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# News Release

## Ceremonial Room Connects Aboriginal Students to Their Roots ATCO Gas donates \$10,000 towards Aboriginal Ceremonial Room at NorQuest College

EDMONTON – Aboriginal students attending NorQuest College have a new place to gather for counselling, prayer, and traditional cleansing ceremonies. The College officially opened its Aboriginal Ceremonial Room today, providing students with continued Aboriginal support services in a colourful new setting symbolizing hope, love, faith, and strength. NorQuest students and Elders use the multi-purpose facility to conduct healing circles, story telling, traditional Smudging (cleansing) ceremonies, and as a meeting room for the Aboriginal Student Club.

“We are very proud to offer our students a place where they can share stories, connect with their Elders, and conduct traditional ceremonies to celebrate their culture,” says NorQuest College President, Dr. Wayne Shillington. “The Ceremonial Room is a wonderful complement to our many Aboriginal programs and support services and will serve as an inspiration to future generations of NorQuest students.”

The Aboriginal Ceremonial Room exists because of a \$10,000 donation from ATCO Gas. “ATCO Gas is pleased to support NorQuest College in its endeavour to provide affordable post-secondary alternatives for Aboriginal peoples in a culturally supportive environment,” says Jerome Engler, President of ATCO Gas. “Together, ATCO Gas and NorQuest College are working to remove barriers for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students with the goal of creating employment opportunities and ultimately, more sustainable communities for all Albertans.”

The Aboriginal Ceremonial Room also features several unique art pieces including a traditional Smudging Table for cleansing ceremonies, a hand-crafted Willow Medicine Wheel, student paintings, and a symbolic Cree blessing hand-painted on the wall.

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