

Alberta-North

2009 - 2010 Annual Report



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Executive Summary and Highlights

Formed in 1994, Alberta-North is a distance education initiative launched under the Northern Alberta Post-Secondary Institutions Society. Through a network of 87 educational gathering places called Community Access Points (CAPs), Alberta-North is committed to providing access to distance education in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

In 2009-2010 Alberta-North partners delivered and supported 9,354 courses which were promoted through its distance education course calendar. Seventy-four percent (74%) of these course enrolments were located in Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories, while the remaining 26% of enrolments reflected learners from across Canada. Overall there were 315 communities noted in Alberta-North's 2009-2010 enrolment roll-up.

University studies accounted for 44% of Alberta-North's 2009-2010 course enrolments while academic upgrading captured 20%. The remaining 36% of course enrolments was distributed across a variety of career programs in business, health, human services, and trades.

In alignment with Advanced Education & Technology's goal of increasing collaboration among providers of higher education, in 2009-2010 Alberta-North members showed an increase in the number of partnerships in delivery and stewarding on behalf of distance education learners (40% in 2008-2009 vs. 42% in 2009-2010).

In 2009-2010 staff located across Alberta-North's 1.4M km² service region provided 18,198 hours of service and supports to learners and communities. There was a noticeable shift in 2009-2010 toward a greater portion of these service and support hours dedicated to registration and admissions, career and program information, and learner supports. Alberta-North's re-branding campaign that was launched in 2009 may have been a factor in this shift.

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Responsive, flexible, and proactive, in 2009-2010 Alberta-North continued to manage and improve projects initiated in previous years: e.g. professional development of Community Access Point Coordinators, launching of new Community Access Points, upgrading technology, and hosting the annual Access Symposium. Simultaneously, new initiatives in 2009-2010 witnessed the joining of NorQuest College as a member of Alberta-North (resulting in the expansion of Alberta-North's services and supports into communities surrounding Edmonton); while administrative processes have been created to improve the collection of activity data occurring at Alberta-North's 87 Community Access Points.

With sixteen years of experience managing front-line supports and services for rural, remote, and/or northern distance education learners, in 2010-2011 Alberta-North looks forward to being an active participant in the continued implementation of Advanced Education and Technology's goal of a seamless, collaborative distance education system on behalf of all learners.

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2009-2010 Highlights

Alberta-North has provided **18,198** hours of service and support...

... to northern learners across **1.4 M km²** in **315** communities.

74% of Alberta-North learners are residents of northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

Your Education Café

The perfect blend to kickstart your education.

Most popular Community Access Point Services included **career and program information**, registration and learner support.

Alberta-North 2009-2010 course enrollments totaled **9,354**.

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2009-2010 Highlights

University studies accounted for **44%** of Alberta-North's course enrollments. Academic Upgrading accounted for **20%**.

This is a testament to the ability of Alberta-North and CAP Coordinators to meet the diverse needs of northern learners.

Increasing the participation and success of students in the North for 16 years.

Alberta-North provided funding for an additional **73+ hours per week** at CAP sites allowing flexibility for learners to complete or participate in courses they wouldn't have had access to otherwise.

42% of course enrollments were delivered between **two** Alberta-North partners.

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A Pragmatic Partnership

The Alberta-North initiative was created out of necessity – the need to address multiple and severe barriers encountered by northern residents and communities to accessing post-secondary education. In 1992, the presidents of the northern post-secondary institutions began to meet informally, recognizing the shared benefit in collectively discussing northern issues and exploring appropriate strategies. In 1994, the presidents created the Northern Alberta Post-Secondary Institutions Society (NAPSIS) and launched Alberta-North, a major initiative that was to extend e-learning and a network of learning support services into rural and remote northern locations. Community Access Points were installed in 26 sites. Today, Community Access Points are located in 60 communities in northern Alberta and another 27 places in the Northwest Territories - an obvious success.



The aim of Alberta-North has always been threefold. Number one is to increase community-based access and opportunities; number two is to increase participation and success of students; and three, to improve the post-secondary system in the north. The development of Community Access Points in northern communities primarily addresses the first of these aims. In today's environment, however, the lack of community-based access to education is becoming a lesser issue in the north, being replaced by considerable concern over low participation and success rates among northern people and, in particular, Aboriginal populations. This concern applies throughout the province, but is especially acute in the north. Also present in today's milieu are extensive transformational changes to Alberta's post-secondary system. The new stewardship role for Comprehensive Community Institutions (colleges), Regional Access Planning, Regional Advisory Committees, redefined alignments between colleges and community adult learning groups, and increased attention to research are all intended to improve the system and bring the concept of Campus Alberta into reality.

Alberta-North 2009-2013 Business Plan