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Welcome  
Bienvenue



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# Northern Passages

Newsletter of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine

## Construction Begins on the West Campus

More than a building - a positive step in Northern Ontario healthcare



Dr. Fred Gilbert, Lakehead University President; MPP Michael Gravelle, Premier Dalton McGuinty; MPP Bill Mauro; and Dr. Roger Strasser, Founding Dean, toss the turf at the future site of the West campus Medical School.

Construction of the new medical school in Thunder Bay has officially begun. Premier Dalton McGuinty was on hand to help break ground at the construction site on the Lakehead University campus. On Thursday, August 26, McGuinty, along with Medical School Founding Dean Roger Strasser, Lakehead University President Fred Gilbert, Thunder Bay-Superior North MPP Michael Gravelle and Thunder Bay-Rainy River MPP Bill Mauro participated in a sod turning ceremony.

Speaking to the crowd gathered for the ceremony, Premier McGuinty called the Northern Ontario School of Medicine an "honourable and noble pursuit". He recognized that although construction was only just beginning, work began years ago. "This School already has a strong foundation, built on the commitment of leaders who have worked a long time to get to today," McGuinty said.

Northern Ontario School of Medicine Founding Dean, Dr. Roger Strasser, said the school will have a positive impact on the North. "This groundbreaking ceremony marks more than the construction of a building," he said. "Students will begin their instruction here in 2005, and in a few short years, will graduate as trained doctors, prepared to live and work in this region."

Dr. Fred Gilbert, President of Lakehead University and Chair of the Medical School Board, credits the support of the community for making the School a reality. "This building is further proof that together, we can achieve great things. The Northern Ontario School of Medicine was conceived through community, educational, and healthcare teamwork. This in itself is reason to celebrate," he says.

The three-story stand alone building currently under

construction will accommodate the needs of the School's students and research on the West campus. It will feature SMART classrooms, exam rooms, a medical library, research areas and wet and dry laboratories. The School, which will cost approximately \$8 million to complete, will be 32,000 square feet.



Rendition of the Lakehead University campus Medical School learning facility

The school will be complete next summer, and ready to welcome the charter class of students in August, 2005.

# State-of-the-art Construction Underway at East Campus

Last March, the ground-breaking ceremony for our East campus took place, marking the beginning of construction. Site preparation on the Laurentian Campus began in late January with excavating, drilling and rock

blasting followed by the installation of site services. In April, the construction contract for the medical school was awarded to The Atlas Corporation of Concord, Ontario and the construction period will extend from May 2004 to July 2005.



According to the architect, the design will enable the school to

reduce air flows when people exit an area.

Belanger also explained that all of the building's exposures, the penetrations of the building envelope are minimized to reduce

use approximately 50% less energy than buildings designed to the Model National Energy Code for Buildings. In other words, the school can save approximately \$50,000 annually if pegged at today's energy costs. Other significant factors such as extra expenses for state of the art heating, air conditioning equipment and ventilation, lighting and electrical systems, as well as water heating components will have a quick payback period.

Other unique factors featured in this high performance building include optimized windows to harvest free natural light and a heat recovery system to transfer energy from exhausted warm air to the cold air being brought in for ventilation. There are motion sensors to turn off lights and

air leakages. All doors require vestibules that separate heated areas from the outside.

The new building for the Laurentian campus of the Northern Ontario Medical School will occupy 6,000 square metres over three floors. With its student focused design, the building seeks to enhance the teaching and learning experience. It will consist of teaching areas that will include an 80-seat lecture theatre, a SMART classroom, 12 small seminar rooms, and a multipurpose teaching space (330 square metres). It also will boast a multipurpose research lab (1090 square metres), a library equipped with electronic facilities (300 square metres) as well as office space for administrative, academic and other services.

Rendition of the Laurentian University campus Medical School learning facility.

The building will be among the most energy efficient buildings in Canada, rated by independent engineering consultants Emermodal of Toronto. The building was designed by a team from the School, the University and the architectural firm of Nicholls Yallowega Bélanger Architects-Architectes of Sudbury, using smart design which, at the same time, minimizes environmental impact.

"The University expressed a

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## Symposium Schedule Resumes

After a successful series of symposia this Spring, the School is currently working on its Fall and Winter 2004 symposium plan. Each symposium, held monthly except in the Summer will continue to feature experts and interesting health related topics.

