

Media Release

For Immediate Release

SMU, IBM and RBC Set to Introduce Liberated Learning Technology to the Canadian Club

September 22, 2006

Saint Mary's University (SMU), IBM, and the RBC Financial Group will be playing a unique role at the Canadian Club in Toronto, Ontario on Monday, September 25, 2006.

Mike Zafirovski, President & CEO, Nortel, will be giving a talk on leadership in our emerging globalized world to over 900 leaders from the Canadian and international business community. At the same time the audience will be introduced to an exciting technology and research collaboration.

SMU, IBM and RBC will be there to share news of their work in Liberated Learning. RBC has been active in showing others how this cutting-edge technology can be incorporated into the corporate world. RBC is now supporting the second phase of the corporate application of Liberated Learning. The University has enjoyed its relationship with RBC and looks forward in this exciting chapter for Liberated Learning.

"Liberated Learning is a new approach to fostering greater access to information using a specially designed speech recognition technology and we hope to raise awareness of this unique technology to others in the business community," says Keith Bain, International Manager of the Liberated Learning Consortium.

"The technology enables real time captioning of lecture and presentation material and simultaneously produces web accessible multimedia transcripts. This technology, originally developed for the university classroom has already seen use in the public and corporate domains and is now poised to benefit a broader community," he adds.

"We are thrilled to be sharing this technology with others and hope that other companies will investigate applications for their workplaces," he says.

"RBC is always looking for innovative and powerful solutions to meet the needs of our diverse employee and client base. We look forward to entering the next phase of this exciting partnership with SMU and IBM," says Nelson Torrao, Program Manager of Applied Innovation at RBC.

Saint Mary's is also working in partnership with Trent University and IBM Research to engage national Canadian disability organizations in the development process for IBM ViaScribe™ speech recognition technology; the cornerstone of the Liberated Learning concept. Working with these organizations and the Government of Canada through the Office for Disability Issues (Human Resources and Social Development Canada) is the beginning of an exciting new era for Liberated Learning.

"To solve accessibility challenges we need collaboration between business and universities. When we work together we can break through the barriers to full inclusion and help drive a societal transformation where everyone can achieve their full potential," says Frances West, Director of the IBM Human Ability and Accessibility Center.

The project team has initiated this key phase of community involvement by demonstrating the technology to national organizations such as The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, The Canadian Hearing Society, Easter Seals Canada, the Neil Squire Society, and the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada to name just a few. All are enthusiastic about the potential of this leading edge technology to support and further the aspirations of all Canadians.

Liberated Learning began when the Atlantic Centre for Research, Support and Access for Students with Disabilities, at Saint Mary's collaborated with IBM Research in 1998. Since initial testing, the team has grown to encompass 15 universities in a global consortium dedicated to enabling barrier free access to information (www.liberatedlearning.com).

Saint Mary's University is known for its community outreach projects, both in Canada and around the world. Saint Mary's, founded in 1802, is home to one of Canada's leading business schools, a Science Faculty widely known for its cutting-edge research, a comprehensive and innovative Arts Faculty and a vibrant Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.

For More Information:

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