

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Merritt Centre Grand Opening

KAMLOOPS-On Wednesday, February 8th, forty-six people gathered outside the University College of the Cariboo's new Merritt Centre for the ribbon-cutting and festivities associated with the opening of UCC's newest centre.

Jim Wright officiated at the opening, which saw Merritt's dignitaries out in full force. Jim commented on the coincidence of UCC's autonomy coming at the same time as the Merritt Centre official opening, and stated that the Merritt Centre reflects the UCC Board of Governor's regional focus and presence.

Board chair Paula McRae remarked upon the "good neighbour" policy of UCC, and stressed that UCC appreciated partnerships with Nicola-region businesses, as well as with other educational institutions.

Merritt mayor Clara Norgaard stressed that the Centre was "much needed," a sentiment echoed by MLA Harry Lali and UCC board member from Merritt Bob Baird, who also offered their congratulations to the staff, faculty and students at the Merritt facility.

Adrian Kershaw echoed everyone's delight, and thanked the advisory committee for advice, support and planning for the Centre, which was 5 years in the making. He reserved special thanks for school district representative Mike Henderson, and for Merritt Community Coordinator Janice Riley, who was pleased to report that student enrolments doubled when the Merritt Centre was built.

The Centre is located right downtown at 1600 Voght Street. A brand-new facility with large, bright classrooms, the Centre features wide hallways, wheelchair access, and a student lounge in the main building. Clean white wall, teal carpets and dark rose countertops give an uplifting appearance, especially when brightened by the generous light from the two huge skylights in the main hall.

Two seminar rooms and a 30-seat classroom at the Centre offer the local community an excellent educational environment as well as a community meeting place. Coordinator Janice Riley is a capable and cheerful young woman with loads of experience and a winning attitude. No wonder enrolments had already doubled by the time Harry Lali, Paula McRae and Bob Baird cut the ribbon!