

April 27, 2010

## **NorQuest College announces next President & CEO, Dr. Jodi Abbott**

EDMONTON – The NorQuest College Board of Governors today appointed Dr. Jodi Abbott to serve as the next president and chief executive officer of the College effective July 1, 2010.

“We are delighted to welcome Dr. Abbott as President-designate of NorQuest College,” said Board of Governors’ Chair Wendy Kinsella. “We are inspired by her vision, passion and energy, and know that she is the person to lead NorQuest into an exciting future.”

The Search Committee, led by Board of Governors Vice-Chair Lynn Faulder, worked very hard and considered many capable candidates before recommending Dr. Abbott. We thank the Committee for that effort and we thank all the candidates for their interest in our College,” said Kinsella.

“Some have been to the moon and some have studied Mars. We now have an important opportunity to leverage a strong foundation and launch our insightful strategic plan to a new galaxy,” said Dr. Jodi Abbott, President-designate of NorQuest College. “Through a passion for learning, progressive thinking and a results orientation, I look forward to this next 'quest' - moving NorQuest rapidly to being relevant, responsive and supporting students in your Community. I’ve got my ticket for the launch, how about you?”

Dr. Abbott joins NorQuest in July from her current position as Senior Vice President, Quality Performance Improvement for Alberta Health Services. Dr. Abbott’s career includes leadership roles with the Canadian Paralegic Association of Edmonton, Vice President of Family Service for Catholic Social Services, Executive Director with the Canadian Diabetes Association, and executive director roles in Alberta Health and Wellness. Her love of skating is at the forefront and she is the Vice President of the Board of Skate Canada.

As a former member of NorQuest College Board of Governors, Dr. Abbott demonstrated progressive contributions in the development of the College’s 2010-2020 Strategic Plan.

“This is a truly exciting time for NorQuest students and staff as the College experiences significant growth in programs and services to learners,” said Search Committee student representative Deborah Kinisky. “I believe the President designate will be most effective in meeting these new opportunities to position NorQuest as a leading community college in Alberta.” Kinisky is an award-winning, first-year student in the Mental Health Rehabilitation Diploma program.

Dr. Wayne Shillington’s retirement was announced September 2, 2009 after 13 years as NorQuest’s president and CEO. Conroy Ross Partners was hired November 30, 2009 to conduct an international presidential search. The selection process involved a search committee comprising representation from faculty, staff, students, management and the board.

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## Biography – Jodi L. Abbott, PhD

Dr. Jodi Abbott has had an exciting and diverse career in Western Canada. Being close to community has always been important to her, and is evident in her employment and volunteer contributions.

Jodi's career began with the Canadian Paraplegic Association in Edmonton where she developed strong relationships with clients and partner organizations, becoming a dedicated advocate for people with disabilities. She continued to pursue her interest in the area of disabilities through her work with Catholic Social Services where she was Vice-President of Family Service.



Over the past 11 years Dr. Abbott has held various executive management roles primarily in the health-care system. As Executive Director with the Canadian Diabetes Association, Prairies Area, she created a crucial partnership with the Government of Alberta and improved services available to Albertans with diabetes. Dr. Abbott also supported collaborative work in the area of chronic disease management as a pioneering member of the Alberta Health Living Network. This work was recognized by the World Health Organization in 2003–2005. Outside Alberta, Dr. Abbott was a member of the Ministers Advisory Committee on Diabetes in the Province of Manitoba and assisted the national body of the Canadian Diabetes Association in key governance revitalization. Even today, the association calls on her for expert advice regarding policy and program development.

Dr. Abbott's career continued with Executive Director roles in Alberta Health and Wellness where she was involved in monitoring communicable disease in Alberta, managing physician compensation and developing key policy direction for the Department. During her time with Alberta Health and Wellness, Dr. Abbott participated in the Deputy Ministers Committee on Pandemic Planning and the Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee on Academic Medicine.

In 2007, Dr. Abbott joined Capital Health as Vice-President, Operational Policy and Integration. With the inception of Alberta Health Services she focused her work in the areas of system redesign, quality, patient safety and performance improvement. Notable achievements include raising awareness of the complexity of system integration including the development of relationships with several international universities who study clinical integration, coordinating a publication on integrated care, co-leading the development of a quality dashboard to measure system performance, and establishing a province-wide approach for patient safety. Dr. Abbott joins NorQuest in July from her current position as Senior Vice President, Quality Performance Improvement. While serving with Alberta Health Services, Dr. Abbott also had the privilege of participating on the Edmonton Nominating Committee for the Premier's Council for Economic Strategy.

Dr. Abbott has been fortunate to have had inspiring mentors to guide her career. As a result, she takes pride in building relationships and mentoring students, staff and volunteers as they develop technical and leadership skills. As a visionary leader, Dr. Abbott inspires others to “go the extra mile” to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. This leadership style has allowed her to excel as an executive manager.

Dr. Abbott completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Calgary, and her Masters and PhD in Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta. Her thesis work focused on the adjustment and re-employment experience of people with spinal cord injuries. Dr. Abbott has maintained connection with the academic community through her work in health care and by supervising graduate students. She has continued her learning journey by completing training in strategic leadership, change management and quality improvement.

Of Jodi's passions, her love of skating is at the forefront, where she holds a position as Vice-President of the Board of Skate Canada. She is also an International Skating Union judge in singles, pairs and dance, and had the privilege of judging in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver. Jodi continues to support local sport development by judging in communities across Alberta as her time allows. In addition to her role as a volunteer with Skate Canada, Jodi participated in Rotary in the Edmonton area for several years.

Jodi is proud to be married to Michael, her husband of 27 years, and shares her home with their two yorkies, Zoe and Izzy. She is a long-time Albertan having grown up in Edson where much of her family still resides.

As a former Board Member of NorQuest College, Dr. Abbott demonstrated progressive contributions in the development of the Strategic Plan (2010-2020). As a result of seeing the possibilities, Dr. Abbott looks forward to leading NorQuest into the future.

## About NorQuest College

NorQuest College is the Edmonton region's community college and the largest community college in Alberta. NorQuest serves 10,000 learners each year at campuses in Edmonton, Wetaskiwin and Stony Plain, at seven community learning sites and online in over 200 Canadian communities.

NorQuest offers diplomas and certificates in health, human services, business and industry career programs. The College has expertise in adult literacy, academic upgrading, ESL, Aboriginal education, and learner supports for students with disabilities. NorQuest is the regional steward for the Edmonton region – encompassing an area from Camrose to Jasper and Drayton Valley to Whitecourt – ensuring access to post-secondary education. For more information, visit [www.norquest.ca](http://www.norquest.ca).

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