

MEDIA RELEASE

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SIAST students take top regional research awards

Chem Tech students recognized for presentation, technical skills

April 14, 2014 – Darnell Wojcichowsky and Jenna Paslawski, students in SIAST's Chemical Technology program, received first- and third-place awards, respectively, at the Canadian Society for Chemical Technology's (CSCT's) Western Canadian Student Symposium in Edmonton. Both students were recognized for their engaging oral presentations of research projects they had carried out during work placements, which are integral to the program.

"Both Darnell and Jenna were fully committed to their research and had made the effort to understand the background to their projects," says Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour, associate dean, Diversity, Faculty of Science, at the University of Alberta and one of the symposium's judges. "This made it possible for them to answer the probing questions of the audience."

During his practicum at Cameco's McArthur River uranium mine in northern Saskatchewan, Wojcichowsky identified the optimal pH range for the removal of molybdenum, a contaminant in uranium waste water. Paslawski also completed her practicum in northern Saskatchewan, at Cameco's Key Lake uranium mill, where her research determined improvements to the way in which "yellowcake," a form of uranium oxide, is analyzed.

"Going out into the workforce on placement was a great experience," says Wojcichowsky. "I learned about the wide range of jobs available in the field and gained a better understanding of what will be expected of me when I graduate."

As a polytechnic, SIAST engages its students in hands-on applied learning that benefits industry, students and the institution. Its Chemical Technology program focuses on knowledge and skill development in chemical analysis and chemical plant operation. In addition to labs and applied research projects, students in the two-year diploma program gain real-world experience through industry training.

"I am very proud of how well SIAST Chemical Technology students performed in this competition," says Lynda Kushnir Pekarul, SIAST's dean of Science and Health. "The symposium provided an excellent opportunity for the students to shine as they presented their applied research projects."

The Western Canadian CSCT Student Symposium is open to students who are enrolled in a chemical technology diploma program at NAIT, SAIT or SIAST. Thirteen students participated in the oral presentation category at this year's symposium, held at NAIT. Evaluation criteria include presentation skills, such as organization, poise and eye contact, as well as technical content and the ability to respond to challenging questions. Next year's symposium will be held at SIAST Kelsey Campus in Saskatoon.

SIAST is Saskatchewan's primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training. A member of Polytechnics Canada, SIAST offers apprenticeship training and certificate, diploma and degree programs. The institution serves 26,000 distinct students through campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and through extensive distance education opportunities.

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