

Laurentian University

CEMI launches innovative research in Sudbury



History is in the making as the Ontario Mineral Industry Cluster Council's (OMICC) Business Plan of May 2005 is realized with the creation of Sudbury's Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation (CEMI) at Laurentian University. With the provincial government's generous contribution of \$10 million earlier this year and the additional \$5 million committed from INCO, CEMI is well underway to securing its target start-up capital of \$30 million from industry and government sources.

Created in November 2003 by the Ontario government, under the leadership of the Honourable Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Northern Development and Mines, to capitalize on the benefits of a 'cluster' approach to developing the mineral sector, OMICC leverages current mineral industry assets to create a large and more globally competitive cluster of mineral and related industrial organizations. The council brings together key stakeholders from Ontario's mineral sector-related industries, organizations and

government agencies. The CEMI vision was one of the first outcomes to be developed by OMICC.

In 2004, Laurentian University adopted a vision to become a National Centre of Excellence in Mining Innovation. Laurentian University already hosts six mining research Chairs, nine mining research centres and seven mining-related graduate programs at the M.Eng., M.Sc., and PhD level.

In December 2005, Laurentian University announced that it enthusiastically endorsed OMICC's vision of CEMI, allocated funding to establish the Mining Initiatives Office. "Establishing a Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation in Sudbury will have substantial and long lasting economic impacts on Sudbury and the rest of Northern Ontario, as well as the entire province and the country," states Laurentian's Director of Mining Initiatives, Dr. John Gammon.

CEMI promotes a vision for Sudbury to become an international centre for world-class, industry-driven research, advancing state-of-the-art concepts, processes, and methodologies in support of the regional, national and international exploration and mining industries, and providers of mining services and supplies.

CEMI will focus on five research sectors: exploration, deep mining, mine process engineering, telerobotics and automation, and the environment and reclamation.

CEMI taps the existing mining-related research expertise of Laurentian University and is built on a platform of established research centres whose mandates intersect with those of CEMI. At this time, the specific centres associated with CEMI include the *Mineral Exploration Research Centre* (MERC), the

Mining Innovation, Rehabilitation and Applied Research Corporation (MIRAR-Co), the *Telerobotics and Automation Centre* (TRAC), the *Cooperative Freshwater Ecology Unit*, the *Laurentian University Mining Automation Laboratory* (LUMAL) and the *Centre in Mining Materials Research* (CIMMR), all established at Laurentian University. Two additional Centres will be established over the next 3 years: *Deep Mining Systems Engineering Research Centre* and a *Research Centre in Reclamation and Environment*.

Sudbury is the perfect location for CEMI since this city, a major mining camp that has generated over \$150 billion in new wealth, is home to major mining companies such as INCO Limited, Falconbridge Limited, FNX Mining Company, Wallbridge Mining Company Limited and First Nickel Inc.. Sudbury is also home to more than 300 mining supply and services companies, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, the Ontario Geological Survey, Laurentian University, Cambrian College, NORCAT, Collège Boréal, CANMET and CAMIRO.

By harnessing the intellectual capacity across Northern Ontario, CEMI will play a key role in shaping the mineral sector workforce of tomorrow—helping to address skill shortages estimated at 81,000 jobs over the next 10 years, and ensuring the Canadian mining industry's global competitiveness well into the future.

CEMI will capitalize on the region's considerable mining assets and strengths, and further enhance Sudbury's stature as an international centre of world-class, mining industry-driven research. CEMI will help secure a lasting and stable future for the province and country's mineral industry. ■