total sessions offered **12**
- Average number of participants per session **180**
- Total number of visits to BARK2GO **2156**

ON-CAMPUS PROGRAM VISITS = 3473



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Program Report

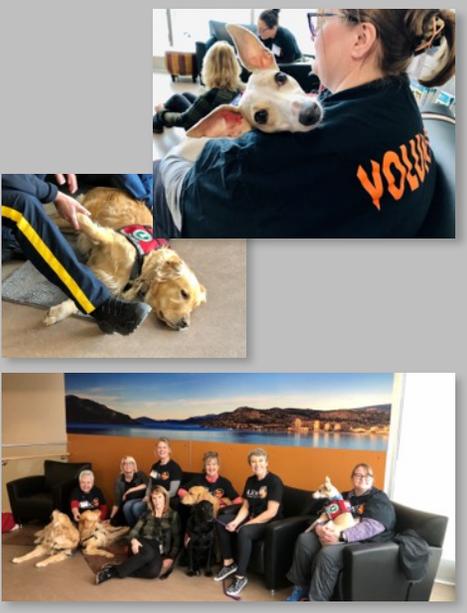
VEDA and RCMP Sessions

Thanks to continued partnerships, UBC's B.A.R.K. continued to visit students at VEDA Exclusive Living, marking Year 4 of this program. In addition, visitation to the Kelowna RCMP Detachment entered into Year 3.

BARK AT VEDA EXCLUSIVE LIVING

B.A.R.K. is grateful for the continued sponsorship from VEDA exclusive living. This year we held sessions monthly, on Mondays from 6:00-7:00pm. Therapy dogs and their handlers in their Apex or Lakeview club rooms to support resident wellbeing and build community. Open to everyone, these sessions see approximately 30-50 students per visit.

- Total sessions offered **5**
- Average number of participants per session **48**
- Total number of visits **241**



RCMP DROP-IN

B.A.R.K. offers regular drop-in sessions on Thursday mornings at the Kelowna detachment. Each session sees 4 handlers and 4-6 dogs stationed within the detachment. On average 14 employees (predominantly RCMP, City of Kelowna, and Regional District of Central Okanagan) attend each drop-in. Employees, on average, interact with therapy dogs and handlers for approximately 15 minutes per visit.

- Total sessions offered **13**
- Average number of participants per session **14**
- Total number of visits **177**



Community Initiatives

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Each year, the B.A.R.K. program participates in a variety of community-outreach programs. Thanks to student volunteers, we were able to participate in the following events this year:

- Visits to School District 23
- Jumpstart, UBC
- CREATE, UBC
- Relay for Life, UBC
- Valentine's Day event, Missionwoods
- Indigenous Scholars Summer Camp, UBC
- Pride Picnic, UBC
- Homecoming, UBC
- Digital Media Conference, UBC



STUDENTS & SENIORS ON VALENTINE'S DAY

Held on Valentine's Day, this session brought together student volunteers and handlers from B.A.R.K. and saw over 60 senior residents for an evening of conversation, laughter, and building connections.

"It wasn't a good day until I came here. I love the dogs!"
- Missionwoods resident

"I felt lucky to be a part of it. As a student, I am mostly in contact with people of my own age, however, this event gave me the opportunity to bring joy and happiness to the community too!"

- Romina Amir Sardari, B.A.R.K. Student Volunteer



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The B.A.R.K. Team

Running all of the varied B.A.R.K. programs would not be possible without the hard working, dedicated team of student and community volunteers. The B.A.R.K. Team in 2019/20 consisted of the following members:

61

Therapy dogs

60

Volunteer Handlers
(681 hours)

25

UBC Student Volunteers
(740 hours)

Total in-kind volunteer hours = **1421**



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Publications and Presentations

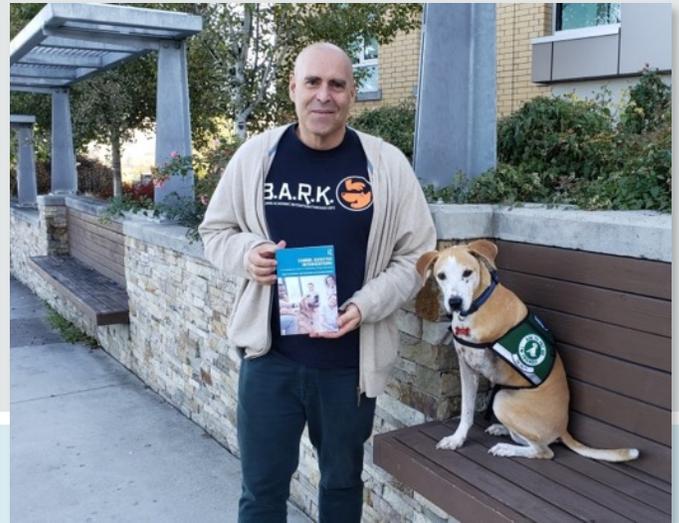
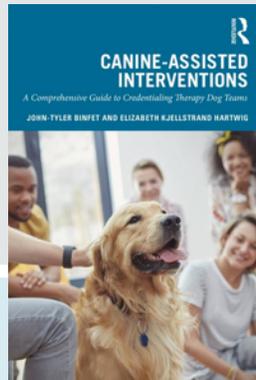
CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Binfet, J. T., Draper, Z. A., & Green, F. L. L. (2019, July 4). *Reducing stress in law enforcement officers and staff through a canine-assisted intervention*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for Anthrozoology, Orlando, Florida.

