

Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mount Royal Faculty Association to host #abpse Advocacy Week Post-Secondary Education is a #PriorityThatMatters

The Mount Royal Faculty Association (MRFA) will host its annual Post Secondary Education Advocacy Week from March 7 to 11, 2016 on the Lincoln Park Campus.

A series of daily events for students, staff, and faculty, timed to coincide with the return of the legislative session where important decisions about Alberta's future will be made, have been designed to explore the pivotal role that post secondary education must play in that future.

The MRFA is optimistic that Alberta's government will continue to recognize the vital role played by higher education in our province, as was most recently suggested by the creation of a single Ministry of Advanced Education. We are very pleased that Minister Schmidt has accepted our invitation to participate in Advocacy Week, and we look forward to welcoming him to campus on Friday, March 11.

The MRFA firmly believes that for advanced education to be an "important contributor to [the government's] plans to diversify the economy", as Minister Schmidt has recently stated, there must be continued investment in post secondary education throughout our province, especially at this time of economic uncertainty.

Post Secondary Education remains a priority that matters, regardless of the global price of oil.

A 2014 survey conducted at the University of Alberta found that a mere 4% of Albertans wanted the government to spend *less or much less* on Post Secondary Education in Alberta. That was a stark contrast to the 56% of those surveyed who wanted the government to spend *more*, and the remaining 24%, who wanted the province to *spend much more*.

Only increased investment will ensure greater access for students, and provide staff and faculty with the resources needed to contribute to the diversification of the Alberta economy as well as the growth of the province's social and cultural institutions.

For post secondary institutions to remain world-class centres of teaching and research, innovation and learning, where the leaders of a new diversified economy are educated and inspired, stable and long-term funding is pivotal.

Past government decisions to cut funding to post secondary education led to the elimination of programs, the loss of jobs, and less access for students. But that was the past; now is time to invest in Alberta's future.

For more on Advocacy Week se: <http://www.mrfa.net/content/advocacy-week-2016>

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