

# College accredited by HR association

Special to The Daily Courier

When Ryan Lazauskas graduated from Okanagan College in June with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, the 27-year-old knew he had written his last college exam. But in the back of his mind, another daunting exam was weighing heavy on him – the National Knowledge Exam, the first step in obtaining the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation. “I did a lot of research before I chose to study human resources at Okanagan College,” said Lazauskas, who is now a human resources assistant at Tolko Industries. “The program has an excellent reputation and the professors have the industry experience that really makes a difference in the real world. I knew I wanted to pursue the CHRP designation and was confident an education at Okanagan College would put me in the best position to be successful after graduation.”

However, Lazauskas isn’t going to have to challenge his knowledge with the national exam now.

Baldev Gill, chief operating officer of the Human Resources Management Association (HRMA) of B.C. and the Yukon, was in Kelowna last week to recognize Okanagan College as an HRMA accredited institution.

It means graduates of the Human Resources Management program are exempt from writing the exam.

The announcement was welcome news for recent



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Baldev Gill, left, of the Human Resources Management Association and Heather Banham from Okanagan College sign the HRMA accreditation of the college.

graduates like Lazauskas. “This new accreditation is just one more reason to take business at Okanagan College,” he said. “It’s a lot to expect students to finish their degree, start a new career and at the same time prepare for a really intense exam. I am so glad the program has been accredited by HRMA. It allows new graduates to really focus on building their careers and adjusting to life after post-secondary.”

Dr. Heather Banham, dean of Okanagan College School of Business, said the accreditation marks a significant achievement for the institution’s human resources specialty. “This agreement represents a tangible outcome ensuring that BBA graduates are well equipped to take on professional roles in organizations of all types and sizes,” said Banham. “Employers can be confident these students have developed

competency in the nine required practice areas and are on their way to attaining certification as a Certified Human Resources Professional.” Lazauskas couldn’t agree more. “This accreditation is a huge step forward for the program,” he said. “The professors at the college bring so much industry knowledge into the classroom and that creates a learning environment that prepares

students for the challenges they will face when they enter the workforce.” The agreement will be retroactive for three years, meaning students who graduated with a BBA and human resources management specialty dating back to May 2013 will receive an exemption from writing the exam, providing they achieved a minimum 70 per cent grade-point average.