



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Frontier College speaks out in support of Canada's learners, volunteers and literacy practitioners

**TORONTO, Ontario** – October 4, 2006. In 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney came to Frontier College to launch a federal government program in support of literacy – the National Literacy Secretariat.

Since then, funds from this federal agency have helped to build an infrastructure of literacy programs in every part of Canada, developed new and effective literacy teaching materials and supported original research and public awareness programs about literacy in our country.

“I am very concerned about how the cuts to literacy funding announced on September 25<sup>th</sup> will harm the adult learners, teachers and volunteer tutors who make up this national literacy network,” says John O’Leary, President of Frontier College.

In 2005, Statistics Canada and the OECD confirmed that one in four Canadian adults has trouble carrying out basic tasks involving reading and writing.

An investment in literacy programming would have a significant positive impact on our society and on our economy.

A rise of one per cent in literacy scores relative to the international average is associated with an eventual 2.5-per-cent relative rise in labour productivity and a 1.5-per-cent rise in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per person, according to Statistics Canada.

Frontier College is calling on the appropriate government ministers and their officials to meet with the leaders of provincial literacy coalitions and the national literacy organizations to work out a solution to this situation. By working together, the literacy network and the federal government can achieve a great vision for our country – literacy for all.

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Literacy is an essential skill in today’s world. At **Frontier College**, we believe it’s a fundamental right. Low literacy skills are directly linked to poverty, poor health and high unemployment. Forty-two percent of adult Canadians have trouble with everyday tasks that involve reading. That’s millions of Canadians who are not reaching their potential. Through a network of thousands of volunteers, Frontier College is helping people to realize their potential and seize the opportunities that come their way.

For more information about Frontier College or to arrange an interview with John O’Leary, one of Canada’s leading literacy experts, please contact:

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