

ATTENTION NEWS AND ASSIGNMENT EDITORS

MEDIA RELEASE

Ave W centre celebrates grand opening

SIAST, Mount Royal and skills centre welcome newly renovated facility

October 22, 2010 – SIAST, the Saskatoon Public Schools and the Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre (STSC) celebrated the grand opening of the Avenue W Education Centre today. The newly renovated facility accommodates programming and services for the three organizations.

The \$21-million, 35,000-square-foot project began in 2007. It includes an addition of 9,500 square feet on the north wing of Mount Royal Collegiate to accommodate a multicultural centre and multipurpose building. Renovations to the Mount Royal library, cafeteria and gym were also included in this project. The new facility is home to several SIAST programs, relocated from SIAST Kelsey Campus, along with a state-of-the-art early childhood education demonstration centre. The renovation has also provided training space for the STSC. The STSC works closely with employers to determine skills required for entry-level positions; it then develops programming based on industry needs.

“The provincial government proudly supports the Avenue W Education Centre, aimed at building a diverse workforce and helping Saskatchewan people meet their training and work goals,” minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration Rob Norris says. “An example of the innovative partnerships, this centre will attract new talent to the skilled trades and encourage individuals to build their careers in our growing province.” In February 2007, the provincial government announced an infusion of \$17 million into Mount Royal Collegiate to support a partnership with SIAST, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, the Gabriel Dumont Technical Institute and Saskatoon Public Schools for the development of an integrated training facility at Mount Royal. The partnership has since grown to include additional private and public sector representatives.

“Our government is proud to have supported the Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre, a facility that will foster economic growth throughout the entire province,” says Kelly Block, MP for Saskatoon-Rosetown-Biggar, speaking on behalf of the Honourable Lynne

Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification. "This facility will continue to strengthen our community and our economy for generations to come." Federal funding of \$3.3 million for the multipurpose building is being provided by Western Economic Diversification Canada under the Community Adjustment Fund (CAF), with additional funding of \$366,444 provided by the Province of Saskatchewan. The majority of training for STSC students takes place in the multipurpose building.

"The opening of SIAST Kelsey Ave W Centre helps SIAST respond to increased demand for job-ready post-secondary education by providing much needed space," says Dr. Robert (Bob) G. McCulloch, president and CEO of SIAST. "It gives our humans services students access to excellent learning facilities, especially in the early childhood education field, and it enhances our Basic Education outreach activities. Perhaps as important, however, was the three-year process that led to today's grand opening – it has given SIAST the opportunity to strengthen invaluable ties with industry and educational partners."

"The contributions of the two levels of government promise to make the shared educational facility at the Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre / Mount Royal Collegiate a centre of excellence for trades and skills training for many years," says George Rathwell, board chair for STSC and director of education for Saskatoon Public Schools. "In addition to the "state of the art" practical and applied art facilities, the supports for these students in the form of day care, counselling, career coaching and cultural responsiveness make this a true community centre."

– 30 –

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Information about SIAST can be found at www.goSIAST.com.

BACKGROUND

Mount Royal Collegiate

Mount Royal Collegiate has been transformed by the partnerships that led to programming being offered in the north wing of the school. This partnership is a tremendous plus for Mount Royal students, who now share the school's expanded welding, wood construction, machining and mechanics shops with students attending SIAS, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies and Dumont Technical Institute. By partnering with other educational institutions and the business sector, part of a school building that was no longer needed for high school students is now home to courses and training opportunities responsive to both industry and community needs.

Mount Royal Collegiate celebrated its 50th anniversary in September 2010. In addition to the transformation of the north wing of the school, renovations at the school in the past two years include a new library, three new computer labs, new kitchens and the SaskTel Innovation Station. With the recent additions of a 2,000-square-foot cultural centre and a 13,000-square-foot building for STSC programming, Mount Royal Collegiate is now more than double its original size. Mount Royal is home to a thriving English as an Additional Language (EAL) program for students from around the world. More than 1,200 students attend Mount Royal Collegiate.

Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre

The Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre (STSC) was established in 2007 as part of a larger initiative to revitalize core Saskatoon neighborhoods, address the needs of Saskatoon and area employers for skilled workers and prepare vulnerable youth and adults for employment and career opportunities in the trades. Last year the STSC delivered 12 programs to approximately 190 students.

Courses STSC has taught are:

ECE Level 1
Culinary Arts
Construction Prep

Steel Stud/Drywall
Electronics Assembly
Masonry
Stucco
Welding
Retail Service
Commercial Roofing
Commercial Flooring

SIAST Kelsey Ave W Centre

In addition to 10 relocated programs, SIAST also offers a number of services for students at the new facility, including an Elder's office, registration services, student development and counselling, a computer lab, and student lounge areas. Approximately 250 students, faculty and staff have moved into the SIAST Kelsey Ave W Centre. The facility has strengthened educational partnerships and brings educational services closer to the community.

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 14,000 students were enrolled in SIAST programs in the most recent academic year; additionally, the organization drew almost 30,000 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. The Ave W Centre is the ninth Saskatoon location at which SIAST currently offers programming.

Programs offered at SIAST Kelsey Ave W Centre are:

Basic Education Learning Commons

English for Aboriginal Learners (EAL) in the Community
Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)
English for Post-Secondary Success

Community/Human Services Programs

Early Childhood Education certificate
Early Childhood Education diploma
Educational Assistant certificate
Disability Support Worker certificate
Therapeutic Recreation diploma
Youth Care Worker certificate
Youth Care Worker diploma