



**SIAST**

SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTE OF  
APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Putting knowledge to work.**

## ***NEWS RELEASE***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# **Grand chief awarded honorary diploma**

*SIAST Woodland recognizes Gary Merasty for entrepreneurial spirit*

**June 10, 2005** – The grand chief of the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) has been awarded an honorary diploma in Entrepreneurship and Small Business from the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology at the annual SIAST Woodland Campus graduation ceremony.

Grand Chief Gary Merasty, head of the largest tribal council in the province, is currently serving a second three-year term as grand chief. Chief Merasty is a member of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation within Treaty Six territory.

“As a community builder, Chief Merasty’s entrepreneurial drive has contributed to significant economic partnerships for First Nations people in the province,” says SIAST president and CEO Dr. Bob McCulloch.

The PAGC is involved with several successful businesses, including major hotels in Prince Albert and Saskatoon, West Wind Aviation and the Dakota Dunes Golf and Country Club. The PAGC is also a partner in the non-profit Northern Broadband Network, established in 2003, to develop and implement Internet access to communities and schools across the north.

Grand Chief Merasty is a SIAST alumni, having completed the Industrial Mechanics Pre-employment program at SIAST Kelsey Campus in the early ‘80s. He played hockey with the Kelsey Amaruks and continues to support minor hockey. He coaches and has raised significant funds (more than \$200,000) to support minor hockey development for Aboriginal children.

SIAST’s honorary diploma program recognizes distinguished achievements and contributions aligned with SIAST’s vision, values, goals and objectives.

SIAST is Saskatchewan’s primary public institution for post-secondary technical

education and skills training, recognized nationally and internationally for its expertise and innovation. Almost 12,000 students are registered in SIAST programs, which touch every sector of the economy; additionally, the organization draws more than 27,000 individual course registrations. It operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides a number of courses and programs through distance education.

The PAGC represents 12 First Nations in Saskatchewan with a membership of more than 30,000 people.

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Additional information about SIAST can be found at [www.goSIAST.com](http://www.goSIAST.com)

## **GRAND CHIEF GARY MERASTY – BIO**

Grand Chief Gary Merasty (B.Ed., M.Ed. University of Saskatchewan) is currently serving his second term as Grand Chief of the Prince Albert Grand Council. He is a member of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation within Treaty Six territory. Gary has been married for 16 years to Brenda, who herself is currently completing a master of education degree. The two have four children.

### **PREVIOUS PROFESSIONAL AND WORK EXPERIENCE**

Owner of Merasty and Associates Consulting  
Chief of Staff for Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations  
Assistant Director of Education - Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation  
Vice Principal/Teacher - Pelican Narrows (Opawikoscikan Community School)  
Miner - Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company - Flin Flon, Manitoba  
Project Manager - Education Facilities Construction

### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE EXPERIENCE**

Present - Chairman - Prince Albert Development Corporation  
Present - Chairman - West Wind Aviation Limited Partnership (Charter Airline)  
Present - Co-Chairman - Northern Interim Development Board  
Present - Vice Chair - Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority  
Present - Board Member - Dakota Dunes Golf and Country Club Limited Partnership  
Present - Board Member - University of Regina  
Present - Board Member - Saskatoon Airport Authority Board  
Past - Chairman - Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology  
Past - Chairman - Northern Lights Community Development Corporation  
Past - Chairman - Woodland Cree Enterprises Inc.  
Past - Board Member - Keewatin Community Development Corporation  
Past - Board Member - Banff School of Management Aboriginal Board