Enrolment numbers on rise

New programs draw students to college

BY ROGER KNOX
MORNING STAR STAFF

Opening week numbers are encouraging at the Kalamalka campus of Okanagan College.

John Lent, the college's regional dean for North Okanagan, said Thursday that enrolment numbers at his campus are up 13 per cent from the close of the 2006-07 year.

"It's hard for me to know the exact numbers at this point, so I'm being cautious and very hopeful," said Lent. "Our numbers are a bit higher (than other regional campuses)."

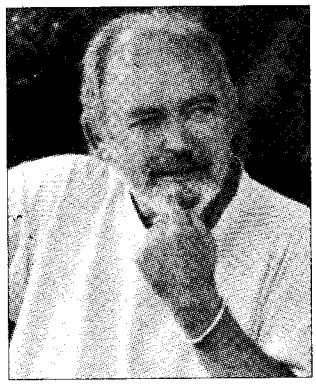
Lent credits the creation of new programs for helping his campus draw more students.

One of the new programs is an introductory health program, the Human Service Worker program, which is a two-year diploma course that leads to social work in the health care industry.

The program is led by Mark Nishihara, who Lent described as a "terrific new instructor."

The Home Support Resident Care Attendant program has also drawn substantial interest from students. It's a six-month certificate program where students are trained to work in long-term care facilities.

"We have constructed a 10-bed lab at the Kal campus to help these programs," said Lent.



John Lent

A licensed practical nursing program will start at the Kal campus in September, 2008. Right now, the college's continuing studies program is offering access to licensed practical nursing courses.

"Someone taking the Home Support Resident Care Attendant program can then upgrade to licensed practical nursing," said Lent.

"It's a beautiful fit, particularly with the number of long-term care facilities and individual care living facilities that are now part of our communities."

Lent said science numbers at the campus are up.

"We have a number of students taking university courses, and that's really exciting," he said.

The college also introduced a new two-year diploma program on writing and publishing. A total of 44 students are enrolled in creative writing.

Okanagan College's Kal campus is still taking students in the Adult Academic and Career Preparation (formerly Adult Basic Education) program. Lent said full numbers in AACP won't be known until the end of September.