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Advocacy and Media Report:

Canada in Colorado: Academic Workshops for University Faculty and K-12 Teachers

September 21-22, 2005

SUMMARY:

On September 21 – 22, DENVR hosted two academic workshops sponsored by Foreign Affairs Canada/ACE and the Association for Canadian Studies in the U.S. (ACSUS). These workshops, a pilot program of ACE and ACSUS, were a resounding success for both the organizers and the participants. On the first day, faculty from six Colorado and Wyoming universities learned about resources for strengthening Canadian content in their courses and at their universities, and discussed specific opportunities and plans at their universities. On the second day, approximately 20 K-12 teachers were provided with an armload (literally!) of teaching resources and materials, and enthusiastically discussed and experienced new ways of teaching their students about Canadian history, geography and culture.



Details:

During this set of two workshops, funded by ACE, sponsored by the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, and hosted by the Denver Consulate General, Colorado and Wyoming educators were provided with a wealth of information on resources and materials available to them for increasing Canadian content in their classes.

Dr. Chris Kirkey (ACSUS Councilor and Director, Center for the Study of Canada at Plattsburgh State University of NY), assisted by Dr. George Sulzner (President, ACSUS) led the first workshop with faculty and administrators from the University of Colorado, Colorado State University, the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado College, the Colorado School of Mines and the University of Wyoming.

The workshop was tailored to the specific interests of the participants – including political science, voice and music, security studies, and history – and was carried out in a hands-on, interactive manner. In addition to providing information about the experience of Canadian Studies programs around the country, Dr. Kirkey provided information on professional associations and grant opportunities. Participants demonstrated strong interest in the many resources and tools available to support and encourage Canadian Studies or Canada as a comparative focus to their various course offerings or activities.

Outcomes and follow-up activities:

- The U.S. Air Force Academy is planning an assembly on US-Canada relations in early 2006. Their representatives at the workshop benefited greatly from the information provided and committed to working with DENVR to strengthen Canadian participation and content in their workshop.
- Prof. Cheryl Wells from the University of Wyoming plans to introduce a course on Canadian history in the spring semester.
- The School of Mines is exploring adding Canadian content to their honors program, their economics courses and is also considering establishing an exchange program with a Canadian university. DENVR ARO will work with them on all these activities.
- DENVR ARO will work with Colorado State University, the University of Colorado and with Colorado College to solidify the Canadian interests already present at the universities into a formalized program.



Nadine Fabbi (Associate Director, Canadian Studies Center, University of Washington) led the second workshop for K-12 educators, with presentations also by Betsy Arntzen (University of Maine) and Tina Storer (Western Washington University). Some 18 schools from around Colorado were represented by teachers of social

studies, languages, and history. The participants themselves were given a Canadian history and culture lesson as they learned about resources on the web and elsewhere available to them to teach about Canada. The teachers all left with books, maps, magazines, and other teaching tools.

The workshop generated enormous enthusiasm among the participants for teaching more Canada in their classrooms. As the state of Colorado mandates the inclusion of Canadian content in the grade six curriculum, the teachers spoke of plans to utilize the teaching tools in their classrooms and host similar workshops at their individual schools.

DENVR will follow up with all participants in both workshops to ensure that the momentum generated at the workshops will continue as the faculty and teachers return to their classrooms. A program of one-on-one visits has already been drafted. Specific outcomes will be reported as they are realized.

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