

Northern Ontario Heritage Fund

Province Provides \$1.6 Million for Mining Innovation Centre.

Sudbury, September 25, 1998: The Ontario government will provide \$1.6 million through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) to develop a Mining Innovation Centre at Laurentian University in Sudbury.

The announcement was made today in Sudbury by Joe Spina, Parliamentary Assistant to Northern Development and Mines Minister Chris Hodgson.

"Our government is committed to supporting the development of key and emerging sectors that generate important economic benefits in the North," said Spina. "Through this funding, we are promoting the development of new technology and the growth of a mining-related knowledge-based initiative which will export its unique expertise to other provinces and countries."

MIRARCO - or, Mining Innovation, Rehabilitation, and Applied Research Corporation - is a not-for-profit corporation founded in April 1998 through collaboration among Laurentian University and the private and public sectors. This funding will help the corporation with start-up costs including acquisition of equipment, project development and marketing.

MIRARCO will develop a world class Mining Innovation Centre that will foster mining innovation by converting pure research data into real commercial applications in mining. It will also work in adapting technologies relevant to other industrial sectors.

As well, MIRARCO will provide seed funding for R&D projects in such fields as environmental monitoring, mine planning and design, and mining technology integration. It will also assist in developing partnerships between technology providers, R&D organizations, service providers and industrial users.

"We are pleased to support the establishment of this centre, which will generate economic growth and attract further investment into Northern Ontario," said Hodgson. "This project will further enhance Sudbury's reputation as a centre for mining excellence."

"Our Mining Innovation Centre will commercialize knowledge and deliver industry-relevant products to the private sector," said MIRARCO's Peter Kaiser. "We are very pleased that the province could support this project, which is expected to be self-sustainable within five years, create about 35 new jobs, and contribute to economic diversification in Northern Ontario."

"Our university is delighted to support new and innovative concepts such as this one," said Laurentian University President Dr. Jean Watters. "This Heritage Fund and its members are demonstrating tremendous foresight in helping to promote the North's newest provider of mining knowledge."

"The provincial government and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation, including area board members Darla Scott and Eric Belford, are committed to promoting new economic development opportunities in the North," said Hodgson. "Since October 1996, the province has contributed some \$95 million to 161 projects, generating an additional \$207 million from project partners. This has meant a total investment to date of about \$302 million into the North."

The NOHFC will contribute \$1,632,806 to this project, while MIRARCO and its partners, including Laurentian University and mining companies, will provide the balance of this \$2.5 million initiative.