

Premier Gordon Campbell
Address at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre Announcement
Vancouver
October 3, 2002
Check Against Delivery

I would like to give a special thank you to Ike Barber. As we think of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre becoming an “icon,” I think we may have to spell it a little differently.

The University of British Columbia has been part of my life for a long time, and one of the first people I saw as I came in today was Dr. William Gibson. I wanted to be a doctor for a long time, but I didn’t get through Chemistry 100. The next person I saw was Dr. George Curtis. For a while, I thought I’d be a lawyer. Then George took me through constitutional law, and I decided to put that aside.

Having said that, I can tell you that George – and Bill Gibson, and everybody in the university – is doing one of the most important things that we can do in life. They’re sharing ideas, sharing excitement for learning, and opening new doors of discovery for people that they would never have even imagined.

I had the chance to be a teacher for just two years, and it was one of the most exciting things I ever did. When you suddenly connect with someone and show them beyond the horizon they’re used to looking at, it is something that you will never forget.

Ike Barber is a man of vision, he’s a man of commitment, he’s a man of tenacity – and he’s a man who evidently explains to his wife quite clearly why he’s giving \$20 million to the University of British Columbia.

I’m sure Ike would be the first to tell you that without the support of Jean, his family and all of the workers at Slocan, he wouldn’t be able to put these visions into effect. I want to thank Ike for the leadership he’s shown, not just in the forest industry in British Columbia but socially in British Columbia – in the small towns north, south, east and west. You are building a stronger, more prosperous future for literally thousands and thousands of families.

Ike Barber has always recognized the strength of the team. Look at the leadership Dr. Martha Piper has shown for the University of British Columbia and that Catherine Quinlan has shown for our library. I know that Ike recognized that talent, and he said: “Here’s a place that I can have confidence that my commitment will meet my vision.”

Ike’s vision goes beyond the boundaries of British Columbia, but also it reaches into the homes of people in each part of this province. Think of what we can do with the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre.

Smart classrooms to connect our students and our faculty with the rest of the world. Video conferencing facilities that bring people face to face with some of the best minds in the world. High-speed Internet ports, wireless intercom activity – all of those are new words for human exchange and human interaction, for building creativity and innovation and creating a culture of learning.

Ike Barber has shown in the past what you can do when you commit yourself to a vision. His vision is one that takes us beyond the past and well into the future. Ike Barber understands the importance of learning from the most basic tools of learning, reading and literacy to the most sophisticated.

Just as Ike has been supported by an exceptional team of people here at the University of British Columbia as they developed the theme for the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, I have been supported in my caucus by my colleagues who are here with me today –Elayne Brenzinger, John Nuraney, Val Roddick and Richard Lee.

And most importantly, by our Minister of Advanced Education, who shares Ike's enthusiasm for the future – for reaching out and bringing the opportunity for learning to every person in every part of the province, and beyond.

She recognizes the importance of our library system and the connection of the library system through community after community in this province. Our Minister of Advanced Education, Shirley Bond, has been an important part of Ike Barber's leadership team in creating the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre.

Ike has reached out to the people of this province with a facility that will be second to none and will be world-renowned. I am pleased to tell you that the people of this province will commit \$10 million to this project so that it becomes a reality that everybody in every nook and cranny in British Columbia can be proud of.

Thank you very much, Ike, for your leadership.