



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Northern Lakes College Convocation 2014

June 6, 2014 (High Prairie, Alberta) – Families, friends and Northern Lakes College representatives gathered to celebrate the achievements of the 819 students graduating in 2014. The convocation ceremony was held at the Gordon Buchanan Recreation Centre and many friends and families were in attendance to support those graduating.

The processional was led by elder Dave Matilpi, who then opened the ceremony with a special invocation. Master of Ceremonies Brad Hestbak, Senior Director of External Relations at Northern Lakes College, welcomed the students, friends, families and special guests. Greetings and congratulations were imparted by Bev New, President, Metis Nation of Alberta; Linda Cox, Mayor, Town of High Prairie; and William Kostiw, CAO, MD of Big Lakes.

Archie Cunningham spoke at the convocation for the last time as Chair of the Board of Governors after 40 years of service with the college. “Those of you receiving diplomas today are better equipped to be leaders in the community. Your education will shine a light on your careers, your family, your future and your community. Now it is your privilege and responsibility to let it shine.”

Keynote speaker Audrey Anderson, Principal of Peerless Lakes School, shared her story with the graduands and spoke about her challenging childhood and her eventual discovery of her passion for education. “For those of us who have struggled, we are strong for what we have overcome and it is our job to inspire those who are still struggling,” she said. “All of you graduating are helping your community. You are role models and you must always lead for those who are following behind you.” During the ceremony, Audrey was presented with the Northern Lakes College distinguished alumni award. She is the first recipient of this award, having graduated from the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program offered by the college in 2004.

Ann Everatt, President and CEO of Northern Lakes College, addressed the graduating class of 2014. She said, “Be fearless, as you progress through your career... don’t be afraid to take on new challenges or learn a new skill, have faith in yourself. Northern Lakes College will always be here for you. We are proud to have served you and we are so proud you are now our alumni.” She continued, “I am proud to be the President of a College that places so much emphasis on student success. To be able to have that focus requires a Board of Governors, a faculty and staff who are committed to working with each and every student who wishes to pursue a career path. We can assure you that the Northern Lakes College commitment to each student who chooses Northern Lakes College will remain a key focus.”

Awards were given to students in recognition of outstanding achievements in various areas. Nellie Robinson in the Power Engineering program was awarded the Board of Governors Leadership award, and Crystal Orr in the Academic Upgrading program earned the Board of Governors Scholarship, which is given to a student who has exemplified the philosophy of lifelong learning. The Doreen Bellerose Memorial award was presented to Herman Auger, a student from the Peerless Lake Campus. The Governor's Collegiate Bronze Medal, which recognizes a student with the highest academic standing in an academic program, was presented to Melissa Kroeker of the Practical Nursing program. A complete list of the award recipients can be found at www.northernlakescollege.ca on the convocation page.

Joyce Boucher, President of the Student's Association, shared the pride she felt for those graduating. "Today's graduates, I applaud you as you change the world. Many of you have toiled endless hours with paper and exams. Take a moment to breathe it all in, and look around at your family and pat yourselves on the back because you did it!" Valedictorian Leanne Supernault gave an impassioned and emotional speech. "No one got here today without stumbling, but don't be afraid to make mistakes. Don't get comfortable and satisfied, challenge yourself. The workload may be heavy but it's worth every hour spent on it. Today let's look back on all that we have done and give ourselves a hug. You are amazing, you are ready to take on the world!"

The nursing students celebrated their graduation with a traditional Capping and Pinning Ceremony on Thursday, June 5. The ceremony is a 150 year old tradition that is conducted in candlelight, and each nursing student is presented with a nursing cap and pin. "It is important that we reflect on nursing's past, present and future role in continuing the profession as Florence Nightingale envisioned," explained Bonnie Porat, Director, Health Career Programs. "We affirm within ourselves that as nurses, we are identified as one of the most trusted professions in Canada and know that we continue to be critically important and significant to the wellbeing of society."

This year, 60 nursing students from Barrhead, High Level, High Prairie, Slave Lake and Grande Prairie graduated. It is the largest graduating class for the nursing program to date at Northern Lakes College.

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Northern Lakes College is located in more than 26 communities across northern Alberta. Certificate and Diploma Programs offered include academic upgrading, business administration and office administration, health sciences and human services, trades and technology, university studies and a variety of continuing education and workforce development certificates and courses.

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