



Press Release

OCE Builds Competitive Advantage through Ontario's Next Generation of Technology Sector Talent

Toronto, ON (June 21, 2007) – Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc. is proud to announce the first wave of talented students graduating from OCE's Value-Added Personnel (VAP) initiative. The VAP courses work to complement students' technical and research education, equipping graduates with the critical business skills valued by industry so they can hit the ground running when they enter the workforce.

The VAP initiative is a key part of OCE's Talent strategy to build in Ontario a competitive and innovative workforce. The program was developed in response to industry need and is delivered by academic leaders with accomplished business credentials. The graduating students represent hundreds more in labs all over the province who, with the support of OCE, have the early opportunity to work on industrially-relevant research. Last year, more than 3000 people enhanced their knowledge, training and skills through OCE-supported projects, and more than 550 researchers moved to positions in Canadian industry. This next generation is critical to building a sustainable knowledge economy infrastructure. These students will be the people who can facilitate the transfer of technology to industry where it will add value to the province's economy.

Mark Romoff, President and CEO, Ontario Centres of Excellence, says that "This initiative has been gathering momentum since early 2006. Industry leaders were telling us that many of their new tech-savvy hires arrived with gaps in their business and workplace training. Investing to give students these necessary skills allows them to contribute faster and more fully – this pays valuable dividends to Ontario's economy in the long run."

Students participating in the program acknowledge its value. Reza Chaji, PhD candidate at the University of Waterloo, says "Most technology grads aren't familiar with the execution (management and business) side of a technology. VAP helped me to have a clear view about this critical part. I can now effectively manage a research project and prepare it for a company's business needs."

That the courses bring together students across Ontario and across disciplines has proven an added benefit, building new connections between researchers and research facilities. OCE's VAP initiative will graduate another group of industry-ready students in the fall of 2007.

About Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc.

Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc. drives the commercialization of cutting-edge research across key market sectors to build the economy of tomorrow and secure Ontario's global competitiveness. In doing this, OCE also fosters the training and development of the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs, and is a key partner with Ontario's industry, universities, colleges, research hospitals, investors and governments. Celebrating 20 years of innovation in 2007, OCE's five Centres work in communications and information technology, earth and environmental technologies, energy, materials and manufacturing, and photonics. For more information, please visit our web site at www.oce-ontario.org.

To learn more about the VAP initiative or OCE's Talent program, please contact David Kinahan, Communications, at 416.861.1092