



SIAST

SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTE OF
APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MEDIA RELEASE

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SIAST banquet connects students with future employers

*Winner of "Canada's Next Great Prime Minister"
competition to address audience at sold-out event*

Prince Albert, February 8, 2010 – Dr. Alika Lafontaine, physician and 2008 winner of the "Canada's Next Great Prime Minister" competition, will address a sold-out audience of students, staff and business and industry leaders at the 2nd annual SIAST Woodland Campus Business and Industry Dinner.

SIAST Business and Industry Dinners are events focused on connecting business and industry with members of their future workforce.

"At the Business and Industry Dinner students and guests have the chance to listen to an inspiring guest speaker while raising funds to support scholarships for SIAST students," says Pam McLellan, director of donor and alumni relations at SIAST. "But perhaps most importantly, these events give organizations the opportunity to meet and talk with Saskatchewan's brightest and talented recruitment prospects – SIAST students."

AREVA Resources Canada is the event sponsor. "We are proud to support this event and contribute to the student awards program at SIAST," says Bruce Walls, vice president human resources & industrial relations for AREVA Resources Canada. "SIAST educational programs provide students with the skills, knowledge and experience that are required at our mining operations. By supporting these dedicated students, AREVA helps ensure that an effective workforce is available."

Media are welcome to attend this event.

Event details:

SIAST Woodland Campus Business and Industry Dinner

Date: Monday, February 8, 2010
Reception: 5 p.m.
Dinner: 6 p.m.
Location: Prince Albert Golf & Curling Club
900 – 22nd Street East
Speaker: Dr. Alike Lafontaine: Physician and 2008 winner of the “Canada’s Next Great Prime Minister” competition
Event Partner: AREVA Resources Canada Inc.

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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Information about SIAST can be found at www.goSIAST.com.

Dr. Alika Lafontaine's bio:

Alika is a 27-year-old Aboriginal Physician from southern Saskatchewan who was raised with strong ties to both his Aboriginal and Pacific Islander traditions. Despite affinity for both science and math as a child, in Grade 4 he was labelled "developmentally delayed" by school officials. After months of speech therapy sessions, his parents were told he would be unlikely to finish high school. After researching ways to help their son, Alika's parents made the difficult decision to school him at home and achieved subsequent success; he finished high school at age 15; received his bachelor's of science at 19 and graduated from medical school at 24.

Alika is the youngest recipient of the highest honour Aboriginal Peoples give their own, the National Aboriginal Achievement Award as well as a variety of other awards including the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal, a National Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) research grant, a National Aboriginal Health Organization Role Model Award as well as a host of other academic and volunteer awards. Most recently he was named 2008's "Canada's Next Great Prime Minister" after winning CBC's annual competition with applicants from coast to coast.

In addition to his academic achievements Alika also has varied professional experience. Since he was eight, he has performed as a vocalist with "The 5th Generation," a family musical group that has performed across Canada and has appeared on the 1999, 2000 and 2008 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards. He also has done extensive work as a workshop presenter, keynote speaker and conference coordinator. Alika currently focuses most of his free time on his work as a consultant, helping organizations identify core issues, build stakeholder consensus and optimize resource allocation through the use of PriorityPath technology.

Alika is currently enrolled in specialty training at the University of Saskatchewan in the field of Anesthesiology and actively promotes medicine as a viable career choice for youth in Saskatchewan.