



March 2008

B.C. ALUMNI HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CANADA'S PACIFIC GATEWAY

Welcome to the BC Alumni Ambassadors Network. I would like to thank the hundreds of you who responded to my first message in September last year. Your passion for British Columbia is evident in your questions asking how you can help promote our wonderful province as a great place to live, work, study and do business.

I had the pleasure of meeting many of you when we kicked off the BC Alumni Ambassadors Network at an event in Hong Kong in November last year, and we look forward to launching BC Alumni in additional countries throughout Asia in the coming year. Stay tuned to our BC Alumni web site (www.bcalumni.ca) for upcoming news and stories about B.C., upcoming missions to Asia, and other initiatives as we work to make B.C. the North American capital for Asia Pacific commerce and culture.

I would like to share with you a few accomplishments we celebrated in 2007. Among them:

- Establishment of full-time B.C. representatives in China and Japan, with other countries to follow.
- Significant investment in B.C.'s port, rail and highway infrastructure, including the expansion of the Port of Prince Rupert to handle container traffic.
- Agreements that will see the first direct flights between Vancouver and Guangzhou, starting next year, and the addition of four new flights per week between Vancouver and Hong Kong.
- Launching of an ambitious twinning program that saw twinning agreements between: Trail and Sagamihara in Japan; Williams Lake and Fusong, China; Hope and Izu, Japan; and the City of Surrey and Zhuhai, China. And there will soon be more twinning agreements to announce.
- Signing of a twinning memorandum of understanding between the Ports of Prince Rupert and Ningbo during the grand opening last fall of the new facilities at Prince Rupert.
- Successfully carrying out 11 high-profile overseas missions and hosting 51 in-bound delegations to and from Asia.
- Signing of 10 educational and six other agreements with Asian nations.

And we have even bigger plans for 2008.

As many of you know, our 2008 budget was another major step forward in our efforts to combat climate change. We are enacting a revenue-neutral tax on carbon-emitting fuels in B.C. and investing \$1 billion on new programs and initiatives to encourage people to make choices that reduce their carbon footprint, and spur green development and innovation.

We know that the booming economies of Asia are creating huge demand for environmental equipment and technologies, as they look for ways to grow that are sustainable. British Columbia, with its strong cultural and economic ties with the Asia Pacific and its growing reputation as a centre of excellence in environmental technology, is uniquely positioned to take advantage of these opportunities.

This year's budget also provides \$40 million to strengthen and expand economic and cultural links between B.C. and Asia-Pacific nations. More details on this exciting program will be announced in the coming months.

This May, we are opening the B.C.-Canada Pavilion in Beijing. During its four-months of operation, the pavilion will host a number of business, cultural and technology missions. It is my hope that many BC Alumni ambassadors, (and your friends), will be able to visit the pavilion.

In closing, I would encourage you to keep in touch through the BC Alumni web site. And I would also encourage you to let other alumni in Asia know about the exciting things B.C. is doing to further connect with the Asia Pacific.

Sincerely,

Gordon Campbell
Premier of British Columbia
Canada