

MEDIA RELEASE

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Sask credit unions donate \$25K to SIAST

Funds to support Aboriginal student success

May 12, 2011 – Saskatchewan credit unions announced a major donation to support the success of Aboriginal students at SIAST – \$25,000 was given to SIAST’s Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP).

The SIAST ASAP initiative is a five-year, \$5.5-million comprehensive recruitment and retention plan focused on supporting Aboriginal students from the time they consider attending SIAST through to graduation. The initiative includes 21 actions to address systematic barriers that are faced by Aboriginal students. Remedies include a post-secondary summer transition program at each SIAST campus and enhancements to student support services.

“The ultimate goal of the initiative is to achieve a representative Aboriginal student population in all SIAST programs and to have an Aboriginal student program completion rate that is equivalent to the general student population,” says Alison Pickrell, SIAST’s associate vice president, Student Affairs. “Aboriginal people often confront multiple challenges at every stage of their post-secondary experience – from the ranks of prospective student through to graduation and beyond. With the support of Saskatchewan credit unions, SIAST ASAP will help students address those challenges.”

The ASAP initiative builds on SIAST’s success in attracting Aboriginal students. SIAST has more Aboriginal students than any other post-secondary institution in Saskatchewan and has the second-largest Aboriginal enrolment of any Canadian college.

“Saskatchewan credit unions are excited to be part of this program,” says Pam Skotnitsky, executive vice-president of Corporate and Community Affairs, SaskCentral. “We believe in re-investing our financial success in ways that help people realize their goals and dreams. The ASAP program will help Aboriginal students to do this.”

SIAST is Saskatchewan’s primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training, recognized nationally and internationally for its expertise and innovation. More than 15,000 students were enrolled in SIAST programs in the most recent academic year; additionally, the organization drew almost 25,000 individual course registrations. Through program and course registrations, SIAST served almost 26,000 distinct students with programs that touch every sector of the economy. SIAST operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides a number of courses and programs through distance education.

SaskCentral is owned by Saskatchewan credit unions to serve and represent their collective interests. There are 61 credit unions in Saskatchewan serving more than 520,000 members in 272 communities through 304 service outlets. Saskatchewan credit unions build lives and fulfill dreams by helping members achieve financial well-being and investing in communities. Visit us at: www.saskcu.com.

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