

# the insider

Weekly newsletter published  
for everyone in the Athabasca  
University community

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The Grinch didn't steal Christmas this year—at least not at AU. The season was celebrated in style with many departments going all out with their decorations. This first issue of The Insider for 2011 closes out the old year and begins the new.



Posted live on The Landing:  
<https://landing.athabascau.ca/>

Athabasca University 

# Mobile learning research gets a major boost at AU

**The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) has awarded \$346,142 to Athabasca University to support Open Social Mobile Systems for eLearning Research (OSMoSYS) led by Dr. Jon Dron of the School for Computing and Information Systems. The announcement was made January 21 by the Honourable Gary Goodyear, Minister of State for Science and Technology.**

Dr. Rory McGreal, AU's associate vice-president of Research, welcomed CFI's investment in OSMoSYS.

“The equipment for this CFI project will enable AU researchers to experiment with the creation, adaptation, dissemination and distribution of learning activities and content via mobile devices,” he said. “For example, the 3D scanners will be used for digitizing physical historical artifacts, like aboriginal cultural items such as headdresses, axes, mukluks, knives and other objects. These will then be made available for study by researchers and accessible to the public using their mobile phones, tablets and netbooks.”

“For me, the great thing about this award is the opportunities for connected learning and research that it affords,” said Dr. Jon Dron, principal investigator for OSMoSYS. “The research that will be enabled through this project cuts across many disciplinary areas and enables a diverse group of researchers to extend and enhance their capabilities together and individually. Connected and networked, these rich multimedia, mobile and social tools will enhance knowledge and learning in places and ways that have hitherto been difficult or impossible.”

The CFI announced a total of \$61,291,274 in new funds to support 246 projects at 48 institutions across Canada. The CFI is an independent corporation created by the government of Canada to fund research infrastructure. Since its creation in 1997, the CFI has committed \$5.3 billion in support of more than 6800 projects across the country.

“For me, the great thing about this award is the opportunities for connected learning and research that it affords,” - Dr. Jon Dron

## News In Brief



### MAIS Student Finalist in Writing Competition

Heather Clitheroe, a student in the MAIS program at AU, was one of the finalists in the recent fall 2010 Black Lawrence Press chapbook competition.

“Alas - I didn't win. But (I was) very honoured to be a finalist!” she wrote on The Landing.

The title of Clitheroe's entry in the fiction category, I Bet I Can Find a Million People Who Hate Slab Cakes, is one of the stories in the chapbook that was previously published in the online literary journal [Hobart](#) this past fall.

A list of Clitheroe's other published work can be found on her [website](#).

## DID YOU KNOW?



Athabasca University's Facebook page now has over 1,000 fans

# President Addresses AU's Finances at Year-End Town Hall Forums

At the town hall forums in November and December, AU President Dr. Frits Pannekoek assured staff that layoffs are unlikely.

The forums, which are held at least once a year at all AU locations, focused this time on AU's financial situation. Like most other post-secondary institutions across North America, AU faces budget challenges due to factors such as the economic downturn of recent years.

But the situation is not severe enough to require layoffs, the president assured staff. "My absolute last resort is layoffs," said Pannekoek on December 6 at the forum in Athabasca. "Rather than laying people off to meet a bottom line, we've decided to freeze positions instead."

Sometimes external people are hired in cases of extreme need, Pannekoek

continued, but as of December there were over 50 frozen, unfilled positions.

Pannekoek said the coming year will likely be another "zero year," which means a year that AU receives a zero per cent increase in funding from the Government of Alberta. The president noted that it could have been a decrease, so it's not entirely bad news.

"We're going to have another year of some pressure. We'll probably have to continue the freeze," he said. "(But) this year it looks like we're going meet our numbers, so the (freeze and other) strategies have worked."

"The number one value I have is the people who work at AU," Pannekoek emphasized. "And we also value the input of the entire university

community in designing solutions (for the financial challenges)."

Because there is no magic bullet that can remedy the situation, the university is exploring several financial strategies in tandem. Pannekoek outlined these strategies as well as value-based principles that should guide all strategies. The principles and strategies are available on his blog on The Landing.

