

## Olds College Recognized for Internationalization Excellence

**May 28, 2014 – Olds, Alberta** - Olds College been recognized with the Association of Canadian Community College's (ACCC) Silver Internationalization Excellence Award for the Dominican Republic Coffee Project.

Olds College has developed strong partnerships with coffee growers in the Dominican Republic and helped them export and market their product in Canada. Olds College began this exercise in social entrepreneurship in the Fall of 2012 when Dan Fullerton, the former director of International Development, had the idea to import coffee from the Dominican Republic. Olds College began importing green coffee beans from the Belarminio Ramirez Coffee Company located at Jarabacoa, Dominican Republic. The coffee beans are grown by selected growers and are grown organically and shade-grown. The most unique aspect of the Olds College coffee is that 90% of the profits from the coffee go to a Dominican Republic Scholarship program. This unique program encourages children in the mountains of Jarabacoa to remain in school and supports technical farmer training to enhance both coffee quality and farm revenue.

"This project has been an exercise in both entrepreneurship and social awareness," explains Toby Williams, Director, Entrepreneurship and International Development at Olds College. "Our goal was to show our students the importance of creating relationships with community and businesses in order to make a difference".

The Olds College Dominican Republic Coffee project has seen 8000 pounds of coffee beans imported by Olds College, with sales reaching close to \$65,000. Funds were used to support the Compadre Pascual School, a small rural school near the coffee growing area. Improvements to the school included replacing the roof, building washroom facilities, installing a solar panel to generate electricity, and providing four netbook computers.

Students participated and gained valuable experience by applying their skills to each step of the project, from its conception to the marketing of the final product. Fifteen Olds College students recently ventured to Jarabacoa earlier this year to learn about coffee production and the lifestyle of the Dominican Republic.

ACCC, soon to be known as Colleges and Institutes Canada, is the national and international voice of 95 per cent of Canada's publicly funded colleges, institutes and polytechnics. We work with industry and social sectors to train 1.5 million learners of all ages and backgrounds at campuses serving over 3,000 urban, rural and remote communities in Canada. ACCC operates in 29 countries via 13 offices around the world.

For More Information Contact: [www.oldscollege.ca](http://www.oldscollege.ca)

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