

OKANAGAN COLLEGE EXPANSION

Thorpes take the lead

**Couple will co-chair
\$5-M fundraising campaign
for Centre of Excellence**

Special to the Herald

Two well-known citizens of the South Okanagan are adding their support to the fundraising campaign for Okanagan College's Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Building Technologies and Renewable Energy Conservation in Penticton.

The husband and wife duo of Rick and Yasmin Thorpe have a long association with Okanagan College and will serve as honorary campaign co-chairpersons of the \$5-million fundraising campaign for the Centre of Excellence.

"I'm thrilled," said Okanagan College Foundation president Steve Tuck. "Yasmin and Rick are tremendous supporters of the college and post-secondary education in the Okanagan. They've helped make higher learning a reality for many students in our region through their scholarship program."

"I know the respect they have earned from the residents of the South Okanagan and British Columbians," said Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton.

"Their presence will significantly benefit our fundraising and help make the Centre of Excellence a reality in Penticton."

"Rick and I are strong advocates of Okanagan College, and we are committed to working with the citizens, businesses and the communities of the South Okanagan to make the new Centre of Excellence a reality," said Yasmin.

Yasmin is active in numerous programs focused on writing and literacy in the South Okanagan. As a co-founder of the volunteer organization the Penticton Writers and Publishers, she was instrumental in organizing an annual week-long B.C. Youth Write Camp and is also very involved in the South Okanagan's Raise-a-Reader program.

Rick served for 13 years as an MLA and cabinet minister in the South Okanagan, retiring in the spring of 2009.



Special to the Herald

Rick and Yasmin Thorpe of Penticton were named the honorary chairpersons for the \$5-million expansion to the Penticton campus of Okanagan College.

In 2005, the Thorpes, in partnership with Okanagan College and UBC Okanagan, established a \$250,000 scholarship fund. To date, 28 students from the Okanagan have received \$2,500 first-year scholarships — for a total of \$70,000.

"Yasmin and Rick have been sincere and valuable friends to the College as it has developed," said Jim Henderson, who is spearheading the volunteer fundraising committee in the South Okanagan. "Their decision to help with our fundraising efforts is a welcomed boost."