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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Academics Taking a Lead in Strengthening Saskatchewan's Nonprofit Sector**

Regina, SK – A new Nonprofit Sector Leadership and Innovation Certificate was announced at a conference hosted by Luther College's Voluntary Sector Studies Network (VSSN) and the Saskatchewan Nonprofit Partnership (SNP) on June 9, 2016. "The certificate which was identified as the number one need by the nonprofit sector and, therefore the highest priority goal for VSSN this year," says Franz Volker Greifenhagen, Academic Dean at Luther College at the University of Regina, "is a concrete service that Luther College in partnership with the Faculty of Arts and the Centre for Continuing Education is offering to students – a certification in something very practical and real that they can use."

Ruth Easton, a second year Luther Arts student planning to begin the NSLI certificate in the fall, was one of the seventy participants representing students, academics, government, and nonprofits in attendance at the conference. "I left the conference with a sense that individuals in the non-profit sector are really excited about the students who will be coming out of university with the NSLI certificate in a couple years," says Ruth. "The completion of the certificate will allow students, like myself, to come to the sector with a sense of purpose and a strong understanding of how the sector works, and how it is an important contributor to Saskatchewan's overall economy."

"The certificate would have been very beneficial to me when I was in school," says Wendy Fitch, Executive Director of the Museums Association of Saskatchewan and conference participant, "as I had no way of learning how to operate a nonprofit other than by trial and error on the job."

"The nonprofit sector is everywhere but is not recognized as universal," says Gloria De Santis, VSSN Steering Group facilitator. "The goal of the VSSN and SNP is to generate new energy and excitement within the sector, and increase general awareness of this vital sector within Saskatchewan. The conference and certificate are just two examples of how VSSN and SNP are working together to strengthen the nonprofit/charitable sector within the province."

According to Tracey Mann of the Community Initiatives Fund, the SNP is the community-based arm that positions the nonprofit sector as a desirable and viable career choice that compliments VSSN, the formal education arm that promotes the career opportunities to students, and provides education about the sector.

# News Release



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