

## Community Engagement Site Project Manager Hired

**March 28, 2008:** A highly regarded educator and rural learning expert has been selected to help residents of Mountain View and Red Deer counties benefit from the array of learning and business opportunities coming to south central Alberta.

Allan Tarnoczi will serve as Community Engagement Site Project Manager, a leadership role that links surrounding communities with the technology, learning applications and support of the Community Learning Campus (CLC). Tarnoczi's position was created through the "Finishing the Dream" project which received \$2.5 million from Rural Alberta's Development Fund. His primary goal will be to address the needs of people within communities served by the CLC.

"Allan has over 25 years experience as a teacher and leader in rural Alberta," says CLC Executive Director Dot Negroportes. "We are delighted that he will be able to share his vision and expertise to expand the reach and impact of the CLC."

Community Engagement Sites (CES) will provide a close-to-home location for people of all ages to access learning and business tools. Some people may use the CES to take a class for pleasure, while others might build their professional skills through post-secondary courses for credit. Many people will use the SuperNet to support businesses applications.

"Most consumers in urban and larger rural communities have ready access to high speed Internet connections, but people in smaller communities struggle with dial-up access or inconsistent high speed access," says Negroportes. "The CES will provide an environment where broadband Internet access will be available, and a person will be available to provide instruction and support.

"This is a great opportunity to develop sustainable learning opportunities and increase capacity in rural communities. The technology and systems introduced at the community engagement sites will be better than can be found in many larger centres."

Each CES location will have a coordinator who will provide personal support and connect residents with resources specific to their needs and interests. The Rural Development Fund grant, announced on January 24, 2008, provides funding for the Project Manager position and part-time support at each site, as well as a portion of the technology. The CES Project Manager will oversee the development of the facilities, technology and staffing over the next three years, and Tarnoczi is eager to take on this new role.

"Only a few rural communities in all of Canada have this opportunity. This project will enhance the rural experience just as paved roads reduced physical isolation many years ago. I'll be looking for people in each community to help us understand and champion local needs, and I'm looking forward to getting started," he says.

Tarnoczi's background is ideally matched to the opportunity. Among his many roles in Chinook's Edge School Division, he served as Division Principal which provided the opportunity to visit every community in the region served by the CLC.

Community Engagement Sites will be established on a phased-in basis in the communities of Bowden, Cremona, Delburne, Red Deer (first year); Elnora, Penhold, Spruceview, Sundre (second year); and Carstairs, Didsbury, Innisfail, and Sylvan Lake/Benalto (third year.) Plans also include links to the Sunchild E-Learning Community.

The RDF grant, submitted by the South Central Rural Alliance, also provides \$1 million to support the “Fibre to the Premises” project which seeks to make SuperNet connectivity a tool to support economic development in Olds. Alliance members include Mountain View County, Town of Olds, Town of Carstairs, Community Learning Campus, Olds College, Chinook’s Edge School Division, Sunchild eLearning Community, and the Olds Institute for Community and Regional Development.

- 30 -

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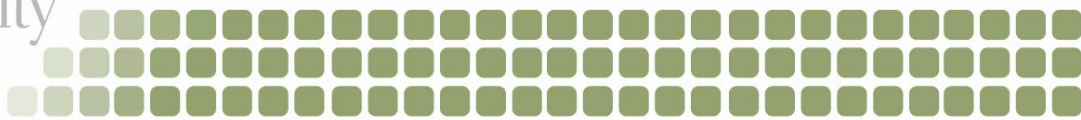
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