Rousseau, C. X., Draper, Z. A., Binfet, J. T. Tardif-Williams, C. & Green, F. L. L. (2019, July 4). *Exploring handlers' wellbeing in an on-campus canine-assisted intervention*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for Anthrozoology, Orlando, Florida.

PUBLICATIONS

Binfet, J. T., Draper, Z. A., & Green, F. L. L. (in press). Stress reduction in law enforcement officers and staff through a canine-assisted intervention. *Human Animal Interaction Bulletin*.



BOOK BY DR. BINFET

Dr. Binfet's new book with Dr. Kjellstrand Hartwig from Texas State University is out and the reviews are in! Titled "Canine-Assisted Interventions: A Comprehensive Guide to Credentialing Therapy Dog Teams" (Routledge Press), this book provides a combination of scientific information about the benefits to working with therapy dogs and a practical "how to" guide.

"Based on the latest scientific research, John-Tyler Binfet and Elizabeth Kjellstrand Hartwig have produced a unique and important guide to the implementation of canine-assisted interventions in settings ranging from classrooms and retirement facilities to mental health clinics and college campuses. The book is a veritable how-to manual, covering topics such as the selection and training of handlers and dogs, the assessment of dog/handler team effectiveness, and therapy animal welfare. This book is a must-read for anyone involved with animal-assisted intervention programs." — Hal Herzog, PhD, author of *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals*, USA

"Drawing on a wealth of experience, John-Tyler Binfet and Elizabeth Kjellstrand Hartwig provide a comprehensive review of what is known about canine-assisted interventions (CAIs) and give essential information on best practice and how to credential therapy dog teams, ensuring the wellbeing of the dogs. CAI organizations and those interested in becoming a CAI team must read this book." — Anthony L. Podberscek, editor in chief, *Anthrozoös*, Australia

"*Canine-Assisted Interventions* is an essential guide to all those involved in delivering and researching canine-assisted interventions. It provides evidence-based guidelines for professional practice, building upon current international research evidence and professional practice guides. The combination of up-to-date scientific evidence on canine-assisted intervention and professional experience has led to a sourcebook that every practitioner involved in canine-assisted intervention should use. Canine-assisted intervention practice is growing rapidly around the world, and this book provides a much-needed guide to credentialing teams and ensuring our practice benefits our human clients while ensuring the welfare of the dogs we work with." — Jo Williams, professor of applied developmental psychology, University of Edinburgh, UK

"In *Canine-Assisted Interventions*, John-Tyler Binfet and Elizabeth Kjellstrand Hartwig bring together a groundbreaking, thorough, and detailed guide to the assessment and credentialing of dog and handler teams. This long overdue resource is a much needed and indispensable resource for individuals and organizations engaged in the work of animal-assisted interventions. Binfet and Hartwig articulate a clear and thorough evidence-based approach to animal-assisted intervention that will significantly advance this growing field of research and practice." — James Gillett, associate dean of research, McMaster University, Canada



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In The News

MEDIA

Each year, B.A.R.K. generates a variety of media which helps to expand the reach of the program. A full list is included on the website, but here is a sample of the media from the 2019/20 academic year.

TELEVISION

- Castanet (2020, Feb 14th). Dogs show love to seniors: UBCO's BARK program visits seniors at Kelowna retirement home.
- Castanet (2019, Nov. 30th) Pups help kids read: New study shows kids' reading improves in presence of dogs.
- Global News (2019, Nov. 28th) UBC study says dogs help young children with reading.



RADIO

- CBC Montreal (2020, Feb. 12th)
- EZ Rock iHeart Radio (2020, Jan 27th)
- RNC Colombia (2019, Dec 7th)
- Global News, Charles Adler Tonight (2019, Nov 29th)

PRINT

- Kelowna Daily Courier (2020, Feb 14th). Love goes to the dogs for Valentine's day.
- Infonews.ca (2020, Feb 14th). Why Valentine's Day went to the dogs at Kelowna retirement community.
- Huffington Post (2019, Dec. 18th) Therapy Dogs Ease Passenger Stress at Most Major Canadian Airports.
- CBC (2019, Dec 7th) Dogs may be smarter than we think – and can benefit our health in ways we don't realize.
- Daily Mail UK (2019, Dec. 3rd) Children spend longer reading and are motivated to learn when there's a dog in the room, study finds.
- Yahoo (2019, Dec. 3rd) New research says having a dog may help motivate kids to read more.
- Psych Central (2019, Dec. 3rd) Story time with dogs can keep kids reading.
- Global News (2019, Nov. 28th) UBC Okanagan study finds dogs boost literacy in young students.
- Ottawa Citizen (2019, Mar. 11th) Dog therapy: What I've learned overseeing 60 canine campus teams
- The Conversation (2019, Mar. 10th) Dog therapy: What I've learned overseeing 60 canine campus teams

Love goes to the dogs for Valentine's Day

Steve Mitchell Feb 14, 2020



Massachusetts Retirement Resort resident Ray McLean (center) with Prima the Great Dane at a special BARK Valentine's Day dog-tinge event.

