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PRESS RELEASE – MARCH 5, 2004

***International competitors ready to take on local students at
OUC's 21st Annual Spaghetti Bridge Contest***

OUC's Spaghetti Bridge Building Contest is becoming a United Nations of pasta masters as it draws more international competitors eager to vie for the title each year.

"I think bringing back the heavyweight competition this year through the generous sponsorship of Huber Mackenzie Turik Architects Inc. has served to generate a lot of interest and excitement in the contest both locally and internationally," says Peter Murray, associate professor of Physics and long-time organizer of the event.

Teams from the Netherlands, Hungary, and Iran will be competing against OUC and local high school students at the 21st annual contest being held at the North Kelowna Campus Friday, March 12.

The team-building competition gets underway at 9:30 a.m. in the Recreation Centre, with judging for individual secondary/post-secondary entries beginning at 11 a.m., the team competition at noon, and the heavyweights at 1:15 p.m. Replicas of the Kettle Valley Railroad trestles built by students from nine elementary schools in the region will be showcased in the demonstration category at 10 a.m.

Sjoerd Nobel and Bastiaan Naber, engineering students representing the Delft University of Technology (Netherlands) are hoping to regain the title that was narrowly lost to students from the Budapest Politechnic last year. But András Köves and Matyas Kuttyik, mechanical engineering students from the Hungarian school, say "we have been working on our bridges 24/7 and plan to represent our school and our country well."

Joining the competition for the first time will be a contingent of civil engineering students from the University of Tehran: Hamideh Abolghasemi Riseh, Mojtaba Heidari Moaf, Pooneh Maghoul, and Pouya Bani Bayat. "Being able to visit Canada was a great

incentive to participate,” says Hamideh. “It is so exciting to take part in a contest that is worldwide, to see other students, to talk with them, and to experience such a unique trip.”

Some of foreign students have won competitions in their respective countries to earn the right to compete at OUC. But they will face stiff competition from a number of post-secondary and secondary school students from the Okanagan region.

Approximately 175 competitors in total are expected to participate in this year’s event. Prizes will be awarded for the most functional pre-built bridges to individuals as well as teams who participate in an on-site, timed building competition.

“We are grateful for the community support this contest has received for so many years,” says Dr. Andrew Hay, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering Technologies. “It is a unique way to teach students some basic concepts of engineering design and provide them, and the many spectators, with a fun and entertaining experience.”

Participants could also come away with scholarships and cash awards. Each event rewards the top five students or teams with a prize. The Huber Mackenzie Turik Heavyweight competition is offering students an opportunity to win \$1,500 for the first-place winner, \$1,000 for second place and \$500 for third place as well as OUC Bookstore gift certificates. The local architecture firm has also established two \$1,000 scholarships contest participants can apply for. Students competing in the individual and team in categories can win cash awards valued up to \$150 and hardware.

Additional sponsors of this year’s contest include: OUC, the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of B.C. (APEG), Foundation for Education and Advancement in Technology, the OUC Students’ Association, Earth Tech, Northside Industries Inc., Whitewater Specialities Ltd., Air Liquide, Okanagan Precision Machine Ltd., Multi-Power Products Ltd., Fenders’ Autobody, Kelowna Tool & Die, Falcon Ladder, Advanced Surveying Ltd., Right Weigh Scales, and Monashee Adventure Tours.

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For further information about the contest, contact Dianne Powles at 250-862-5473.