Pannekoek thanked staff for the excellent ideas for financial solutions that they have submitted in recent months and encouraged them to keep the ideas coming. He offered to make himself available for face-to-face lunch discussions about financial strategies. Ideas for financial solutions can also be submitted by e-mail to [Pannekoek](#) or [Troy Tait](#), acting director of operations in the Office of the President.

## Key Issue — The President's Salary

In 2009-2010, the gross (total) salary of the president was \$529,000, while his net (take-home) salary was \$361,885.

In 2008-2009, his gross salary was \$494,000, while his net salary was \$340,594.

"In 2009 I made the commitment that I will return anything over \$340,000 as a gift to the university," said Pannekoek. The money Pannekoek donates to AU is matched by the Government of Alberta.

AUGC determines the president's salary by using data from sources such as the survey of salaries of university presidents conducted by the Human Resources Association of Universities of Western Canada (HRAUWC). The president's salary is in the mid-range of salary levels for Canadian university executives.

See page A20 of [AU's 2009-2010 annual report](#) for more details on both the president's salary and the salaries of the university's other executives.

## Key Issue — The Negative Perception About Distance Education Institutions

"The single most important issue facing open and distance universities today is the quality perception," Pannekoek said. "It's the perception that institutions like ours are not the same quality."

Pannekoek routinely hears about this issue from a global perspective in his role as president of the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE). When it comes to AU, the problem boils down to this:

More and more traditional universities with strong brand recognition are entering the distance education marketplace, making the marketplace more competitive. These traditional universities may not offer the same quality of distance education that AU offers, because they're just getting started in the field. But students may choose these universities over AU, both because these universities are more well-known, and also because of the common perception that the education offered by distance learning institutions is not as good.

## Follow the President on The Landing

[Dr. Frits Pannekoek's blog](#) on The Landing includes entries about AU's principles and strategies for dealing with the current financial challenges. He has also started a collection of budget model literature on The Landing that he encourages you to read.



# AU Hosts New UNESCO Chair



**Dr. Rory McGreal, associate vice-president Research at AU, is the new UNESCO Chair in Open Educational Resources, established at Athabasca University last year, in conjunction with the**

## **Commonwealth of Learning (COL).**

The official announcement will be made at Government House in Edmonton on January 31, 2011.

The specific objectives of this chair are to:

- Take a leadership role in networking, capacity-building, teaching, training and research related to open educational resources (OER), in line with UNESCO's priorities and the UN Millennium Development Goals.
- Build on the OER community and complement it with the creation of an international decentralized OER network, essentially moving from a community of interest to a community of practice, in order to further strengthen the OER movement and ensure the sharing of information and best practices.
- Promote action at the institutional, national and international levels and link OER initiatives, practitioners and researchers internationally using the existing OER community and the OER network that may evolve into a network of networks.
- Conduct and promote participatory research on OER that will benefit marginalized groups and developing world communities, mostly focusing on Africa, gender equality, rural and remote communities and youth, and disseminate the results of research through open scholarly journals, open archives and relevant wikis, blogs and websites.

# AU Will Not Renew Access Copyright Licence

Athabasca University, like the majority of universities in Canada, has decided not to renew its licence with Access Copyright, a Canadian copyright licencing agency. The current agreement expired on December 31, 2010.

With the expiration of the licence, AU will move quickly to make more extensive use of open educational resources (OER), material such as lectures, texts, lessons and podcasts produced by other universities and made freely available for use. Where the use of OER isn't possible, the university will approach copyright holders directly for permission to make use of their work.

AU is also committed to opening its learning content online for free access to OER, the first Canadian university to do so.

Access Copyright applied to the Copyright Board of Canada for permission to increase its annual fee to \$45 per full time student from the current fee of \$3.38. In addition, the agency is asking the Copyright Board to impose an interim tariff on Canadian universities in advance of its final ruling on the new application.

"We cannot afford such an exorbitant increase, nor do we want to pass it on to our students," said Dr. Rory McGreal, associate vice-president research at AU. "And the idea that the Copyright Board is considering an order to pay Access Copyright an advance in order to cover their exorbitant salaries and to pay for their legal actions against us is outrageous."

