



## **BCNET Hosts Gala Event to Inaugurate Kelowna's Connectivity to a World-Wide Research Network**

KELOWNA, BC (February 09, 2006) – Dr. Richard Tees, acting Deputy Vice Chancellor, UBCO led a celebration today to announce Kelowna's connection to BCNET, a "super" broadband global research network that runs at 10,000 times the speed of the commercial Internet.

These "super" high-speed, high-bandwidth global connections via BCNET will greatly expand the Okanagan higher education community's capacity for research and collaboration. Kelowna's researchers can now connect with colleagues provincially, nationally and globally – facilitating the development of innovative research projects in areas of education, health, physics, the arts, and science.

"This increased connectivity is key to achieving our mandate as a research-intensive university," said Dr. Richard Tees, acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor, UBC Okanagan. "Researchers such as Dr. Rebecca Tyson, who specializes in biological modeling, will be better able to connect with fellow researchers around the world and share her research into the dispersion of the codling moth. This orchard pest is a problem not only in the Okanagan but in other areas around the globe."

Using high-speed dedicated wavelengths called lightpaths, BCNET has interconnected University of British Columbia Okanagan, Okanagan College, Kelowna General Hospital, and the BCIT Aerospace facility to a newly constructed data exchange centre – known as the Kelowna Transit Exchange – that links to researchers to the provincial, national and global research network. Located in the Landmark Technology Centre, the "Transit Exchange" was created in partnership with local industry. CANARIE, Canada's Internet development organization, has provisioned the Intercity lightpaths, contributed funding and assisted in the implementation of equipment.

Access to BCNET will affect the growth of research and the availability of education in the region. "This is a critical component in the technological development of our region," said Okanagan College President Jim Hamilton. "It will provide the necessary backbone for further infrastructure improvements that can facilitate economic development in our service area."

These sentiments were echoed by Robert Fine, Executive Director, Economic Development Commission, for the Central Okanagan. "The Economic Development Commission has been a big supporter of BCNET and the KELTX, not for what it brings to the Region in the short term but rather the long term," he explained. "Providing bandwidth for researchers to allow UBC Okanagan and its partners to meet their full potential is

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the obvious short-term benefit, but the creation of the exchange in Kelowna is another key step in building up access to and availability of technology infrastructure in the community.”

BCIT will seek to improve its already superior aerospace and aviation program with access to BCNET’s world-wide connection. “BCNET’s capability will continue to facilitate our unique information and communication needs as a polytechnic,” said Dr. James Watzke, Dean of Applied Research at BCIT. “As we look to expand our applied research programs into a number of areas, including aerospace, avionics and secure transportation, at both our Kelowna and Vancouver-based Aerospace Technology Campuses, it will be critical to be connected to our research partners and colleagues around the world, enabling fast and comprehensive access to mutually beneficial information.”

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#### About BCNET

BCNET is a not-for-profit society formed to provide high-speed optical network capabilities – often called advanced networking – to British Columbia's higher education and research institutions. Dedicated to providing high-capacity, "super" broadband, research networks to BC's research and higher education communities, BCNET operates a critical piece of the infrastructure that keeps British Columbia at the forefront in technological advancement and innovation. Up to 10,000 times faster than the commercial Internet, these specialized advanced networks provide the backbone for innovation in research, education and science in British Columbia.

For more information please visit our website [www.bc.net](http://www.bc.net)

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