



NEWS RELEASE

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Grande Prairie Regional College Welcomes Alberta-North Access Symposium

Grande Prairie Regional College is proud to host the annual Alberta-North Access Symposium from May 3 – 5, 2009. Some 130 delegates from throughout northern Alberta will participate in this unique distance education conference.

Alberta-North is a partnership of seven post-secondary institutions that are committed to making distance education accessible to students in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories. The Access Symposium provides professional development opportunities for post-secondary staff involved in developing, teaching, facilitating, and administering distance education.

“GPRC is pleased to have this opportunity to host the Access Symposium,” says Don Gnatiuk, President and CEO of Grande Prairie Regional College and vice-chair of Alberta-North Board of Directors. “It is a wonderful opportunity not only for delegates but for the members of Alberta-North to share the news of our distance education initiatives on behalf of our learners.”

The event will feature two keynote addresses, on the mornings of May 4th and May 5th. Sir John Daniel, President and CEO, Commonwealth of Learning, and Ian Pringle, Education Specialist: Media, Commonwealth of Learning, will present “*Local Learning Centres: Getting the Community in the Driving Seat*” on Monday May 4, describing their experience helping communities use media to take charge of learning agendas. On Tuesday, May 5, author Calvin Helin’s topic will be “Up from Dependency through Education.” His presentation will provide essential background to understanding the plight of indigenous people, and review the important role that education plays in moving the population forward.

Connie Harrison, Assistant Deputy Minister of Alberta Advanced Education and Technology will also be bringing greetings on behalf of Minister Doug Horner.

Dozens of concurrent sessions on both days will offer information and expertise specific to the staff who assist distance learners, course developers and researchers who are among the delegates.

Bill Persley, Chair of the Alberta-North Board of Directors says “Professional development opportunities such as this one are essential for our staff involved in both the facilitation and delivery of distance learning. The Access Symposium specifically addresses the unique challenges of distance learning and celebrates the successes we have had in Northern Alberta. Without the collaboration of Alberta-North’s inter-institutional teams this event would not be possible.”

View the Access Symposium’s entire agenda at www.abnorth.ab.ca/symposium.html.

For more information, please contact:

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