

MEDIA RELEASE

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SIAS expands mobile programming

Computer Systems Technology program sole Sask source for Android device training

May 3, 2011 – SIAS's Computer Systems Technology (CST) program has expanded the training it provides in mobile programming to keep pace with the latest consumer and industry trends.

A new course to be offered in the next academic year will focus on developing applications for Android-enabled devices, complementing training currently available for Apple mobile devices.

"The demand for mobile applications is exploding," says Jeremy Foster, director of IT at Regina-based GB Internet Solutions. "It is important for companies in this industry to have the talent to keep up with demands, so we are very excited to hear about the new mobile class coming to SIAS." GB operates a number of mobile applications and websites, including GasBuddy.com.

SIAS is currently the only post-secondary institution in the province offering training on Android-enabled devices, sales of which have surged ahead of iPhone and BlackBerry smartphones. These increased sales will result in higher demand for Android-compatible applications.

"The opportunity for CST students to develop Android-based apps for mobile devices will greatly expand their portfolios," says Conrad Krueger, SIAS's acting associate dean of Technology. "The evolution to mobile application programming is a natural progression for our students in their programming curriculum. We anticipate some interesting and innovative apps from our students."

SIAS's two-year CST diploma program provides practical training in all aspects of the information technology area including hardware, software and systems. Graduates are prepared for employment in positions such as network administration; computer programming; and hardware, applications and systems analysis and design.

CST graduates are eligible for credit toward computer science degree programs at both the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina. These credits allow CST graduates to complete a degree in two years at either institution.

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 15,000 students were enrolled in SIAST programs in the most recent academic year; additionally, the organization drew almost 25,000 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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Further information about SIAST can be found at www.goSIAST.com.

BACKGROUND

Computer Systems Technology is a diploma program that provides extensive technical training related to the computer industry. The Canadian Information Processing Society's (CIPS's) College Program Accreditation Council (CPAC) accredits the program. This accreditation will help graduates pursue the Information Systems Professional of Canada (ISP) designation.

Students learn how to:

- develop interactive Web pages with multimedia components
- install and configure computer hardware and software
- design, install and manage local area networks
- troubleshoot and repair hardware problems at a board-swapping level
- perform systems analysis and design
- develop computer programs in several programming languages
- provide end-user technical support services
- develop proficiency with a number of common computer application packages

As a member of the Microsoft Developer Network Academic Alliance (MSDNAA), SIAS has incorporated internationally accredited courseware into the program. Based on responses from the 2009 *SIAS Graduate Employment Report*, 93 per cent of graduates surveyed found jobs within six months. The program accepts 48 students each year, and students are in the job market within two years.