Please visit [AU's News and Events](#) for the complete news release issued by AU.

# AU Press January 2011 Releases

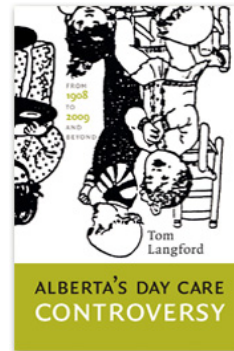
## Light from Ancient Campfires: Archaeological Evidence for Native Lifeways on the Northern Plains



Light from Ancient Campfires is the first book in 20 years to gather a comprehensive archaeological record of the Northern Plains First Nations. Author Trevor R. Peck is the plains archeologist with the Archaeological Survey of Alberta. Beginning with the earliest material evidence of a human presence in Alberta, he embarks on a monumental archaeological survey of the region's original inhabitants.

In the course of his study, Peck also reviews the shifting interpretations of the archaeological record that have occurred over the past two decades.

For more information, visit [Light From Ancient Campfires](#)

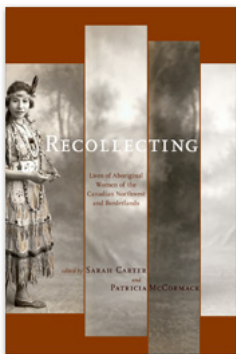


## Alberta's Daycare Controversy: From 1908 to 2009—and Beyond

Daycare in Alberta has had a remarkably durable history as a controversial issue. Since the late 1950s, disputes over daycare programs, policies, and funding have been a recurring feature of political life in the province. Alberta's Daycare

Controversy traces the development of daycare policies and programs in Alberta, with particular emphasis on policy decisions and initiatives that have provoked considerable debate and struggle among citizens. Author Tom Langford is an associate professor in the department of sociology at the University of Calgary.

For more information, visit [Alberta's Daycare Controversy](#)

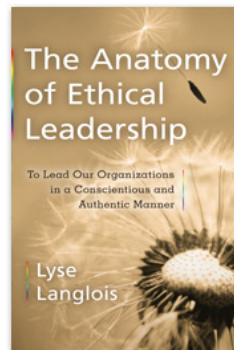


## Recollecting: Lives of Aboriginal Women of the Canadian Northwest and Borderlands

Edited by University of Alberta professors Sarah Carter and

Patricia McCormack, *Recollecting* is a rich collection of essays that illuminates the lives of late-18th-century to mid-20th-century Aboriginal women, who have generally been neglected in narratives of the history of the West. The contributors look beyond the representations of these women in conventional historical documents and instead draw on records generated by the women themselves, including their beadwork, other material culture and oral histories.

For more information, visit [Recollecting: Lives of Aboriginal Women](#)



## The Anatomy of Ethical Leadership: To Lead Our Organizations in a Conscientious and Authentic Manner

Performance at all costs, productivity without regard to consequences and a highly competitive work environment: these are some of the features of the modern workplace that can generate moral dilemmas. Author Lyse Langlois is an associate professor in the department of industrial relations at Université Laval and a member of the Inter-

University Research Centre on Globalization and Work. The book is grounded in her extensive field research with leaders in education and health care, and maps out a model for ethical decision-making in hopes of changing our prevailing philosophy of management.

For more information, visit [The Anatomy of Ethical Leadership](#)

**Want more? Visit AU Press at [www.aupress.ca](http://www.aupress.ca) or:**



### Online education the way of the future

AU student Ian Heikoop doesn't believe in student debt. The 18-year-old is in his second year in AU's Bachelor of Business Management program with plans to continue on to a co-op MBA, without incurring a cent of debt.

In December, he responded to an open invitation from The Financial Post for students to share their experiences of financing their education. Heikoop spoke about the advantages of studying at AU. "Online education is a pretty good deal and a

good solution to the student finance problem," he wrote. "Online education is the way of the future."

His flexible online schedule allows him to run his own business, Oxford Digital Solutions, which provides digital formatting, desktop publishing and web development and design.

His closing remark, that AU doesn't use a fraction of the technology tools available, generated a spirited discussion among staff members.

Read more at the [Financial Post](#).



