

MEDIA RELEASE

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SIAST reinstates Geomatics due to high demand

Industry backing instrumental in decision to offer program

November 15, 2010 – Thanks to industry support and labour market demand, SIAST will once again offer its Geomatics program in fall 2011. Grads from the program have excellent employment prospects, but the program was suspended earlier this year due to low enrolment and competing resource demands.

“There is definitely a shortage of geomatics technologists in Saskatchewan,” says Ron Eichel, president of the Saskatchewan Land Surveyors Association (SLSA). “We need more people in the industry.”

Demand for Geomatic students through SIAST’s co-op education office – more than three times the number of available students – offers a clear indication of employment prospects. Co-op placements often lead to jobs for students upon graduation.

Companies are competing for the few available geomatics technologists in Saskatchewan, and there are simply not enough to go around. Many are hoping that the combined effort of SIAST and the SLSA will help alleviate the shortage.

Since the program was suspended, the geomatics industry, and in particular the SLSA, has offered to increase its support of student recruitment, capital equipment needs and scholarships. SIAST will accept applications to the 20-seat program immediately.

“The relationship between SIAST and the SLSA is invaluable,” says Arnold Boldt, dean of Technology. “The association’s commitment to the program and its willingness to be part of the solution speak volumes about the opportunities and the work environment awaiting grads.”

The Geomatics diploma program provides knowledge and skill development in using science and technology for collecting and using geographically referenced data. It involves the location, surveying and mapping of natural and man-made physical features, property and other boundaries. The program involves five semesters and two

paid cooperative work terms. Employment after graduation can consist of surveying and map production positions in a number of industries.

SIAST is Saskatchewan's primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training, recognized nationally and internationally for its expertise and innovation. More than 14,000 students were enrolled in SIAST programs in the most recent academic year; additionally, the organization drew almost 30,000 individual course registrations. Through program and course registrations, SIAST served almost 26,000 distinct students with programs that touch every sector of the economy. SIAST operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides a number of courses and programs through distance education.

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