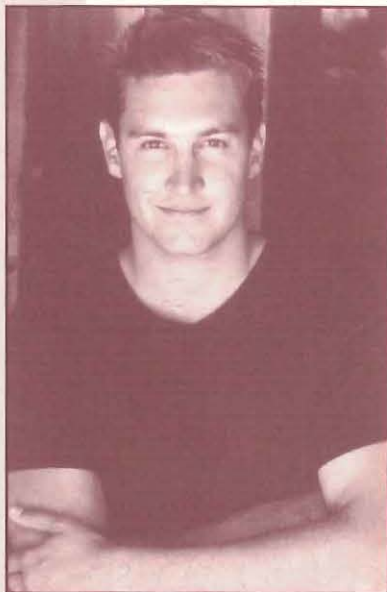


## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

It's difficult to know whether actor *Christopher Wiehl* ever imagined his YVCC education would lead him to one of the most exotic locales in the world. Wiehl, winner of this year's YVCC Distinguished Alumnus Award, is currently in Capetown, South Africa, filming his latest project called *The Groomsman*, an independent feature film and romantic comedy, produced by Miramax Films, in which he plays Jay, the lead character.

Mr. Wiehl, a native of Yakima, attended Eisenhower High School and grew up in Yakima with his parents, Inga and Richard, and sister, Lis. His acting career began at YVCC in 1989 after enrolling in his first acting class with then drama instructor, Dr. George Meshke. Wiehl landed the lead role of John Merrick in *The Elephant Man* in his first audition and later received an actor-of-the-year award for his performance. "Dr. Meshke's passion for his craft was exciting and energizing," remembered Wiehl of his acting days as a student at YVCC. "The support I felt from faculty and from this community really gave me a platform to launch from," he said. Wiehl transferred to the University of Washington, where he continued to perform in a variety of productions and earned a B.A. in Dramatic Arts in 1993.



After a brief stint in New York, Mr. Wiehl moved to Los Angeles in 1994. Since that time, he has guest-starred in over 25 television shows and appeared in five national commercials for brands such as Coors Light, Old Spice and Ford Motors. He recently finished a full season as a lead character in the television series "Bull" on TNT and this fall will play the lead character in a new CBS pilot called "First Monday" with co-stars James Garner, Joe

Montegna, Charles Durning, and Gail Strickland.

In addition to his acting credits, Mr. Wiehl has also produced feature films, *Cold Hearts*, and his labor of love, *Yakima Wash*, a film that revealed the importance he places on home town roots and the connection to family and friends. He has plans to script another film to be shot in Yakima in summer, 2002.

## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI OF PREVIOUS YEARS

*Catherine May Bedell*  
1982

*J. Alex (Lee) Maxwell*  
1983

*Bid Morrison*  
1984

*James R. Sorenson*  
1985

*Robert Brachtenbach*  
1986

*E. Frederick Velikanje*  
1987

*Bill Barnett*  
1988

*Bill Lee*  
1989

*Gene Shields*  
1990

*Mel Lewis*  
1991

*Lenny Hitchcock*  
1992

*Pete Rademacher*  
1993

*David Shinn*  
1994

*Mike Bernazzani*  
1995

*Erasmus Gamboa*  
1996

*Elaine Ostrander*  
1997

*Tom J. Chambers*  
1998

*Richard E. Weller*  
1999

*Mel Stottlemyre*  
2000