

# News Release

December 10, 2013

For Immediate Release

## **Pockets of Innovation Webinar Series to Showcase Ground-Breaking Online Learning Innovations at Ontario's Public Colleges and Universities**

(THUNDER BAY, ON) - Building on the growing interest in its [Pockets of Innovation Series](#), Contact North | Contact Nord is launching the Pockets of Innovation Webinar Series in January 2014 to showcase the ground-breaking innovative work in online learning taking place at Ontario's 24 public colleges and 22 public universities.

As a province-wide initiative, Contact North | Contact Nord has identified, researched and showcased 90 pockets of online learning innovation through face-to-face interviews and demonstrations at public colleges and universities across Ontario. The Pockets meet three criteria: they represent a new approach, they improve the learning experience of students, and the developers are prepared to share what they've learned and the challenges they encountered with colleagues in other public colleges and universities in Ontario.

The Pockets highlight creative approaches to online courses and programs, blended learning, the development of resources such as OERs, e-texts, online assessment, e-portfolios, and virtual reality, as well as institutional change strategies, and student support and faculty development programs. Visit [www.contactnorth.ca/pockets](http://www.contactnorth.ca/pockets) on the Ontario Online Learning Portal for Faculty & Instructors to see all of the Pockets.

The free Pockets of Innovation Webinar Series will feature 45-minute live, interactive webinars focused on a specific Pocket from a college or university.

The first webinar, scheduled for the week of January 20, 2014, features [MOOC at Fanshawe](#) and explores how Fanshawe College successfully designed and offered their first massive open online course. Participants will be able to ask questions as they consider how they might apply this model in their own college or university.

The second webinar, scheduled for the week of February 10, 2014, features York University's [SPARK](#), the Virtual Learning Commons. This online resource helps students with their research, writing, and learning skills and is available for use and adaptation by all Ontario colleges and universities.

The third webinar, scheduled for the week of March 3, 2014, features faculty at [Georgian College](#) demonstrating their use of virtual reality to enhance student learning and confidence through interactive role playing.

“The Pockets of Innovation Webinar Series provides a professional development opportunity for faculty and instructors from across Ontario to learn about emerging developments in online education and harness best practices in online teaching”, stated Maxim Jean-Louis, President – Chief Executive Officer, Contact North | Contact Nord.

Complete details on the Pockets of Innovation Webinar Series, including the date, time and registration process for MOOC at Fanshawe, will be available at [www.contactnorth.ca/pockets](http://www.contactnorth.ca/pockets) in early January.

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**For more information:**

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**About Contact North | Contact Nord – Ontario's Distance Education & Training Network**

Contact North | Contact Nord is Ontario's distance education and training network serving more than 600 small, rural, remote, Aboriginal and Francophone communities across the province through its 112 local online learning centres.

Contact North | Contact Nord partners with Ontario's 24 public colleges, 22 public universities, over 250 public literacy and essential skills and training providers and the Government of Ontario to provide local access to education and training opportunities.

Its three portals provide an online learning virtual hub to Ontario students, prospective students, faculty and instructors averaging close to 450,000 unique visits a year: Ontario Online Learning Portal for Students ([studyonline.ca](http://studyonline.ca)), Ontario Online Learning Portal for Faculty & Instructors ([contactnorth.ca/home](http://contactnorth.ca/home)), and e-Channel ([e-channel.ca](http://e-channel.ca)).

## Contact North | Contact Nord

Ontario's Distance Education & Training Network  
Le réseau d'éducation et de formation à distance de l'Ontario

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Since it was established in 1986, Contact North | Contact Nord has generated and supported more than 315,000 registrations.

Contact North | Contact Nord is a not-for-profit corporation with its head office in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and is funded by the Government of Ontario.

[www.contactnorth.ca](http://www.contactnorth.ca)