Dogs may be smarter than we think – and can benefit our health in ways we don't realize

f t g+ v l

Studies show our four-legged friends can identify more words than previously thought and even help us learn

Adam Miller CBC News Posted Dec 07, 2019 4:00 AM ET | Last Updated: December 7, 2019



New research suggests dogs can recognize more language than we thought and even help kids better learn to read. (Submitted by the University of British Columbia)



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Sources of Support



AVP Students

The B.A.R.K. program is supported on UBC's Okanagan campus by the AVP Students Office and the Okanagan School of Education's Innovative Learning Centre. We are also grateful for the continued sponsorship from VEDA Exclusive Student Living (<http://www.vedaliving.ca>), and the many individual donors who participated in our fundraising campaign this year. Specific project support was contributed by the Kelowna RCMP, and City of Kelowna. Donations to B.A.R.K. made be made at www.barkubc.ca.

Financial Report

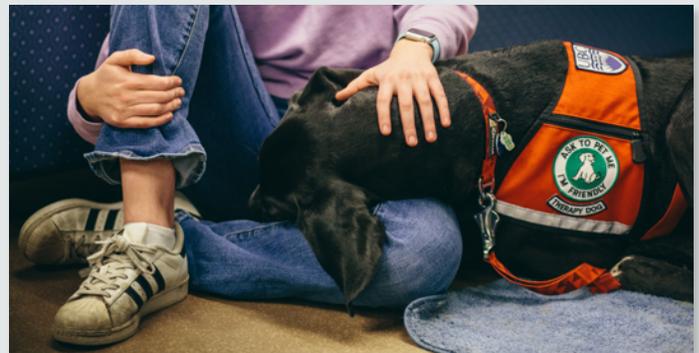
FINANCIAL REPORT 2019/20

Revenue

AVP Students Office (UBC Okanagan)	7000.00
VEDA Exclusive Living	10000.00
Carry Forward (2018/19 Fiscal)	19195.90
Workstudy (UBC) funding	3981.90
Fundraising/Donations	4786.00
Total	44963.80

Expenses

Salaries and Benefits (student positions)	5040.57
Conference Attendance	6778.42
Operational Supplies and Expenses	1871.91
Office Supplies/Postage	219.71
Books/Subscriptions/Memberships	1413.30
Computer supplies	1718.84
Printing and Copying	950.92
Drop-in Session Refreshments	3357.02
Cellular and Communications	550.00
Gifts/Volunteer Appreciation	328.33
Laundry	23.51
Volunteer Parking passes	2164.11
Total Expenses 2019/20	24416.64
Carry forward next fiscal	20547.16
Total	44963.80



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Comments from Visitors



"Excellent! I look forward to this every week!"
- City Employee, Feb. 2020

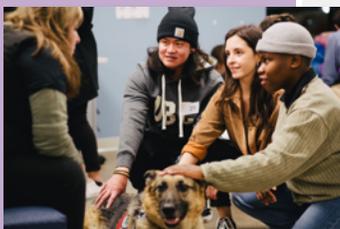
"I really admire the people that are running the BARK program because this is a stressful time in many people's lives and I'm sure the program helps a lot of people"
- UBC student, Feb. 2020



"It was great to see all the dogs and meet new people. Great experience, thanks for having me!" - UBC student, Sept. 2019

"I really appreciate this program. Makes me feel way better after a bad day!" - UBC student, Oct. 2019

"Always makes me super happy to see them and makes my Fridays that much better" - UBC student, Sept. 2019



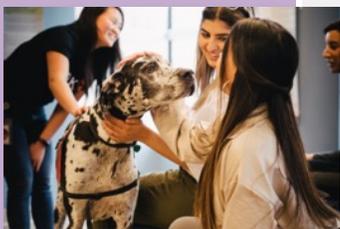
"Great stress relief. I had a smile on my face the entire time!"
- UBC student, Mar. 2020

"Amazing! Favourite day of the week"
- City Employee, Mar. 2020



"I felt very relaxed! It made it feel like home" - UBC student, Mar. 2020

"I think this is a valuable and important program that is very beneficial. Thank you."
- City Employee, Feb. 2020



"Fantastic! Always great to be with the dogs, and an excellent way to reduce stress." - RCMP Employee, Mar. 2020





BUILDING ACADEMIC RETENTION THROUGH K9S

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Kelowna, BC, V1V 1V7

Website: barkubc.ca

Facebook: BARK UBCO

Twitter/Instagram: BARKUBC



CONTACT

Freya Green, Program Coordinator

As Program Coordinator, Freya assists with the administration and implementation of on-campus and community-based B.A.R.K. programs. Any questions regarding volunteering for B.A.R.K., requesting B.A.R.K. visitation, or general inquiries should be directed to Freya Green at bark.dogtherapy@ubc.ca