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Port Alberni Honours ElderCollege Founders with the Gift of Education

A new bursary will be awarded to a Port Alberni student at the 2010 Awards ceremony this spring, in memory and recognition of Hans Affourtit and Val Hughes whose insight and dedication made North Island College's ElderCollege program a reality.

Hans Affourtit had a vision to provide members of the community with the opportunity to access lifelong learning. "Hans believed that age doesn't have to mean you stop learning. He wanted to create an outlet for people to continually explore their curiosities," explains Sylvia Springer, ElderCollege Advisory Board Member. "Val Hughes shared Hans' values. She was so involved in the community, she signed on almost immediately and the two of them never looked back."

North Island College's ElderCollege program is designed for students who are looking for a unique community of adult learners aged 50 plus. The courses offered are diverse, practical and interesting and range in subject matter from computer skills to a lecture series to wine tasting. It's all about learning for enjoyment and for the sake of learning.

The ElderCollege program began with Affourtit and Hughes' efforts at the Port Alberni campus in 1994 and has been growing ever since. The Port Alberni ElderCollege Advisory Board unanimously agreed that starting a bursary in their memory was the most fitting way to honour them not only as individuals, but also for the contributions they made to the ElderCollege program during their lifetimes. "Hans and Val were both very community minded people," says Leanne Moore, Regional Continuing Education & Training Officer at NIC's Port Alberni campus. "Their common thread was a passion for volunteering. We definitely wanted the award criteria to reflect those values."

The Port Alberni ElderCollege Bursary supports a mature student continuing their studies in any program offered at NIC's Port Alberni campus. The recipient must be a resident of Port Alberni, and may be either a full-time or part-time student who works very hard at his/her studies. The recipient must demonstrate financial need and preference will be given to a student who has actively volunteered in the community.

The 2010 Port Alberni Foundation Awards Ceremony will take place on Wednesday, June 2nd at Alberni District Secondary School. Recipients of North Island College awards and bursaries will be recognized for their scholastic achievements. Plus, they will have an opportunity to meet and mingle with the generous donors who have made these awards possible. Everyone is welcome to join North Island College, the NIC Foundation, and Foundation donors in congratulating the Port Alberni award recipients.

The NIC Foundation has provided North Island College students with financial assistance in the form of scholarships and bursaries since 1991. Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, made up of community leaders from the College region, the Foundation actively seeks donations in support of North Island College. Through the continuous support of individuals, local businesses and organizations, the Foundation assists students in achieving their educational goals. For further information about the NIC Foundation, please visit www.nic.bc.ca/foundation or call 250-334-5000 ext 4267.

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