## Second Annual Alberta Alfresco Conference Held at AU

Staff from AU, Edmonton Public Schools, Grant MacEwan University and other organizations converged at AU Edmonton on December 3 to participate in the 2nd Annual Alberta Alfresco Conference.

The conference, organized by the Alberta Alfresco Users Group, was an opportunity for people to learn about the latest developments in Alfresco content management, to share their successes in using Alfresco and to find solutions for Alfresco-related challenges at their organizations.

"This event was repeated again this year because all the groups who attended last year felt it was very valuable to meet and compare notes with other Alfresco users," says Karen Stauffer, AU's Alfresco program manager.

"There is a huge demand from the Alberta Alfresco Users Group to continue meeting, and preferably on a more frequent basis." Representatives from Alfresco were also on hand to explain the services they offer in training, consulting and technical support.

At AU, Alfresco is being implemented university-wide for web content management and records and document

management. About half a dozen Alfresco-related projects are currently underway through funding from the Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP), the Community Adjustment Fund (CAF) and other sources.

Some Alfresco projects at AU have already been completed, tested and installed on a staging server. Once AU's Alfresco Enterprise Content Management (ECM) team is satisfied that all Alfresco projects are working together smoothly, the team will move the projects into production. This is expected to happen in early 2011.

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# Corporate Wellness Programs Discounts

Cheers to your health and wellness and to an exciting 2011. The Wellness Committee has arranged corporate rates for AU employees at three fitness facilities.

When signing up for any of these three programs, please remember to take the completed registration form and either a recent pay stub or obtain a letter of employment by emailing Nichole Collins.

## Edmonton

### City of Edmonton Sports and Fitness Facilities

AU employees and their families receive a 20 per cent annual membership discount, 15 per cent multi-admission pass discount, or bulk admission rate discounts at all Edmonton sports and recreation facilities.

Employees may also customize their bulk admission rate package to include the Valley Zoo, Fort Edmonton Park, John Janzen Nature Centre and Muttart Conservatory.

More information at [Edmonton Corporate Wellness Program](#).

## St. Albert

### Servus Credit Union Place

AU employees and their families receive a 15 per cent annual membership discount.

Visit the [Servus Place corporate rates website](#) for more information and to download the registration form.

The Wellness Committee is currently working on adding these programs and many more to an AU fitness corporate rate website. Stay tuned for the launch of this website and more very exciting membership discounts that span the country.

## Athabasca

### Athabasca Regional Multiplex

AU employees and their families receive a 20 per cent membership discount for use of the multiplex and Landing Pool. Visit the [Multiplex website](#) to complete the registration form. Drop it off at the multiplex front reception desk.



## News In Brief

### Who Frank is, Plus Other Mysteries Solved, in *Morty, who's Frank?*

AU course materials editor Eve Comrie and Athabasca watercolourist Joan Sherman launched their children's book *Morty, who's Frank?* at AU Athabasca in December.

Written by Comrie and illustrated by Sherman, *Morty, who's Frank?* is about the misadventures of a frog captured by two boys bearing a suspicious resemblance to Comrie's grandsons.

To view a copy of the book, visit the AU Edmonton foyer on the 11th floor of the Peace Hills Trust Tower or the central foyer at AU Athabasca. To purchase a copy, e-mail [Eve Comrie](#).



Eve Comrie (left) and Joan Sherman

# The Story of the Stauffer Inuit Soapstone Carving Collection

**AU Alfresco program manager Karen Stauffer and her husband Scott recently donated their collection of Inuit soapstone carvings to AU. The following is Karen's story of how they amassed this impressive collection, which is on display at AU Athabasca near the main Library entrance.**

My husband Scott developed his interest in Inuit soapstone carvings while on his first posting as an RCMP constable in Yellowknife in 1979. He purchased some carvings in the hamlet of Coppermine (now Kugluktuk) and then became very interested in learning about the artists, their work and how the type and colour of the soapstone indicates the region from which it came.

Our first Inuit community posting was Rankin Inlet, and there Scott began to seriously pursue his collection. While travelling for work to nearby communities, he always checked the Co-op stores for carvings. It didn't take long before the carvers knew Scott was keen on the carvings, and they often came to our door with their art.

