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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

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

FORT SMITH, NT (November 26, 2008) – Students from all South Slave communities will be in Fort Smith Dec. 1-5 to participate in the popular week-long Trades Awareness Program (TAP) at Aurora College in Fort Smith.

Twenty-one students from across the South Slave Region will take part in the Intensive Program, which allows students who have taken previous TAP modules to build on the skills they learned in their earlier session. TAP offers both introductory and intensive streams for students at different skills levels. The upcoming intensive stream delivery will focus on carpentry, cooking and heavy duty equipment technician.

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 Dec. 1-5, the intensive 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, and Carpentry. The program will be hosted by Aurora College Thebacha Campus in Fort Smith.

“Aurora College Thebacha Campus has skilled instructors and well-equipped shops that make this a real skill-building opportunity for the program participants,” says Jeff O’Keefe, Acting Campus Director of Thebacha Campus. “Students who attend these programs are well-positioned for success when they are ready to attend Aurora College’s trades programs after they graduate high school.”

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 the Fort Smith business community.

“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 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."

An Introductory Session of the Trades Awareness Program will be offered in spring of 2009.

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