

COMMUNITY learningcampus

Spring 2007

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In collaboration with the Town of Olds,
Mountain View County and
the University of Alberta

Bell e-Learning Centre created through a \$3.1 million investment

Bell Canada and Olds College announced a partnership that will create a state-of-the-art distributed learning facility at the Olds College Campus. The Bell e-Learning Centre - made possible through a \$3.1 million investment by Bell - will be pivotal to the new Community Learning Campus currently under construction.

Through the Alberta SuperNet, the Bell e-Learning Centre will enable Olds College and the Chinook's Edge School Division to better support the educational needs of rural communities through advanced technology. Expected to open in late 2007, the facility will focus on research and innovation and on developing solutions that enable distributed learning for students in the region.

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Stirling McLeod (Chair, Olds College Board of Governors), Bob Mills (MP, Red Deer), H.J. (Tom) Thompson (President and CEO, Olds College), Charles Brown (President of Bell in Western Canada), Richard Marz (MLA, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills), The Honourable Doug Horner (Minister of Advanced Education and Technology), and The Honourable Ed Stelmach (Premier of Alberta) officially unveil a model of the Bell e-Learning Centre

RBC donation leads the way to community Health and Wellness

A \$250,000 investment by RBC Financial Group, through its charitable foundation, will increase community access to the new Health & Wellness Facility - a major structure of the Community Learning Campus (CLC). RBC's support will enhance program development,

and a portion of the funds will be used to support free activities to encourage participation of community members of all ages.

The Health & Wellness Facility will deliver innovative programs, such as coaching excellence, active living

and wellness programs, and will house three large gymnasiums, a running track, fitness centre and links to extensive outdoor amenities. The CLC's holistic approach to the health and well-being of all community members is a priority that is shared and supported by RBC.



Students in Cremona receive instruction from their teacher in Bowden through video conferencing technology.

Pilot Video Conferencing Class Shows Promise

The intention is to learn what works and what needs to be adjusted, so that programs can be offered more extensively in the future.

"I think the concept is fantastic," said Nathan Clark, the Bowden teacher who is instructing the

Spanish 10 class. "I can see this becoming more important in the future."

Jim Gibbons, Superintendent, Chinook's Edge School Division, and CLC Vice Chair, said, "video conferencing has huge potential for strengthening rural education, and rural communities. With these new technologies, we will be able to reach out to learners and community members more strongly than ever before.

"With video conferencing, a number of technologies work together to

make it possible for students to have live, excellent quality interaction with a teacher who is not physically present in their classroom,"

For instance, SMART boards will allow the teacher to write something on the board, visible to all students. Students in remote sites can also write on their SMART board and have it be visible to the teacher.

Another support, currently being used in Spanish 10, is the "Desire 2 Learn" website. All students are provided with a lap top. On-line, students can access materials posted by the teacher, including video or audio clips, worksheets, etc. For Clark, having the interactivity is critical.

For students like Gaylin Barlow, the bottom line from a student perspective is more choice. "With options, you can learn what you are interested in. It helps you out when you graduate."

Step inside the classroom, and you'll see that things are slightly different than what you'd see in a traditional classroom. There is a group of five students, sitting around a television screen in Cremona, intently listening to and watching their teacher who is in Bowden.


The students are enrolled in Spanish 10, a course that was previously unavailable in Chinook's Edge schools because of the limited number of students who were interested at each school. Now, with videoconferencing capabilities, the opportunity was offered to students in Bowden, Olds and Cremona.

"With these new technologies, we will be able to reach out to learners and community members more strongly than ever before."

- Jim Gibbons, CLC Vice Chair

"I wanted to learn a second language," said Gaylin Barlow, a grade 11 student at Bowden Grandview School. "It's a really interesting class. I like everything about it - the culture, language and music."

Spanish 10 is also providing an opportunity to Chinook's Edge School Division and to the Community Learning Campus (CLC), to study the way videoconferencing operates.



Raise the Roof...

Show your support of the arts, commemorate loved ones, or celebrate life events. Through CLC's *Reserve Your Seat Campaign* you can purchase a seat(s) in the new theatre and inscribe your name or dedication on a plaque that will be proudly displayed on the seat itself.

For more information:
OFFICE OF ADVANCEMENT, OLDS COLLEGE
 4500 -50 Street, Olds, AB T4H 1R2 Telephone (403) 558-8232
 or
KIWANIS CLUB OF OLDS
 Box 3733, Olds, AB T4H 1P5
 Geoff Lynn (403) 558-3498
 Bill Johnston (403) 507-8717
 Rita Thompson (403) 558-3688

Researching alternative fuels



The CLC's influence is reaching beyond Chinook's Edge borders. Eileen Stephens, pictured with Dr. Abimbola Abiola from Olds College School of Innovation, traveled from Daysland to gain insight to benefit her high school biology students.

The artwork of a local grade 7 student has inspired the creation of a new biodiesel logo, celebrating the production and use of renewable fuel in Olds and surrounding areas.