It was also not unknown for an artist to receive a fine in court and then show up with a carving for sale to get the money to pay the fine. Many of the carvers were hunters but depended on the sale of their carvings for money. I know of one incident where an art-

ist was convicted and given a fine in court, then turned around and sold a carving to the judge for the exact amount of the fine.

On one trip to Coral Harbour, Scott spotted a walrus skull, complete with a perfect set of ivory tusks, for sale at the Co-op. He knew right away that he wanted renowned Rankin Inlet artist Pierre Karlik to carve those tusks.

On Scott's return to Rankin Inlet, he took the skull to Pierre and asked him to do the carving. But Pierre refused, stating he didn't need the money. However, Scott wasn't willing to give up. He owned a beautiful Winchester rifle (that I had given to him as a Christmas gift), which he took over to Pierre to see if he could trade the rifle for the carving. Pierre readily agreed to this.

By the time we transferred to Alberta in 1994, we had a significant collection of Inuit soapstone art. We have proudly displayed our collection in our Fort McMurray home for several years. However, as we planned to retire and downsize our housing, the question

regarding what we should do with this collection kept coming up.

In a chance conversation with AU president Frits Pannekoek, I discovered that the university houses an art collection and would be interested in accepting our collection as a donation. This seemed like a perfect solution for us, because I have a long history with the university as both a student and an employee. I am thrilled that this collection, for which we both have a huge emotional attachment, will be kept and displayed at AU. We feel we still have some connection to the carvings and always will.



Scott and Karen Stauffer

## News In Brief

### Showcasing AU Research

All AU faculty and professional staff researchers are invited to submit abstracts for the 2011 Academic Research Forum poster session. This year's forum theme is Conducting Interdisciplinary and Multi-Disciplinary Research.

The AU Research Forum is an opportunity to showcase your research for the benefit of our research community. Abstracts are invited for

completed research, research in-progress and program or project initiatives related to the forum theme. Researchers are asked to stand by their posters during the morning, noon, and afternoon breaks to answer any questions.

The deadline for submission of abstracts is Friday, January 28, 2011, 4:30 p.m.

Contact [Alice Tieulie](#), the Academic Research Committee secretary, for instructions and a copy of the abstract form. Completed forms can also be sent to her.



### Multicultural Counselling and Social Justice



Dr. Sandra Collins, with AU's Graduate Centre for Applied Psychology, is the co-investigator on a three-year research project that received \$88,000 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). With lead investigator Dr. Nancy Arthur from the University of Calgary faculty of education, the goal of the project, *Critical Incidents in Counsellor Education for Multicultural Counselling and Social Justice*, is to conduct research regarding counsellors' views of their preparation for multicultural counselling and social justice. The research will examine the key concepts and competencies that counsellors identify as critical for their professional roles and the ways that professional education has prepared them.

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### Sustainability Options



Dr. Aris Solomon, associate professor of accounting in AU's Faculty of Business, was awarded \$80,000 from the Alberta Regional Development Network (ARDN) for his project *Achievable Sustainability Options for a Resource-Based Community*. The project will be undertaken by Athabasca University and NorQuest College with community partners Hinton and Grande Alberta Economic Region (GAER). The project will develop a conceptual framework leading the way for these resource communities to move towards a more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable footing in the future.

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### Program Evaluation

Also from the ARDN, AU received a grant for \$9,960 to evaluate the Alberta-North Community Access Point Certification Program. Alberta-North is a partnership of seven post-secondary schools, including Athabasca University, committed to distance education in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories. As part of the design for self-sufficiency, Alberta-North developed a certification program for Alberta-North Community Access Point service and support staff. This grant will provide feedback and information to support the program's refinement and improvement, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the capacity of each of the 87 communities connected with Alberta-North's Community Access Point initiative.

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### Project Management Implementation



Dr. Janice Thomas was awarded a research grant for US\$50,000 from the Project Management Institute (PMI). The research seeks to answer the question "How are investments in project management implementations best planned and managed in order to deliver sustainable, long term benefits?" This is Thomas's second grant from PMI.

