

September 3, 2010

## **ARDN offers rural development research opportunities in September More than \$300,000 invested in spring-summer 2010**

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) is now accepting applications for rural development research projects of \$10,000 or under. Applications must be received by October 31, 2010.

To be eligible, interested individuals or organizations must partner on the research project and application with one of ARDN's 21 public post-secondary institution (PSI) members. The PSIs may also submit their own projects, but preference will go to those that are rural community based or collaborative.

Applications to host networking events that facilitate the exchange of information on rural development related topics and foster partnerships are accepted on an on-going basis. This category must also be submitted by an ARDN PSI member.

"Our organization is dedicated to fostering education, research, networking and collaboration among our post-secondary members and the rural communities they serve," said ARDN executive director Dee Ann Benard. "This support facilitates the exchange of information and the formation of partnerships that will strengthen rural Alberta."

More than \$300,000 was invested in spring-summer 2010. This investment included 12 rural research projects led by nine ARDN member PSIs for a total of nearly \$113,000. Research topics range from employer engagement in adult education to biofuels, early literacy activities to heritage tourism. Another \$190,600 was directed toward nine networking events led by eight member PSIs on topics ranging from rural health workforce development to Aboriginal leadership, newcomers to Canada to traumatic stress for first responders.

For detailed information about ARDN or to connect with the post-secondary contact in your community, go to [www.ardn.ca](http://www.ardn.ca) or call toll-free 1-877-987-1006.

*The Alberta Rural Development Network is a partnership of Alberta's 21 publicly-funded, publicly-governed post-secondary institutions. The Network supports and enhances rural development in Alberta through research, education, networking and collaboration. ARDN is funded in part by Rural Alberta's Development Fund whose funding is provided by the Government of Alberta. To learn more, go to [www.ardn.ca](http://www.ardn.ca).*

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**BACKGROUNDERS ATTACHED**

## **ARDN Facilitated Projects (submitted March 1, 2010 – April 9, 2010)**

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) is directly involved in rural research. Through its post-secondary institution (PSI) members, ARDN facilitates the establishment and implementation of rural research projects. Twelve rural research projects led by nine PSIs received assistance totaling nearly \$113,000 in the *under \$10,000* category. A brief description of each project is found below; more information is available on [www.ardn.ca](http://www.ardn.ca) and will be updated as each project moves forward.

### *Bow Valley College*

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#### **Employer Engagement in Adult Education in Rural Alberta and Smaller Communities within Bow Valley College Region: \$9,950.00**

ARDN support for this project will help to increase the potential for industry and employers in smaller communities, and increase access to post-secondary education in rural Alberta.

#### **The Coordination Challenge: Multiple Urban Post-Secondary Institutions Addressing Regional and Rural Issues: \$10,000.00**

ARDN support of this project enables research to identify the best strategies and models for collaboration. This project focuses on institutions within the Calgary and Edmonton regions with respect to assessment and delivery of services in rural areas and smaller communities.

### *Lakeland College*

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#### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Leader: Transitioning Knowledge, Wisdom, and Experience to the Next Generation: \$10,000.00**

This investment will help develop a survey for Alberta's rural post-secondary presidents to draw out their leadership insights and share that information with other leaders.

### *Mount Royal University*

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#### **Revitalization of Rural Alberta Businesses: Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program: \$9,500.00**

ARDN's assistance will help create a community-based economic strategy with a focus on nurturing and supporting businesses already in the community. This project is in the form of a two day workshop, which includes sessions that provide individual assistance and training that will have positive long term effects on rural Alberta.

### *NorQuest College*

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#### **Workforce Development in NorQuest's Western Region – Needs assessment and Potential Workforce Development Program Delivery Model: \$8,600.00**

ARDN's investment will help NorQuest College enhance the development of businesses, non-profit organizations, governments, and communities within the Edson, Hinton, and Jasper regions. This project will research the need for NorQuest-provided workforce development opportunities.

## *Northern Lakes College*

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### **Supporting Grouard's Historical Interpretive Potential: \$10,000.00**

ARDN support for this project will contribute to the construction of an interpretive centre in Grouard that will focus on the rich history of the community.

## *Red Deer College*

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### **Transportation Risk Assessment for Wildlife on the Queen Elizabeth II and Secondary Highways in the Red Deer Region: \$10,000.00**

This project focuses on the research and construction of sites that will counteract wildlife collisions along busy rural highways that have high animal collision rates.

