



News Release

Bell Canada and Olds College Partner to Develop e-Learning Opportunities for Rural Albertans through the SuperNet

Bell invests \$3.1 million to create the Bell e-Learning Centre

Olds, (Alberta), March 9 – Bell Canada and Olds College today announced a partnership to create a state-of-the-art distributed learning facility at the Olds College Campus. The Bell e-Learning Centre - made possible through a \$3.1-million investment by Bell - will be the heart and soul of the new Community Learning Campus, currently under construction.

Through the Alberta SuperNet, the Bell e-Learning Centre will enable Olds College and the Chinook's Edge School Division to better support the educational needs of rural communities through advanced technology. Expected to open in late 2007, the facility will focus on research and innovation and on developing solutions that enable distributed learning for students in the region.

"As Canada's leader in Information and Communication Technology innovation, this investment reinforces Bell's commitment to Alberta and to our partnership with the Alberta Government in building the SuperNet," said Charles W. Brown, President, Bell, Western Canada. "In addition, we plan to interconnect the management and operational components of the Bell e-Learning Centre with Bell's 11 Innovation Centres across the country to provide access to the latest Bell-developed research and development solutions. Olds College is the first academic institution in Canada we have connected in this special way."

Premier Ed Stelmach praised the collaborative work being done on the Bell e-Learning Centre. "Private sector companies like Bell that invest in learning and innovation are a key part of Alberta's success," said Stelmach. "Bell Canada and Olds College should be commended for working together in partnership on the new e-Learning Centre and for using Alberta's SuperNet to make tremendous learning and research opportunities available not only for students but for the entire Olds community as well as people throughout Alberta and across Canada."

"Olds College has a clear vision and strategy to expand learning opportunities and enhance rural community capacity, and we see Bell as the best technology partner to accomplish this goal," said H.J. (Tom) Thompson, President of Olds College. "The Bell e-Learning Centre will help us develop and deliver innovative learning options not only to secondary and post secondary students, but to all learners throughout their lives."

About Bell Canada

Bell Canada is Canada's national leader in communications with 28 million customer connections across the country. The company provides consumers with simple solutions to all their communications needs, including telephone services, wireless communications, high-speed Internet, digital television and voice over IP. Bell also offers integrated information and communications technology (ICT) services to businesses and governments, and is the Virtual Chief Information Officer (VCIO) to small and medium businesses (SMBs). Bell is proud to be a Premier National Partner and the exclusive Communications Partner to the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Bell is wholly owned by BCE Inc.

About Olds College

Founded in 1913, Olds College's vision is to be the premier Canadian integrated learning and applied research community specializing in agriculture, horticulture, land and environmental management. Located 45 minutes north of Calgary, Olds College prepares students to contribute provincially, nationally and internationally through careers in agriculture, horticulture, environmental land management, agribusiness and rural entrepreneurship. Olds College provides certificate, diploma and applied degree programs, and participates with other institutions in offering post-diploma degrees. Olds College is further dedicated to nurturing innovation, learning, applied research and commercialization for agribusiness through the School of Innovation.

About the Alberta SuperNet

The Alberta SuperNet currently reaches 429 communities across the province, with over 4,200 service locations. The SuperNet has more than 12,000 kilometers of fibre cable or wireless connections, including the longest fibre optic line in North America stretching from Fort McMurray to Fort McLeod. The new Olds eLearning Center is another example of the SuperNet linking Albertans to education, research, and training. Across the province, colleges, schools, libraries, municipal offices and community centers are discovering the power and potential of the SuperNet.

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