Hannah Fisher, a student at Deer Meadow School, won first place in a recent contest sponsored by the Olds College School of Innovation (OCSI). Submissions of artwork were also received from Olds Elementary and Olds High, resulting in the new logo which will showcase the vehicles using biodiesel in a pilot project over the next year.

"Three buses from the Chinook's Edge fleet will be involved in the project, along with some service vehicles from the Town of Olds, Mountain View County and

Olds College," said Tanya McDonald, Research Associate in Bioenergy at the Olds College School of Innovation. "The vehicles will be running on a blend of 20 percent biodiesel and 80 percent regular diesel, so that we can monitor the performance of the fuel."

Production of biodiesel is expected to be underway before May at the BioFuel Technology Centre, an innovative research and demonstration facility where staff are working to determine the potential of establishing similar production facilities on private farmland.

Biofuel was also one of several topics covered at a recent applied research seminar at Olds College that brought together 35 participants, including 20

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High School Students on College Campus Vision of Seamless Transition for Learners Coming to Fruition



Vickie Maddocks, Olds College Equine Science student, mentors Amber Look, grade 11 student from Olds High School

A steady stream of high school students from throughout the area have joined in a variety of Olds College classes and activities this fall, as part of a transition project that is bridging their path to the Community Learning Campus.

From large physical education classes utilizing the College gym to specialized curriculum designed specifically to accommodate high school-aged

students, the transition project has brought about 600 high school students to Olds College since September. And it's not only students who are benefiting. Gayleen Roelfsema, Vice-Principal at Olds High School, has been studying the Introduction to the Horse class alongside students in grade 11 and 12.

"We completed the class component at the high school during 18 lunch hours, and now we're participating in a full day lab here at Olds

College," said Roelfsema, who was learning to halter a horse at the Olds College Riding Arena on March 23rd. "I think the students are enjoying seeing me challenge myself a bit!"

The five high school guests participated alongside full time Olds College students during the lab day. They learned about the evolution of horse breeds, discovered how

to check a horse heart rate, visited the breeding program, and watched College instructors begin to train colts.

Several College students assisted in the lab, mentoring high school students through such activities as bandaging the leg of a horse and properly fitting a bridle.

"This level of participation in Olds College's expertise and facilities is very exciting for our students," said Roelfsema. "Oddly, many local students don't know the incredible opportunities available at Olds College and these types of activities will certainly change that situation. This is a good example of how we can share resources for the benefit of students."



Gayleen Roelfsema, lifelong learner 3



Bell e-Learning Centre under construction, December 2006 (above) and March 2007 (below). The facility is due to open fall 2007.



Bell Canada invests \$3.1 million

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Premier Ed Stelmach praised the collaborative work being done on the Bell e-Learning Centre. "Private sector companies like Bell that invest in learning and innovation are a key part of Alberta's success," said Stelmach. "Bell Canada and Olds College should be commended for working together in partnership on the new e-Learning Centre and for using Alberta's SuperNet to make tremendous learning and research opportunities available not only for students but for the entire Olds community, as well as people throughout Alberta and across Canada."

Researching alternative fuels...

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junior and high school science teachers from throughout the area. The seminar is an example of the ongoing priority to share resources, facilities and expertise in preparation for the opening of the Community Learning Campus.

"I have spent my entire 34-year teaching career in a rural area, so it is very important to me to keep updated on what is evolving in science and research," said Eileen Stephens, who teaches junior high science and Biology 20 & 30 at Daysland School. "I will be taking back some of the things I've seen at the seminar, and using them as experiments to assist with my students' learning. This sharing of resources will benefit every teacher who attended the seminar."

OCSI staff also shared their expertise with high school students recently, as students consulted with research staff for their science fair projects. Some of the resulting projects were displayed at Olds College during Open House on March 31st.



Simon Jakobsen

Simon Jakobsen knows first-hand the opportunities being created for students of all ages through various projects underway on campus. The grade 11 student is completing his work experience at the BioFuel Technology Centre, doing everything from sweeping floors to grading the canola from which biodiesel is produced.

"I like the sciences and my biology teacher told me about this opportunity," said Jakobsen. "Being around this type of experimental work is very interesting to me, and it's opening more ideas about where I'd like to work in the future."

Generosity of one man results in "lasting infrastructure and programs"

Jack Anderson, a native Albertan who owns W.A. Ranches west of Calgary, recently presented Olds College with the single largest individual donation in its history. His gift will impact several projects underway through the Olds College 2009 Capital Vision Campaign. The Bell e-Learning Centre, one of five structures being built at Olds College as part of the Community Learning Campus, will receive \$700,000.

"Mr. Anderson's investment of \$1 million has a huge impact on Olds College, our learners and the

industries we serve across this nation," said H.J. (Tom) Thompson, Olds College President and CEO, and CLC Chair.

"Jack Anderson is a native Albertan and it is the commitment of leaders like him that built this province. His generosity is allowing Olds College to take that further, as we move ahead to create lasting infrastructure and vital program advancements for our students along their journey of lifelong learning. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Anderson for assisting in this important work."