

## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

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# **Northern Lights, Cameco contribute to SIAST's first student housing project**

*On-campus facility will provide housing for 36 families*

**November 21, 2008** – Support from a community group and a corporate donor have helped SIAST move forward with plans for student family housing at its Prince Albert Campus. Northern Lights Community Development Corporation has contributed \$250,000 to the project, and Cameco Corporation has pledged \$200,000.

“The financial commitment from Cameco and Northern Lights is instrumental in allowing us to move forward with our first student housing initiative,” says Dr. Robert G. McCulloch, president and CEO of SIAST. “It’s a vote of confidence to all of us at SIAST and to our employees and students at SIAST Woodland Campus in particular.”

“Communities in northern Saskatchewan play a vital role in the success of our business,” said Gary Merasty, vice-president, corporate social responsibility of Cameco. “This investment is one of the ways Cameco can support students from northern Saskatchewan as they pursue their studies away from home at SIAST.”

The \$6.9 million project will provide housing to 36 SIAST students with one or more dependents. SIAST hosted a ground breaking ceremony for the project today, with partner representatives from the provincial government, Northern Lights, Cameco, the City of Prince Albert and the Prince Albert Grand Council. The provincial government, through Saskatchewan Housing, is contributing approximately \$3,456,000. The City of Prince Albert will provide \$180,000.

When complete late next year, the student housing project is expected to draw a significant number of families from northern Saskatchewan, where a high proportion of the population is Aboriginal. As a result, the project should further increase the participation of Aboriginal students in post-secondary education.

By enhancing access to affordable housing, thus enabling students to bring their dependents to Prince Albert when they move there to study at SIAST, the project will ultimately support academic success. It will build on SIAST's long-standing commitment

to Aboriginal student recruitment and retention. Currently, across SIAST, 18.5% of students are Aboriginal; at SIAST Woodland Campus, 47% of students are Aboriginal.

On-campus student family housing significantly addresses transportation needs and improves access to the campus daycare, helping to alleviate some of the worries faced by students with dependents. Providing access to affordable housing will allow the students to better focus on their studies.

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 13,000 students are registered in SIAST programs, which touch every sector of the economy; additionally, the organization draws almost 32,000 individual course registrations. It 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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