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Maurice Vellacott, MP
Saskatoon-Wanuskewin

Federal Government funds training for new entrepreneurs in northern and rural Saskatchewan

For Immediate Release

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Saskatoon, Saskatchewan — Residents of rural and northern Saskatchewan interested in owning or operating a business will now have better access to business training. Fifteen new videoconferencing sites have been established across the province thanks to a contribution from the Government of Canada.

The Western Economic Diversification Canada investment, totalling more than \$268,000, was announced today by Maurice Vellacott, Member of Parliament for Saskatoon-Wanuskewin, on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification.

“The Government of Canada is proud to work with Saskatchewan’s rural and northern communities,” said MP Vellacott. “Our Government’s investment of nearly \$270,000 will increase accessibility to entrepreneurship training for people in those communities and increase their economic opportunities.”

“With rising gas prices and the need to bridge the gap between face to face meetings and teleconferencing, we feel video conferencing is an important tool for Community Futures in the province especially for the many volunteers who give their time and expertise to the 13 CF's in Saskatchewan,” said Laura Small, CEO, Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan. “As well, our CF counterparts in Alberta, Manitoba and BC make this one of the larger video conferencing training and education networks for small business in Canada.”

The videoconferencing network is a joint initiative of the Community Futures Partners of Saskatchewan (CFPS), the Canada-Saskatchewan Business Service Centre, and Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan.

Modelled after a similar network in Alberta, each videoconferencing site will be located at an office of one of the participating organizations. The equipment will be used to host meetings,

deliver interactive group training sessions and conduct client counselling or loan assessment sessions.

Eventually, unused videoconferencing time slots will be available for a fee to other agencies and service groups. This rental revenue will be used to subsidize bandwidth costs.

CFPS, the Canada-Saskatchewan Business Service Centre, and Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan, along with the Conseil de la Coopération de la Saskatchewan, are all members of Western Economic Diversification Canada's Western Canada Business Service Network. The network members provide services and resources to help Western Canadians start, grow and expand their businesses.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) is a department of the Government of Canada that works in partnership with the provinces, industry associations and communities to encourage diversification of the western economy, as well as to represent the interests of the West in national decision-making.

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