

## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

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# **SIAST renos house nursing expansions**

*Project funded through federal, provincial cost-sharing program*

**March 22, 2012** – The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST), with representatives of the federal and provincial governments, cut the ribbon on the SIAST Wascana Parkway Centre in Regina this afternoon. Renovations enabled SIAST to accommodate recent expansions to Nursing programs. The \$5-million project was funded by the federal and provincial governments' Knowledge Infrastructure Program.

"Our government's investment in post-secondary infrastructure has given SIAST's students and researchers the facilities they need to be global leaders in their fields," said Ray Boughen, Member of Parliament for Palliser. "This project will allow SIAST to strengthen its capacity and build on its reputation as a leading institution of higher learning."

"Our government is committed to enhancing post-secondary infrastructure for our students and demonstrating our position as a national leader in education and training," Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration Minister Rob Norris said. "This project will provide nursing students with the training facilities needed so they are prepared to enter the labour market and experience the Saskatchewan Advantage first-hand."

The 25,800-square-foot project converted offices and meeting rooms into classrooms, an anatomy and physiology lab and an open multipurpose area. The building previously housed provincial government offices. SIAST Wascana occupied half the Parkway building after modifications in 2008 and was able to expand into the entire building as a result of the most recent renovations. SIAST Wascana Parkway is located adjacent to the main SIAST Wascana Campus building.

"These renovations have created a contemporary learning environment to match the top-quality education provided by SIAST's Nursing Division," says Dr. Robert G. McCulloch, SIAST's president and CEO. "We appreciate the support of federal and provincial governments in helping us ensure that our facility in Regina supports nursing education needs."

In recent years, the provincial government increased first-year nursing degree seats by almost 35 per cent to 690, with 195 of those seats located at SIAST Wascana Campus. Each year, the number of students increases as the larger first-year intakes move through the four-year program. SIAST Wascana Parkway Centre currently accommodates 430 nursing students. An additional 56 students attend classes and labs in the main SIAST Wascana Campus building.

SIAST Nursing programs include the Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing, offered in partnership with the University of Regina, Psychiatric Nursing and Practical Nursing, as well as several post-grad programs. Across the province, almost 3,300 students are enrolled in SIAST Nursing programs. The SIAST Nursing Division provides programs and courses to approximately 5,000 students annually.

SIAST is Saskatchewan's primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training, recognized nationally and internationally for its expertise and innovation. Through program and course registrations, SIAST serves 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 the Knowledge Infrastructure Program can be found at <http://ic.gc.ca/knowledge-infrastructure>.

Information about SIAST can be found at [www.goSIAST.com](http://www.goSIAST.com).