

For immediate release | Wednesday July 18, 2012

“No better place” for new mineral resources program

WHITEHORSE – Dr. Joel Cubley can’t think of a better place to teach Yukon College’s new Mineral Resources program than right here in Whitehorse.

“There is such an incredibly varied natural geology to expose students to – right outside the classroom door,” said Cubley, instructor and coordinator for the one-year certificate and two-year diploma program.

“The long history of mining in the Yukon provides an excellent framework for exploring the industry with a focus on local mineral deposits. In addition, there is also a heightened level of awareness and involvement from the mining community that will serve to support the students’ learning.”

“It’s a fantastic place to offer these courses.”

Fresh from completing his Ph.D. at the University of Calgary, Cubley arrived in the territory in April to take charge of the new program.

The program will provide one-year graduates a solid foundation for work in the mineral exploration industry, and second-year graduates a greater breadth of knowledge and experience that will in turn provide for greater career opportunities across the entire mining industry.

Cubley believes Yukon College provides something else to prospective students that he has benefitted from through his own education - small classes with a low student to teacher ratio.

“The opportunity to create a similar experience for students here really appeals to me. The teaching process becomes much more like mentorship and not simply lecturing. It provides a level of interaction that isn’t feasible at a larger institution.”

Cubley’s major goal is to get students on-the-ground experience at Yukon mines, exploration projects, and remediation sites; as well as providing exposure to related mining service industries.

“We are open to whatever Joel may call on us for,” said Mike Burke, Chief Geologist at Golden Predator Corp.

Burke was part of the committee that oversaw the development of the program and believes it will greatly benefit the mining industry and those starting out in it.

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“Many of us discover this career by chance,” said Burke. “The recent boom has given a lot of people experience in an industry they are unfamiliar with, as labourers, core cutters or soil samplers. Having this educational opportunity at the College enables them to enhance their career prospects without leaving the territory.”

Burke is certain that future graduates of the mineral resources program will have little trouble finding jobs in the Yukon mining industry. He says employers will certainly have a much greater confidence in hiring people who have invested in their education between field seasons.

Burke says that Golden Predator remains committed to hiring locally first for its Brewery Creek and other projects, as are many other mining and exploration companies. He believes this only serves to benefit the Yukon by keeping more money here and creating a stable workforce.

Burke remains optimistic about the exploration and mining opportunities in Yukon.

“The Yukon has an abundance of mineral wealth. Even after 100 years, it’s still early days in our development of a mining industry in the Yukon.”

Classes begin August 22nd with a series of field exercises that introduce students to basic geological principles in an outdoor setting. There are still a few places available in the program. Those interested in a dynamic, well-paid career can reach Joel Cubley at (867) 335-6664 or jcubley@yukoncollege.yk.ca.

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