



MEDIA RELEASE

Sept. 2, 2010

Real Estate Foundation of BC supports College's Centre of Excellence

Students who attend Okanagan College in Penticton will benefit from new classroom space dedicated to studies in sustainable building practices thanks, in part, to a generous donation of \$100,000 from the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia.

The grant was announced this afternoon at the Penticton campus by Karin Kirkpatrick, CEO of the Real Estate Foundation of BC.

"Our Board has been impressed by the vision of Okanagan College and its leadership team in their pursuit of innovation and in their commitment to creating learning resources for living building technology in the Centre of Excellence," said Kirkpatrick.

"Supporting this building and the programming that will develop as a result of the new space was a natural fit for our organization. Land use knowledge, sustainability and conservation are the driving forces behind everything we do as we seek to provide leadership in land use and work to align resources in this province."

The six-figure donation was received by Rick and Yasmin Thorpe, Honorary Co-Chairs of the Centre of Excellence Fundraising Campaign and Okanagan College President Jim Hamilton.

"This donation pushes the campaign total over the \$1.78 million mark," said Thorpe. "With support from community-minded organizations like the Real Estate Foundation of BC we are making steady progress in reaching the campaign's \$5-million goal."

"It is extremely satisfying to watch as two organizations working in quite different sectors come together to pursue common goals and values such as sustainable development, conservation and education," said Hamilton. "The key factor in this partnership is the Real Estate Foundation of BC's strong leadership, generosity and their commitment to land use knowledge and responsible practices."

The Real Estate Foundation of BC is a non-profit corporation that was established in 1985. Throughout the past two decades it has distributed more than \$55.8 million in communities throughout BC. In the year 2009 alone, 57 grants totaling \$1.48 million were approved by the Board of Governors.

The Centre of Excellence is on budget and scheduled for completion in 2011 at a cost of \$28-million. It is aiming to meet the standards of the Living Building Challenge – the highest designation for sustainable building in North America, and one that has not yet been achieved.

The Federal and Provincial governments supported the Centre of Excellence initiative with \$23-million in funding, \$13-million and \$9.1-million respectively, through their Knowledge Infrastructure Program.

For more information: www.okanagan.bc.ca/centreofexcellence.

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EDS: Please find attached a jpg image of (l to r): Jim Hamilton, Rick Thorpe, Karin Kirkpatrick, Yasmin Thorpe and Steve Tuck.

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