

## Chinook's Edge and Olds College receive Mayor's Excellence Award

**For immediate release:** January 28, 2011 – Partnering to create exciting opportunities for students has earned Chinook's Edge School Division and Olds College a Mayor's Excellence Award through the Calgary Educational Partnership Foundation.

The award was presented by Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi at a gala event last evening, in the category of School to Work Transition. Providing a seamless transition from school to post-secondary and on to the world of work is a priority of the Community Learning Campus (CLC), which is a joint venture of Chinook's Edge and Olds College.

"This award is a true honour and a tribute to the many people involved in the CLC who are determined to open new opportunities for students," said Dr. H. J. (Tom) Thompson, President of Olds College, who accepted the award alongside Kurt Sacher, Superintendent of Schools for Chinook's Edge. "Everyone involved in the CLC is passionately committed to learning, and they have designed a unique blend of programming options that provide real choice for learners. Whether they are pursuing traditional post-secondary programming, accessing trades and technology opportunities, or preparing for immediate entry to the workforce, the CLC is helping them reach success."

The CLC has garnered a reputation for its unique approach to program delivery, and one approach which is rapidly gaining in popularity and scope is Dual Credit programming. Developing programs in which high school students can earn credit at both the high school level and the college level has been a focus at the CLC for the last few years. Earlier this month, the project met a milestone as every high school in Chinook's Edge has now officially accessed at least one dual credit course for their students.

"It is such a huge opportunity for our students to benefit from the hands-on learning and career development that takes place when they're part of a dual credit program," said Lisa Wilson, Guidance Counselor at Sundre High School who has encouraged several students to access dual credit courses at Olds College. "Being on the college campus allows students to develop a new level of maturity and prompts them to step up and deliver to a new expectation. It really brings a deeper meaning to their education and is absolutely guiding them on their career path.

"I am very excited about this approach to learning because it opens a depth of learning that simply wasn't there before. They are networking, trying new things, learning more about themselves and the world. It lights a spark in these students, and gives them a feeling of accomplishment and direction."

High School students throughout Chinook's Edge have now accessed Olds College courses in pre-employment welding, machining, carpentry, meat processing, landscape construction, fashion and equine courses. The courses and programs are delivered through a blend of on-site programming at Olds College facilities, as well as video-conferencing and other distributed learning technologies utilizing Community Engagement Sites.

"I took welding and machining last year, and that lead directly to my RAP (Registered Apprenticeship Program) job," said Tanner Rankin, a grade 12 student at Bowden Grandview School. "It was a great help to me in pursuing my trade career. I couldn't have done this otherwise, because my high school wasn't able to offer this type of course. Now I'm planning to take a Millwright apprenticeship, and will benefit from the skills and credits from both of my dual credit courses. Being at the college was a really great experience, and this program definitely helped my career take shape."

Sandy Bexon  
Communications Officer  
Chinook's Edge School Division  
403-227-7085 (cell 403-391-3220)  
[sbexon@chinooksedge.ab.ca](mailto:sbexon@chinooksedge.ab.ca)

Rick Overwater  
Communications Coordinator  
Olds College  
(403) 507-  
[roverwater@oldscollege.ca](mailto:roverwater@oldscollege.ca)



Community  
Learning  
Campus