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News Release

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Crown Investments Corporation - 606

MORE ASSISTANCE FOR ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Crown Investments Corporation (CIC) is providing further assistance to increase educational opportunities for First Nations and Métis post-secondary students.

CIC will commit almost \$103,000 to fund a one-year pilot project at SIAST's Kelsey Campus in Saskatoon. The Aboriginal Success in Trades and Technologies Program will provide students with a range of tools and supports, including tutoring, life-skills training, child care and career planning.

"This initiative will help First Nations and Métis students complete their training, and ultimately make the successful transition into fulfilling and good paying jobs in our Crown corporations and other companies," Saskatoon Fairview MLA Andy Iwanchuk said on behalf of CIC Minister Maynard Sonntag. "CIC's contribution is part of our government's \$20 million investment announced in 2003 to hire more young and Aboriginal students in our Crown corporations."

The Aboriginal Success in Trades and Technologies program also builds upon several initiatives implemented by SIAST to help students of Aboriginal ancestry succeed academically. Among the initiatives are: access to Elders, Aboriginal student activity and counseling centres at each campus, an Aboriginal student recruitment advisor and a SIAST-wide Aboriginal advisory council.

"We have a number of initiatives in place at SIAST to support successful program completion by Aboriginal students," SIAST president and CEO Dr. Bob McCulloch said. "The initiative we're announcing today addresses a critical time period - those early days when the number of changes can be almost overwhelming. We believe it will play an important role in helping students meet those challenges."

More than 18 per cent of SIAST students are of Aboriginal ancestry. SIAST is Saskatchewan's primary provider of post-secondary skills and technical training. It operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides extensive distance education options. Almost 12,000 full and part-time students are enrolled in SIAST programs. The organization draws an additional 27,000 individual course registrations.

CIC also announced today that it will provide the Aboriginal Student Recruitment Initiatives at the University of Regina and First Nations University of Canada (FNUC) with a further \$145,000 annually over the next three years.

CIC announced in December 2005 it would commit \$2.5 million over five years to the University of Regina and FNUC to assist with recruitment and retention of

Aboriginal students.

The additional funding will enable the U of R to hire a coordinator at the new Aboriginal Student Centre. FNUC, through Student Success Services, will be able to dedicate a career counselor to offer enhanced career planning services to Aboriginal students.

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For More Information, Contact:

Karen Schmidt
CIC
Regina
Phone: (306) 787-5889

Patricia Gillies
SIAST
Saskatoon
Phone: (306) 230-9233

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