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Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment

An initiative of the *South Slave Communities' Learning Network* made up of the *South Slave Divisional Education Council*, *Aurora College-Thebacha Campus*; and the *South Slave Career Centres*.

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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4th Annual Trades Awareness Program Offers Additional Trade Options **South Slave students from all regional communities applying for popular program**

FORT SMITH, NT – Fuelled by rave reviews by participants from the past three years, students from all South Slave communities are putting their names forward to take part in the week-long Trades Awareness Programs this spring.

With applications still coming in, 66 area junior and senior high school students have indicated an interest in attending the Introductory Trades Awareness Program in Fort Smith. A further 21 students have applied to the Intensive program, which is only open to students who have successfully completed the introductory session. Hay River, Lutsel K'e, Fort Resolution, K'atl'odeeche First Nation and Fort Smith students will be taking part.

Since 2005, the South Slave Divisional Education Council (SSDEC), Aurora College Thebacha Campus and Education, Culture & Employment - South Slave Region have partnered to develop a *Trades Awareness Program* to provide exposure to the trades and other College program offerings to junior and senior high students in the South Slave.

During the week of June 2 – 6, the introductory program will provide selected students from across the South Slave with hands-on experience as they rotate through several trades courses, including Cooking, Heavy Duty Equipment Technician, Computers, Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Aviation and Natural Resources Technician. The program will be hosted by Aurora College Thebacha Campus in Fort Smith. The intensive program will run from May 22 – 30. This intensive program will allow returning students to spend four days in one of the selected trades areas. Both programs will allow students to experience different trades-related businesses in Fort Smith.

The Trades Awareness Program is offered to give students in small high schools access to the trades shops, equipment and instructional expertise available at Aurora College and in Fort Smith. Businesses such as TDC and Northwestern Air Lease have offered students a view into the mechanical and aviation trades through their generous participation in the program.

“Typically, because of their small size, many schools in the NWT are not able to offer a variety of trades programs” notes Curtis Brown, Superintendent of the South Slave Divisional Education Council. “Student interest is definitely there. The number of students who have indicated an interest in the program has increased substantially since the Trades Awareness Program was introduced in 2005.”

“The diversity of course offerings available to these students will allow them to make informed decisions about a variety of careers and provide tools and options for furthering their education after high school,” says Kathleen Purchase, Aurora College Thebacha Campus Director. “Once we introduce them to the excellent instructors and facilities we have at the College, we are confident they will choose to continue their education and start their journey toward a rewarding career.”

The partner organizations believe this form of hands-on trades exposure will assist youth in planning for their futures. Jacqueline McLean, EC&E Regional Superintendent for the South Slave remarks, “We welcome the opportunities that these partnerships present for providing youth with work related experience, skills development and career related resources that are meaningful for students.”

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