## *University of Alberta – Augustana Campus*

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### **Investigating Rural Senior Undergraduate Students: \$10,000.00**

ARDN support contributes to this investigation of whether or not and how senior undergraduates intend to return to their rural communities and use their education and training to become engaged and make positive contributions.

### **Recovering the Past – Discovering Heritage Tourism: \$4,875.35**

This project will research the dinosaur bone collection expeditions that first brought the attention of the world's scientific community to the Boomtown Trail region. It will also convert the research into heritage tourism assets.

## *University of Lethbridge*

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### **An Assessment of the Use and Efficiency of Communications Technology in Developing and Maintaining Networks in Rural Communities: \$10,000.00**

ARDN's investment will go towards an assessment of the current state of technology in terms of its use and effectiveness in the development and maintenance of networks serving as resources for rural communities.

### **Supporting Early Literacy Activities – A Community Approach: \$10,000.00**

ARDN support assists this project, which will pilot and implement early literacy strategies, supporting parents and daycare/playschool centres in immersing young children into literature-rich environments.

## *SAIT*

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### **Enhancing Greenhouse Sustainability Using Biofuels for Energy: \$10,000.00**

ARDN assistance helps benefit rural Alberta by exploring and verifying how green technologies can work together to prolong the growing season in greenhouse systems.

## **ARDN Facilitated Networking Events (submitted March 1 – August 31, 2010)**

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) offers financial and other assistance to member post-secondary institutions (PSIs) to foster networking opportunities and enhance rural development knowledge exchange. This assistance goes toward hosting rural development related meetings and events that are formed from or contribute to collaboration and networking among rural stakeholders. Over the past year, ARDN supported 22 events organized by eight PSIs for a total of \$190,599. A description of each is found below; more information is available on [www.ardn.ca](http://www.ardn.ca) and will be updated as each event moves forward.

### *Bow Valley College*

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#### **Community Engagement in Post-Secondary Education Solutions: \$10,000.00**

*Strathmore, Okotoks, Cochrane, High River – Fall 2010*

ARDN support will help this event explore the readiness of rural Albertan communities to participate in increasing access to adult education and receive input from communities on what types of education is needed. These events will be held in Strathmore, Okotoks, Cochrane, and High River in fall 2010.

#### **Comprehensive Community Human Resource Profiles - Bow Valley College Rural Region: \$6,000.00**

*Multiple Locations – Completed by August 31, 2010*

ARDN supported this event's goal to meet with communities to produce eleven 'community human resource profiles' by August 31, 2010. Communities profiled include: Airdrie, Strathmore, Chestermere, High River, Okotoks, Cochrane, Canmore, Banff, Beiseker/Irricana, Crossfield and Black Diamond/Turner Valley. These profiles form an up-to-date base of information for communities, educators, government and other organizations on which to base service decisions focused on human development.

#### **Rural Health Workforce Development Event: \$10,000.00**

*Location to be Announced – Fall 2010*

ARDN support will help this event promote the development of the health care workforce in rural Alberta, find ways to increase access to rural education programs and services, and build links to stakeholders, government employers, and more.

### *Keyano College*

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#### **Unwrapping the Research: \$10,000.00**

*Fort McMurray – October 22, 23, and 24, 2010*

This conference will facilitate dialogue and learning opportunities among researchers and local residents. It also stimulates creative thinking about innovative opportunities.

## *NorQuest*

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### **Outcome Mapping Orientation: \$4,350.00**

*Edmonton – June 17, 2010*

This event enabled Alberta research and community development networks to build capacity by using Outcome Mapping to demonstrate the collective impact on community learning and economic development.

### **Putting Down Roots: Our Diverse Communities: \$10,000.00**

*Multiple Locations – November 26, 2010*

ARDN assistance contributes to this regional exchange for individuals and organizations that are focused on supporting newcomers through language programming, welcoming, and other social sciences. This event will take place via videoconferencing.

## *Northern Lakes College*

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### **Continuing Care Needs in the High Prairie/Slave Lake Area: \$9,999.00**

*Northern Lakes College – May 2011*

ARDN's support will help provide an opportunity to identify what continuing care needs are not being met locally, and whether there are issues that post-secondary institutions can address through training and education programs for students and/or practitioners, and through research.

### **Aboriginal Leadership and Governance Training in Rural Northern Alberta: \$10,000.00**

*Edmonton – Fall 2010*

ARDN is supporting this event that will share information about current Aboriginal leadership training opportunities, identify unmet needs and gaps in existing opportunities, and work toward solutions.