The first fall symposium will be held on September 23, 2004 from noon to 1:30 pm (Eastern Time) through videoconferencing. The event will feature Dr. Geoffrey Hudson, from the Faculty of Human Sciences of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. Dr. Hudson will discuss the History of Medicine from our west campus in Thunder Bay.

Health professionals may participate in the Symposium at NORTH Network sites throughout the region. Individuals may view the live webcast from their computers by going early to [www.normed.ca](http://www.normed.ca) for webcast setup and details. This symposium meets the accreditation criteria of the College of Family Physicians of Canada and has been accredited for 1.5 MAINPRO-M1 credits.

Please mark these dates in your calendar for our upcoming symposium series and we invite you to join our events!

### Symposium Schedule 2004

Time: 12-13:30 pm  
(Eastern time)

September 23  
October 26  
November 18  
December 16

## Recruitment Keeps Admissions and Student Affairs Office Busy

Since the applications for the charter class commenced on July 5, 2004, the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs (ASA) is excitingly busy.

ASA receives approximately 15 emails, and 10 phone calls a day from prospective students wanting to find more information about the Medical School. The School, through the Ontario Medical School Application Service, will continue receiving applications until October 2004.

In the area of student services, the Office has just completed the Student Guide which will be a very useful tool for medical students. Look for the Guide on the website later this fall!

Furthermore, ASA has collaborated with the distributed site planning team in

coordinating the 1st yr Aboriginal placements. Staff have been honored to participate in visits to Fort Frances, Pic River, Wikwemikong and Shoal Lake with plans to visit other sites in the near future.

The ASA staff are also planning and developing support services in partnership with Laurentian and Lakehead. This partnership will benefit the medical students and will make the Office of ASA better able to serve the needs of all our students.

Cultural supports for both Aboriginal and Francophone people will be offered to this very diverse group of students. Staff continue to partner with Student Affairs personnel at both sites in other areas including Special Needs and Learning Disabilities, Elder Support and



Blair Kite, Senior Admissions Officer (right) explains the Admissions process to prospective students at the Laurentian University Information Fair,

Health Services.

ASA sponsored four Information Sessions for Prospective students on September 9, 11, 12 and 13 at both campuses, and had an information booth at the Mississauga First Nations

Diabetes Conference for People Living with Diabetes on September 10.

ASA staff will attend the Ontario Universities Fair in Toronto on September 24, 25, and 26. This is Ontario's largest information fair for high school students to gather information about universities.

ASA Staff is working with K-Net to develop recruiting videoconferences with students in science enrichment program as well as science teachers and guidance counsellors in communities on their network.

## Research Programs Move Into High Gear

This summer has been a very exciting time for medical researchers at the School. Scientists have arrived at both Thunder Bay and Sudbury, and are beginning to build the programs which will be the foundation of research activity for the coming years.

Dr. Garry Ferroni, Head of the Division of Medical Sciences, is delighted to see the new faculty members on board. "We have been very fortunate to attract excellent scientists working in Canada, Europe and the USA to the Medical School. These researchers will be establishing outstanding research laboratories in their respective fields, and will be engaged in areas of inquiry critical to the health of Northern residents."

In collaboration with researchers at both host universities, members of the School's faculty will be

developing programs focused on northern population health issues, cancer care and research, aging and health, health and the environment, and many other areas. These projects will be undertaken within the School's laboratories, in collaboration with laboratories at partner Institutions such as the



Dr. Greg Ross, Associate Dean of Research, and Dr. Garry Ferroni, Head of the Division of Medical Sciences

Cancer Centres, and at numerous field sites spread out through Northern Ontario.

The unique nature of the School's research environment is the burning passion of Dr. Greg Ross, Associate Dean (Research). "Northern Ontario has very unique health issues, related to factors including life-style, geography, population demographics, heredity, and many, many other determining

factors. A major goal of our research strategy is to enhance the quality of life for Northern Ontario residents through the identification of factors which will increase health and health care." No other region shares the same genetic and environmental background found in the North, and this presents unique research opportunities.

