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NEWS RELEASE

Monday, June 25, 2007

New program offers students hands-on opportunities to explore careers in applied science

SASKATOON, June 25, 2007 – Students at E.D. Feehan Catholic High School will have access to a specialized applied science program that will help them explore opportunities available in a wide range of industries, such as agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining and food production.

The Bioresource Management program was created as a result of new partnerships between E. D. Feehan Catholic High School and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the University of Saskatchewan's College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

Today Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Director of Education Bev Hanson, on behalf of E. D. Feehan, signed separate letters of intent with Dr. Paul McCaughey, Research Manager, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Saskatoon, and Dean Ernie Barber of the University of Saskatchewan's College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

Bioresource Management is one of three "strands" in Feehan's new Career Academy. The other strands are Construction Technology, which began classes this spring and Communication Technology, which begins in fall 2007.

The Career Academy is based on partnerships with post-secondary institutions and industry, allowing organizations to have input into course programming and participate in student mentoring. As a result, young people see real-world applications of what they're learning in class – giving them a glimpse of future careers.

"This is a very exciting time at E. D. Feehan," Hanson said. "Career Academy programs will allow students to begin charting a path for their futures, helping them discover professions they can pursue right here in Saskatchewan."

The Bioresource Management strand of the Career Academy will begin in January 2008. Approximately 50 students have registered for classes. The complete list of courses under development includes: Soil Science, Plant Science, Animal Science, Food/Nutrition and Sustainable Bioresource Management. Students may choose one or more of the classes, which complement standard, required courses like English and Christian Ethics.

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The program's focus on applied science fit well with renewal now under way at the College of Agriculture and Bioresources. The college recently changed its name and revised its mission statement to fully reflect its role in educating students about management of renewable resources.

Dr. Ernie Barber, dean of the college, said the work with E. D. Feehan will enhance the public's understanding of the college's new direction and let young people know there are interesting careers available in applied science.

"It's important to find a way to get into the high school curriculum, pique the interests of the students and get them interested in these careers," Barber said.

The Bioresource Management curriculum will blend indigenous knowledge into the curriculum, an important factor for the college and for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Each organization wants to ensure that aboriginal students are aware of career prospects available in areas like land and resource management.

"We have wanted to create a strategy that will attract more aboriginal young people into science," said Dr. Paul McCaughey of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. "The Bioresource Management program will show students this is a viable path for them with tremendous opportunities."

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For more information please contact:

Roy Sondershausen
Assistant Principal
E. D. Feehan Catholic High School
659-7553

Dr. Ernie Barber
Dean
College of Agriculture and Bioresources
University of Saskatchewan
966-4050

Dr. Paul McCaughey
Research Manager
Saskatoon Research Centre
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
956-7200