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## Changing Lives, Honouring Dreams

**North Island College offers the support and flexibility to make education accessible to everyone. Port Alberni Nursing student Marian Webster shares her story in this year's Community Report.**

Marian Webster's grandmother always dreamed of becoming a nurse. Nearly 75 years later, her granddaughter enrolled in North Island College's Practical Nursing certificate program at the Port Alberni campus, and honoured her grandmother's memory.

"It has been a very long journey to this moment," Marian recounts. "And it was a very big step for me to take."

When Marian, mother and grandmother of three, decided to pursue a career in Nursing, she spent two years in Adult Education at NIC upgrading the five courses she needed to be accepted to the certificate program. NIC offers many opportunities to upgrade courses and to fulfill the requirements for entry into any university or college program, at NIC or elsewhere.

"Education should be accessible to everyone, even if you didn't do well in high school," says Student Advisor Lee-Ann Bainbridge. "We tailor study plans to fit students' needs so they can start working towards their goals. It's a lot easier than many people think."

The time Marian spent in Adult Education helped her get used to studying again. "I had been out of school for quite some time, so it was difficult," she says. "But I knew it was worth it."

Marian grew up in the tiny Nootka Sound community of Yuquot (Friendly Cove) until she involuntarily left her family to spend years at residential school in Tofino and



NIC Practical Nursing student Marian Webster takes a break from studying in Port Alberni. For more stories from our communities, pick up a copy of the NIC 2010 Community Report, available online at [nic.bc.ca](http://nic.bc.ca) or at your local campus or centre on May 19.

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Ucluelet. "I was accepted to study teaching at UBC when I graduated high school," she explains. "But I was, and still am, not interested in the big city. It's a little scary."

Instead Marian worked for many years in office administration, most recently at Kakawis Family Development Centre in Tofino. "From 1989 to 2006, work was my life," she laughs. "I never became a teacher, but in all my jobs, I have always been teaching people something. Nursing, to me, is an extension of that."

The support and personal interaction she experiences at NIC helps her feel connected to her school and her community. "I needed a watch one day for a final lab evaluation," she remembers. "I had left mine at home. Linda, who works in the office, lent me the one on her wrist!"

Marian keeps an open mind about where her path will take her. "I am trying to get as much experience as possible, and just let things happen," she smiles. "I know there will be many opportunities for me to have a rewarding career in health care in my community."

"I would like to make my grandmother proud."

NIC offers many options in health care, from a five-month Health Care Assistant certificate to a four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. If you're interested in a career in this field, call a Student Advisor to talk about your goals—or learn more about NIC programs at [nic.bc.ca](http://nic.bc.ca).

*Learn more about NIC students' stories in the 2010 Community Report, available online at [nic.bc.ca](http://nic.bc.ca) or at your local campus or centre on May 19.*

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