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Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation proposed at Laurentian University

Laurentian University is pleased to announce that plans for a Centre of Excellence in Mining Innovation (CEMI) on the University campus have been launched. This initiative is the principal recommendation made in a business plan completed by the Ontario Mineral Industry Cluster Council (OMICC) in May 2005.

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.

"In creating OMICC, the Ontario government’s aim is to further expedite the kind of cooperative innovation that will keep our mining industry globally competitive," said Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Northern Development and Mines. "To anchor the Council’s Centre of Excellence in Sudbury is a brilliant move that takes advantage of the region’s considerable knowledge and expertise."

In 2004, Laurentian University adopted a mining vision to become a national centre of excellence in mining innovation. “We are very grateful and pleased that OMICC has designated the University as the preferred location for CEMI,” said Dr. Judith Woodsworth, President of Laurentian. “This is a significant endorsement of the quality of our mining-related programs, researchers, professors and students. The University has already invested resources to get this project under way. We now appeal to our government and industry partners to help us make it a reality.”

OMICC proposed the creation of CEMI in Sudbury to capitalize on the region’s already considerable mining assets and strengths, and to further enhance Sudbury’s stature as an international centre for world-class, mining industry-driven research. “The future of mining around the world will depend on innovation, technology and knowledge as much as it will depend on the ore bodies themselves,” said Dave Courtemanche, Mayor of the City of Greater Sudbury. “We need to position ourselves to lead the international mining industry into the next century of mining innovation.”

Leading the drive to establish this centre on the Laurentian campus will be Dr. John Gammon, the former Assistant Deputy Minister, Mines and Minerals Division, Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. In this capacity, he was responsible for managing government activity related to exploration, development, mining, smelting and refining in the province of Ontario. “Our priority in the immediate future will be to bring together the key players in this initiative to identify, and secure, the required resources to make this world-class centre a reality. An interim Board of Directors for CEMI is being put together to lead the Centre’s development and implementation,” said Gammon. “This interim Board is composed of key stakeholders from all levels of government, industry and community partners.”

CEMI would advance state-of-the-art concepts, processes and methodologies in support of regional, national and international exploration and mining industries, as well as providers of mining services and supplies. The Centre's research priorities, developed with industry input, will be focused on mining exploration, deep mining research, integrated mine process engineering, telerobotics and automation, and environment and reclamation.

"Inco Limited is well aware of the challenges confronting the mining industry from our experience right here in the Sudbury Basin – which has been supplying nickel to the world for more than a century," said Mark Cutifani, President of Inco Limited's North America/Europe Operations. "Sudbury's rich history and promising future as a provider of metals to the global marketplace make it the perfect location for a Centre of Excellence. The mining industry in Ontario, in Canada, and indeed around the world, will benefit from the innovative solutions developed here."

For more information, please contact Dr. John Gammon, Director, Mining Initiatives at Laurentian University, by calling (705) 675-1151, ext. 2197 or via email at jgammon@laurentian.ca.

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