



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, September 21, 2016

Lodgepole Indigenous Resource Center officially opens on campus
Center promotes indigenous cultural education, engagement and collaboration

Calgary, AB – Students, faculty, staff and the ACAD Elder Council gathered to celebrate the official opening of the Alberta College of Art + Design’s (ACAD) Lodgepole Center. The event, hosted by ACAD President + CEO, Dr. Daniel Doz, included speeches, a sacred pipe ceremony and a tour hosted by ACAD’s Indigenous Liaison, Tina Kinnee-Brown.

The Lodgepole Center will provide a venue that will engage and inform all levels of ACAD regarding Alberta’s rich indigenous heritage. As well, the space will host programming on traditional teachings open to all students and staff, and provide support to Indigenous students on campus. ACAD’s indigenous student population is 11.2 per cent, the largest of any urban post-secondary campus in Alberta.

“The evolution of the Lodgepole Center has come from our conversations with our indigenous alumni and is an example of how collaboration creates success at the college,” said Dr. Daniel Doz, ACAD President + CEO. “This space is available to all who seek to learn about our province’s indigenous heritage and engage our students, faculty and staff. I look forward to seeing what great things come out of this space in the months to come.”

The name, Lodgepole Center, was given to the space by the ACAD Elder Council to reflect the supportive nature of the lodgepole, traditionally placed at the center of the tipi and which carries the weight of the covering. The space will facilitate Elder advising and support, traditional ceremonies and workshops, sharing circles and more. All members of ACAD are welcome to attend as the Lodgepole Center is a dedicated safe and all-inclusive space.

The opening of our Lodgepole Center reinforces our commitment to our students, alumni, faculty and staff and wouldn’t have happened without the continuing and generous support of the Government of Alberta (Access to the Future Fund Initiative) and the Suncor Energy Foundation.

“At Suncor, and through the Suncor Energy Foundation, we’ve had an opportunity to work alongside many Aboriginal communities across Canada, including those who are part of Treaty 7. What we’ve discovered, and continue to learn, is how deeply we are all connected,” said Paul Gardner, Suncor Energy Foundation board chair and senior vice president, Human Resources, Suncor. “It’s our hope that through places like the Lodgepole Centre we can continue learning through celebration, dialogue and connection.”

All campus members are welcome and encouraged to drop by the new center on the upper third floor of ACAD. Hours of operation are Monday thru Friday **8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

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For more information: [Steven Hodges](#) *Communications + Engagement Specialist*
Alberta College of Art + Design 403-464-5183

ABOUT the Lodgepole Centre - The Story of a Name + Pipe Ceremony

Hiy-hiy, Miigwech, Ish'nysh, Marcee, Nitsíniyi'taki

The Elders Council for The Alberta College of Art + Design (ACAD) was formed on November 7th, 2015 to advise us on the creation and programming of an Indigenous gathering place for students, faculty and staff on campus. ACAD was gifted with the name, Lodgepole Center. This name reflects the circle of life teachings, in which there is always a center core, that represents the coming together of all things. An example is the tipi, in which the center pole that carries the cover is called the Lodgepole. Lodgepole means that all people are working together, from all walks of life, to share and build strength in each other with the gifts of who they are. The Lodgepole Center is a sacred space which acknowledges and nurtures the inter-connectedness of life. Its key purpose is to provide a sense of belonging to individuals and to be welcoming to all.

ACAD's Lodgepole Center would like to deeply thank the following people and organizations:

ACAD's Elder Council: Darryl Brass (Ojibway/Cree), Linda Brass (Sarcee), Edmee Comstock (Metis), Paul Daniels (Stoney Nakoda), Francis Melting Tallow (Blackfoot), Ruth Scalplock (Blackfoot), and our Elder Advisor, Casey Eagle Speaker (Blood). **ACAD:** Dr. Daniel Doz (President + CEO), Marianne Elder (Associate Vice President, Student Affairs), Alison Miyauchi (Acting Vice President, Research + Academic Affairs), Tamara Himmelspach (Interim Aboriginal Liaison), Richard Brown (Chair, School of Visual Art), Charles Bell (Chair, School of Communications Design), Kristy North Peigan (Alumni, BDes), the Engagement, Admissions + Student Affairs, and Finance teams. **Donors:** The Government of Alberta (Access to the Future Fund Initiative) and Suncor Energy Foundation.

Pipe Ceremony:

The ACAD Elders Council held a Sacred Pipe Ceremony to open and bless the Lodgepole Center. The Elders would invited dignitaries from the Canadian and Alberta Government, Suncor Energy Foundation and the Executive leaders of the Alberta College of Art + Design to participate in the ceremony.

A Pipe Ceremony is a gathering in which Elders preside. The ACAD Elders Council chose to conduct a pipe ceremony to bless and open the Lodgepole Center as the pipe will give life to the center and traditional teaching speaks of the pipe as our leader and teacher. The pipe ceremony supports the opening as a "birthing" of the center and will be led by Elder Linda Brass, as the female brings forth creation/birth and is also traditionally responsible for the Tipi and lodging. As the name Lodgepole was given to the space to represent circle of life teachings and coming together of all things, it also references the center pole of the tipi that carries the cover, which is the protection and shield for the family that inhabits it.

During the ceremony the participants sat in a circle and follow the lead of the Elders Council during smudging, prayers, songs, and blessings. All participants will be expected to follow these traditional laws and experience the "opening" of the Lodgepole Center at the Alberta College of Art + Design.