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Ministry of Advanced Education and
Labour Market Development
Industry Canada

\$28M FOR CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE AT OKANAGAN COLLEGE

PENTICTON – An investment of \$28 million from the federal and provincial governments and the institution will help build a new Centre for Excellence in Green Building Technology at Okanagan College in Penticton, and create close to 180 direct jobs.

Stockwell Day, MP for Okanagan-Coquihalla, along with Bill Barisoff, MLA for Penticton-Okanagan Valley and Rick Thorpe, MLA for Okanagan-Westside, made the announcement today.

“It’s been an honour to work with good people at all levels to make this happen,” said MP Day, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway. “This funding will provide jobs for the community and capacity for Okanagan College for years to come.”

This investment is part of the federal government’s two-year, \$2-billion plan to repair and expand research and educational facilities at Canadian post-secondary institutions. The Knowledge Infrastructure Program is helping to provide economic stimulus and promote employment by creating jobs for engineers, architects, tradespeople and technicians. In B.C. the federal government is providing up to 50 per cent of the cost of selected projects on a cost-share basis with the Province.

Work on the Centre for Excellence in Green Building Technologies at Okanagan College in Penticton is set to begin this month. Okanagan College will contribute \$5 million to the project’s total cost of \$28 million.

The campus expansion, targeting gold certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program, will generate close to 180 direct jobs and will accommodate new programming for green construction and trades education.

“By providing funding for these projects, we’re able to keep British Columbians working while investing in facilities for our post-secondary institutions,” said Murray Coell, Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. “We’re directing our resources to where they can produce the biggest and most immediate benefits – creating jobs, stability and confidence for families, and building and renewing campus infrastructure. Province-wide these projects will create almost 3,000 direct jobs”

“This is a great project for both Penticton and Okanagan College,” said MLA Barisoff. “Supporting environmentally sustainable building is the future and this unique new facility being located here in Penticton will make a lasting impact on present and future generations. This is a truly an exciting day for our community.”

“The construction of this new facility will create jobs in the South Okanagan,” said Thorpe. “This project is a great example of how we are working to keep British Columbians working while creating innovative educational resources for the future here in the South Okanagan.”

Okanagan College was established in 2005, and offers career, continuing education, degree, developmental, trades and technologies, university transfer, and vocational programs. The region served by Okanagan College covers 37,750 square kilometres, and extends from Osoyoos and Princeton in the south and west to Mica Creek and Revelstoke in the north and east.

“This new centre of excellence at Okanagan College's Penticton Campus is a tremendous opportunity for students in the region and will play a powerful role in the greening of housing and commercial buildings throughout B.C.,” said President Jim Hamilton. “We look forward to breaking ground shortly.”

This is one of 29 projects at post-secondary institutions across the province that will break ground quickly thanks to a joint federal-provincial investment of \$433 million. The total investment in these projects is \$455 million including contributions from institutions. This project is also part of an overall \$14-billion capital infrastructure program supported by the Province to create jobs and vital public infrastructure in every region of B.C.

Canada’s Economic Action Plan sets out to stimulate the Canadian economy over the next two years and to improve our long-term competitiveness through \$12 billion in new infrastructure investment, which includes the \$2-billion Knowledge Infrastructure Program.

For more information on the provincial government’s three-year job creation plan, visit www.gov.bc.ca/infrastructure. For more information about the Knowledge Infrastructure Program visit www.ic.gc.ca/knowledge-infrastructure.

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