"The work we are going to be doing simply couldn't be done anywhere else" says Dr. Ross, "Our research programs are planned in the North, will be conducted in the North, and are relevant to the residents of Northern Ontario." When asked if the School's research activities will only be of interest to the local community, Dr. Ross is quick to provide an international context. "Residents of Northern Ontario see great challenges in health care, in part related to geographical distances, understanding of critical issues, and communications. These same issues are of fundamental importance to a great percentage of the world's population. Our research objectives are directly relevant to many societies encompassing diverse linguistic and cultural groups within a rural setting."

"We should all look forward to future communications from the School's researchers" says Dr. Ross; "I can't promise they will make everyone happy, but I can promise they will be interesting!"

# Technology Built on Good Relationships

Students of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) will rely on technology to see them through four years of studies. As a dual campus school with remote communications, e-learning, and electronic access to library resources, the School of Medicine requires a lot of technology expertise. Information Technology (IT) staff at the school are building custom programs to meet the needs of students, faculty and staff.

One of the most efficient methods of achieving this is to share information with those who have experience in the same area. Kevin Pashuk, Director of Technology at the School, and his team from the Technology Unit, recently hosted information sharing sessions with a group of IT specialists from the Indiana University School of Medicine. Indiana University's School of Medicine is the second largest in the United States by enrollment. The IT team there, lead by Vincent Sheehan, Chief Information Officer, has invaluable experience in developing the tools that the NOSM team is working to put in place here. The Indiana University (IU) School of

Medicine has 2,500 students and residents on 8 campuses. The total of students, faculty and staff is approximately 8,170. By necessity, the IT team at IU developed their own student information system that would integrate with the university system. Both School's have similar IT needs.



Kevin Pashuk is the Director of Technology at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine

“The issue with technology is that there are always a dozen ways of doing the same thing, but only one will be the best way,” says Sheehan. “If we can share some of the techniques we used to accomplish the same functions, then a lot of experimentation time can be saved.” This kind of unique collegial relationship offers very tangible benefits. IT tools have to be tested by users to ensure

that all needs can be met. NOSM's medical students won't be on campus until next year, so testing opportunities are very limited. Pashuk saw this information sharing session as a way to solve that problem. “It is important to expose our IT developers to concepts that have been tested and had user feedback in a medical school context. Indiana University and our team use the same development tools and the same kind of structure and framework,” he says.

Not all groups would be so willing to share such hard-earned information and experience. This collegial cooperation is based on the working relationship established between Sheehan and Pashuk years ago when the two worked closely together on another project. “The curtains are being pulled back, and we all stand to benefit” Pashuk says.

Each team is sharing valuable information. The University of Indiana is gaining input from the NOSM team on the techniques and tools they have in place, particularly the SMART classroom technology. “We have been looking at and considering

some of these technology tools,” says Sheehan. “What we learn here will give us some ideas about how to move forward in the future with our own technology.”

## Northern Ontario School of Medicine

*Northern Passages* is a publication of the Communications Unit of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

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*A new medical school for the whole of Northern Ontario, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine is a joint venture of Lakehead and Laurentian Universities. With main campuses in Thunder Bay and Sudbury, we will have multiple teaching and research sites distributed across Northern Ontario, in large and small communities. The School contributes to improving the health of people in Northern Ontario.*

## The Sixth Annual AMS/COFM Education Conference Future Directions in Medical Education: Generalism, Interprofessional Education and Distributed Learning



Later this year, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine will welcome faculty from all of Ontario's medical schools. The 6th annual AMS/COFM education conference will be held on November 18 and 19, hosted by the School.

This year's conference theme is “Future directions in medical education: generalism, interprofessional education and distributed learning.

The objectives of this

conference are to:  
Summarize the barriers that challenge interprofessional curriculum and the strategies of the medical schools in Ontario to overcome them.  
Compare three different models of distributed learning in North America.  
Understand the cultural issues of the Generalist in a specialty-oriented health care system.  
Interact with a new model of keeping up to date in content specific areas.

Guest speakers will provide relevant and timely discussion on a variety of issues relating to the theme. Keynote speaker The Honorable Dr. Carolyn Bennett, Minister of the State for Public Health, will present “The Generalist Perspective in a Specialist World,” and Dr. Carol Herbert, Dean, Faculty of Medicine at the University of Western Ontario, will discuss “Interprofessional Education: Challenges and Opportunities.”

This conference, presented by

Associated Medical Services Inc. (AMS) and the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM) is an annual event involving key faculty in the six medical schools in Ontario. Its purpose is to help guide and shape the direction of changes in medical education.

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