



MEDIA RELEASE

May 21, 2008

For Immediate Release

Record number of international students at Niagara College *Summer Language Program brings 300 students to the region*

Niagara College welcomed a record enrolment of international students to its Summer Language program this spring.

Students will study in four, eight and 15-week terms depending on their educational plans. Some are learning English for the first time, while others are taking the College's English for Academic Preparation program to prepare them to enter diploma and degree programs in September. Students will stay in the College's residences and many will join local families in home-stay arrangements so that they can also learn more about Canadian customs and activities.

In total, more than 300 students from 25 countries will study English and learn about Canadian culture this summer at Niagara College. This compares to 168 students in the summer of 2007. Many attend as individuals, although this summer there are also groups of students who will arrive from Japan, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and China.

Canada is seeing an increase in interest from international students thanks to the Government of Canada's new regulations that focus on attracting international students as potential new immigrants. The new policy allows international students who graduate from postsecondary programs to obtain an open work permit under the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program, with no restrictions on the type of employment. The duration of the work permit has been extended to three years, from the previous one or two years, depending on location. The government has responded to requests by the Canadian Bureau for International Education and Canadian colleges and universities to make Canada more welcoming to international students.

"These new regulations now put Canada into a favourable and competitive position relative to other countries that are popular with international students. We now have a much better opportunity to attract even more students here and to continue to enjoy the many benefits of having a strong international student component in our educational institutions," said Martha Casson, Vice President International for Niagara College.

The new Niagara College summer language students will be in our community throughout June, July and August, in many cases, into the fall as they choose to enrol in postsecondary programs.

"Over the course of the academic year, more than 550 international students are living and shopping in Niagara, and many local businesses and employers will see the benefits," said Casson. "We thank the people of the Niagara Region for providing such a welcoming community for these students."

With 6,400 full-time students, Niagara College offers more than 90 certificate, diploma, post-graduate and degree programs at campuses in Welland, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines. Areas of specialization include hospitality and tourism, viticulture, technology, community safety, and media studies. Niagara College has been voted #1 in student satisfaction for four straight years.

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