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### Connecting New Observatory

AU has received over \$500,000 to establish and operate a wireless high speed network between AU Athabasca and the new AU Geophysical Observatory (AUGO2), through the Infrastructure Extension Program of the Canadian Advanced Internet Network (CANARIE). Access to a reliable, high speed, high capacity network link will serve as a drawing card for new and existing provincial, national, and international research partners to conduct studies at AUGO2. It will also allow users to retrieve and use their data rapidly, and facilitate the development of rich-content, low-latency remote instrument user interfaces.

### Conference Funding for SCIS Undergraduates

The School of Computing and Information Systems (SCIS) received \$6,000 through the Alberta Innovates Technology Futures' (AITF) ICT Strategy Planning and Recruitment (ISPR) to sponsor a team in the CaseIT 2011 competition at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver next month. This is an opportunity for three AU undergraduates to further develop their team skills, apply their AU education to real-life business scenarios through strategic IT analysis and presentation, work with other AU students and faculty and put some extracurricular activities on their resumes. The two team coaches are Dr. Alain Ross, assistant professor from the Faculty of Business and Dr. Qing Tan, assistant professor from SCIS.

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### Annual Fall Competition

As part of the annual fall competition, AU researchers have submitted for consideration six Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) proposals, seven proposals to the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and five Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) applications.

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### SSHRC Program Information

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) is pleased to have launched the renewal of its program architecture in 2010. Information on SSHRC's three programs, [Talent](#), [Insight](#) and [Connection](#), is available on the SSHRC website, as are details on current and upcoming SSHRC funding opportunities.

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### New Tri-Council Policy

The long-awaited second edition of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans (TCPS2) is now in effect. The document is available on the [Panel on Research Ethics website](#). From here on, all Canadian human research ethics reviews will be conducted according to TCPS2.

The AU Research Ethics Board will keep the AU community apprised through general announcements as local upgrades and any major changes to AU's documents and procedures are implemented. The research centre reminds all researchers to visit the [REB website](#) and refresh their bookmarks regularly to ensure they obtain and complete the most recent version of the AU ethics application form and associated guidelines for each new project, as these are subject to change on an ongoing basis.

If you have any questions, please contact the [AU REB](#).

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### Research Collaborative Forum

Friday, January 28, 2011



- Dr. Helen Lam, AU Faculty of Business, on Inter-union Conflict in a Multi-union, Non-exclusive Bargaining Regime: Lessons from New Zealand
- Dr. Fernando Angulo, Business School at Grant MacEwan University, Dr. Diego Prior and Dr. Josep Rialp, both from the department of Business Economics at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, speaking on Linking Marketing Capability and Organizational Learning to Financial Performance.

## News In Brief

### Coaching Debut for AU Student

AU student Ryan Oulahen made his coaching debut recently with the junior team the Brampton Battalion in the Ontario Hockey League, the team where his own junior career started.

Selected by the Detroit Red Wings in the fifth round of the National Hockey League's 2003 entry draft, Oulahen embarked on a four-year professional career with the Grand Rapids Griffins, Detroit's American Hockey League affiliate, in 2005-06. He played 302 games, accumulating 53 goals and 54 assists for 107 points before an injury ended his career in 2009.

With the support of AU, Oulahen plans to become a teacher. "I've always felt coaching and teaching go hand-in-hand. This is a great start for me."

[www.TheBramptonNews.com](http://www.TheBramptonNews.com)

Athabasca University 



International Academy of  
African Business and Development

## Challenges in the Era of Globalization

May 17 - 20, 2011

Robbins Health Learning Centre

Edmonton, Alberta

### CALL FOR PAPERS

Submission deadline January 31, 2011

Join over 200 scholars, grad students and professionals from around the world who are actively engaged in business and economic development issues as they relate to Africa.

Special sessions with eminent panelists and contributors, some of which include:

- ▶ Changing paradigm of analysis of foreign direct investment: Chinese firms in Africa
- ▶ Successful Canadian business experiences in Africa
- ▶ The future of doctoral and post-doctoral business education in Africa in an era of globalization
- ▶ Stay tuned for updates on additional sessions

For more information visit our website:

<http://iaabd2011.athabascau.ca/index.php>

Got a story for *the INSIDER*?

Please get in touch with:

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