

THE KILLICK CENTRE FOR E-LEARNING RESEARCH is creating quite a buzz in Memorial's Faculty of Education. In a world bursting with YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, iTunes, Apple, eBay and thousands of other brands, new and emerging technologies play a vital role in helping educators speak and understand the language of youth.

Dr. Jean Brown, principal investigator of the Killick Centre for E-Learning Research, and her team are striving to reach beyond the walls of the university to work with partners in the education system in order to research how new technologies are used by students for learning.

Projects, such as this one, funded through the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) are examining youth entering the workforce, changes in the workforce pattern and e-learning. Dr. Brown said that for this research to be completed, the gap must be bridged between scholars and community members, and she called for strong alliances between community organizations, the K-12 education system and post-secondary institutions. "This will inevitably lead to new knowledge, tools and methods to develop the best strategies for creative e-learning," said Dr. Brown.

An essential theme of the Killick Project is that e-learning is not only important to rural communities, but also to urban areas of Newfoundland and Labrador. "Learning is lifelong," added Dr. Brown, "and can extend to children and adults of all ages, in all facets of the population." So, although the main focus is on kindergarten to Grade 12, it also extends to post-secondary education. Both collaboratively and individually, project participants are engaged in collaborative research, teamwork, and communications (known within CURA as 'knowledge mobilization') as they explore modernized, technical and self-motivated learning through the web.

"I think in the past we were not challenged to think creatively, and we have to consider new ways to relay our research findings," she said. "I'm looking forward to finding out what those ways are." ■

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speak
by Heidi Wicks