## *Portage College*

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### **Portage College Community Social Work Program Mini Conference: \$8,100.00**

*Lac La Biche – August 21 - 22, 2010*

This event is a conference for human services professionals and credits will be given to students from Northern Lakes College and Portage College who attend.

## *SAIT*

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### **Agro-Literacy and Sustainability: \$9,500.00**

*Calgary – June 2010*

This event connected produce growers in the region with the chefs who actively promote local products to the dining community. This conference has the potential of increasing the partnership of key stakeholder groups who are actively promoting local food not just to the culinary world, but the general public.

**Enhancing Greenhouse Sustainability using Biofuels and Green Design: \$10,000.00**

*Calgary – May 2011*

ARDN assistance helps bring together biofuels researchers and commercial greenhouse growers from around the province. This event may also appeal to greenhouse manufacturers, the broader nursery industry, and businesses with an interest in developing renewable heating alternatives and/or biofuels solutions for their operations.

**Future Directions in Providing First-Responders with Protection from Workplace Trauma: \$10,000.00**

*Banff Centre – October 6 and 7, 2010*

This gathering will help place Alberta in a leadership position in protecting first responders and other workers exposed to traumatic stress.

**SimuNation: \$7,950.00**

*Calgary – June 7, 2010*

ARDN support enabled Patient Simulation educators from across Alberta to participate in an exchange of ideas and techniques designed to improve healthcare practice in Alberta through the use of highly realistic and sophisticated Patient Simulation.

*University of Alberta*

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**Continuing Care Needs in the Fort McMurray Area: \$10,000.00**

*Keyano College – May 2011*

This networking event will provide an opportunity to identify what continuing care needs are not being met locally, and whether there are issues that post-secondary institutions can address through training and education programs for students and/or practitioners, and through research.

**Continuing Care Needs in the Grande Prairie Area: \$10,000.00**

*Grand Prairie Regional College – May 2011*

ARDN support will help provide an opportunity to identify what continuing care needs are not being met locally, and whether there are issues that post-secondary institutions can address through training and education programs for students and/or practitioners, and through research.

**Framework for a Provincial Caregiver Strategy: \$10,000.00**

*Edmonton – October 22, 2010*

*Calgary – October 29, 2010*

ARDN assistance will help bring family caregivers together with other organizations to assist in the development of a provincial caregiver strategy.

**The Social Transformation of Rural Canada: New Insights into Community, Culture and Citizenship: \$2,440.00**

*University of Alberta - September 30 to October 1, 2010*

The purpose of this networking event is to convene a workshop of academic researchers from across Canada on the topic of social transformation in rural Canada. A premise for this workshop is a sense that something new is emerging from the spaces and places of rural Canada.

**Building Mental Health Response Capacity in Rural Alberta: \$6,560.00**

*Vulcan – August 2010*

This event will scope, assess, and begin the design of a Rural Alberta Mental Health Crisis Response program that links university-based researchers, the Canadian Mental Health Association and first response caregivers such as paramedics, police, firefighters.

**Managing Alberta's Water – Linking Science to Citizens and Management: \$10,000.00**

*Red Deer – October 2010*

This event will seek to develop collaborative relationships among the large universities in the province and the analytic needs of the Watershed Planning Advisory Councils. The event will raise awareness about the benefits and opportunities that social science research can bring to natural resource management.

**Rural Alberta Deliberates on Climate Change: \$7,400.00**

*Red Deer - Fall 2010*

ARDN supports the first of several events that will link existing activities exploring deliberative democracy and climate change. A preliminary meeting of the core researchers involved will focus on three main strategies: building upon the Community University Research Alliances (CURA) and Alberta Climate Dialogue (ABCD); linking the researchers to important sources; and developing an evidence-informed program of public engagement and deliberative democratic practices that link the research community with other communities facing issues around climate change.

**Rural Sustainability Research Cluster and Community of Practice: \$8,300.00**

*Edmonton – September 2010 to March 2012*

ARDN support will help create a continuing venue for knowledge exchange among the research community working in the broad areas of rural development, sustainability and capacity. It will help fund a series of recurring events in Edmonton and create a cluster of practitioners, administrators, community representatives and researchers working across the wide range of domains that impact the development and sustainability of rural communities in the province.

**Taking the Next Steps Alberta: Planning Policy and Participation for Rural Alberta: \$10,000.00**

*Camrose – October 21-25, 2010*

This event will bring together university-community collaborations from across Canada. They will present and discuss the challenges, opportunities and issues facing rural communities and community organizations in relation to sustainability planning, sustainability and capacity-building policy, third sector governance, and the integration of policy domains under the sustainability planning rubric.