

News Release: March 22, 2012

University of Regina and SIAST explore future nursing program for Swift Current

Cypress Health Region, Great Plains College, SIAST and the University of Regina today signed a letter of intent which aims to bring the Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing program (SCBScN) to Swift Current students.

The partners will provide support for theoretical and clinical nursing education in Swift Current, allowing students to complete the four-year program in that community.

"We are very pleased to be exploring the opportunity to offer the SCBScN in Swift Current," said University of Regina President Vianne Timmons. "There is an ongoing need for nurses in our province, and we are pleased that by bringing nursing education to Swift Current, we can help ensure that people in our province continue to have the best possible access to well-trained health care professionals."

"A SCBScN partnership with Cypress Health Region and Great Plains College offers advantages both to collaborating institutions and to students," said SIAST President and CEO Dr. Robert McCulloch. "It leverages our expertise in distance education, it builds on our commitment to offer education close to the learner whenever possible, and it expands clinical placement options."

The University of Regina and SIAST signed an affiliation agreement in November 2010 to jointly offer the SCBScN, a direct-entry, baccalaureate nursing program. The first classes were offered in Regina with 200 seats and Saskatoon with 150 seats in September 2011. Initial plans for the expansion of the program to Swift Current allow for eight seats per year beginning in September 2013.

SIAST is Saskatchewan's primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training, and has a proud and rich history as one of the primary providers of nursing education in the province. The Nursing Division's team of 245 expert faculty and staff deliver 16 innovative programs to almost 3,300 students annually. Across the province, almost 5,000 students are enrolled in a SIAST Nursing program or course.

University of Regina faculty brings extensive expertise in delivering baccalaureate-level education. The university's growing Faculty of Nursing will contribute to its national reputation as a leader in research in aging, pain management, cancer research, population health, rehabilitation and risk reduction, and rural and northern health.

"The college is pleased to be involved with its post-secondary and health care partners in the delivery of a nursing program in Swift Current," said Interim President and CEO of Great Plains College Bruce Probert. "We look forward to more students being able to find employment in the western part of the province."

"We are very excited about the potential nursing education program in Swift Current as it would be beneficial for a variety of reasons," said Beth Vachon, CEO for the Cypress Health Region. "Past experiences have shown that there is a better chance of recruiting students to the area where they received their training. As well, being part of a learning program will also benefit our existing staff members and those who will be involved in mentoring the students."

For more information visit: www.sasknursingdegree.ca.

-30-

CONTACT:

University of Regina

Natalie Tomczak

External Relations

Natalie.Tomczak@uregina.ca

Phone: 306-337-2452

Fax: 306-585-5661

SIAST

Jen Pilsner

SIAST Communications

jen.pilsner@siast.sk.ca

Phone: 306-775-7713

Cell: 306-527-5583