

Legacy Building in Olds to be named for Ralph Klein

EMBARGOED to 3:00PM (Mountain) – January 25, 2010: With \$750,000 in new funding from the Government of Alberta announced today by Premier Ed Stelmach, the Community Learning Campus (CLC) on Olds College campus sets a new benchmark for rural education. When it opens next month, this facility, housing a health & wellness centre, government offices and Olds High School, will be named the Ralph Klein Centre in honour of the former Premier, one of Alberta's most longstanding and heralded public servants.

Today's announcement also marks the launch of the Friends of Ralph Klein initiative, part of a final fundraising push to support the construction and start-up costs of the facility. The Friends of Ralph Klein, or "FORKs", represent a substantial number of Albertans who recognize and value Ralph Klein's contributions to the province and see within the CLC and Olds College the same can-do, no-nonsense spirit he embodies. Long cited as an educational favourite of Klein, who holds an honorary degree from Olds College, the College is now moving to secure funding from the Friends of Ralph Klein, with the opening date of Ralph Klein Centre slated for February 2010.

"It is extremely fitting that my predecessor, friend and former legislative colleague would receive the naming rights to this cutting-edge community learning centre," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "Not only does it set a new standard for both high-school and life-long education and wellness in rural Alberta, the Ralph Klein Centre and the CLC as a whole would not be possible without one of Ralph's greatest visions, the Alberta SuperNet."

Dr. Tom Thompson, President of Olds College, lauded both Klein and his extensive network of friends and supporters for helping bring the Ralph Klein Centre to completion. "Five years ago when Premier Klein was our guest, we showed him a model of what was then just a dream," said Thompson. "Through the support of visionaries like the former premier, the current premier and their colleagues, we have been able to roll up our sleeves and make this state-of-the-art building a reality for a new generation of learners. We are honoured to associate Mr. Klein's name with this flagship facility."

The completion of this centre is just one more element making the CLC a jewel in rural economic development, life-long learning and wellness, and integrated service delivery. Along with the recently opened Fine Arts & Multi Media Centre and Bell e-Learning Centre, all interconnected to a rurally-distributed network of community engagement sites, the CLC is unique in Canada.

"This new Centre will revolutionize learning and community connectedness, and advance opportunities for residents throughout Central Alberta," said Jim Gibbons, Superintendent of Chinook's Edge School Division and Vice Chair of the CLC Governance Team. "With three gymnasiums, fitness centre, indoor elevated running track, integrated career centre and health services as well as offices for Child and Family Services, and Alberta Employment and Immigration, the Ralph Klein Centre is a model of one-shop service delivery."

The CLC is a partnership between Olds College and Chinook's Edge School Division, in collaboration with the Town of Olds, Mountain View County and the University of Alberta.

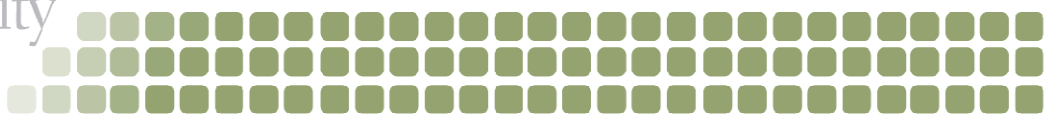
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