



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

MEDIA RELEASE

December 12, 2006
For Immediate Release

CanWest Global Communications Corp. Donates \$3 Million to Create CanWest Centre for Theatre & Film at UWinnipeg

WINNIPEG—Leonard Asper, President and CEO of CanWest Global Communications Corp., today announced a corporate gift of \$3 million to The University of Winnipeg to establish the CanWest Centre for Theatre & Film. This extraordinary gift will further enhance the national prominence of The University of Winnipeg's highly-regarded Department of Theatre & Film and affirm its reputation as a centre of excellence in theatre and film studies in Canada.

“We're pleased to be part of the dynamic development and growth underway at The University of Winnipeg and in downtown Winnipeg,” said Asper. “The theatre and film graduates make a significant contribution to the Canadian theatre and television scene and we rely on their skills to help our company grow. The vision, commitment to excellence and talent pool in The University of Winnipeg's theatre and film studies therefore appealed to us both as corporate citizens and investors. Support for the performing arts and for post secondary education are two of CanWest's designated areas of community investment and we are proud to be part of this project.”

“As a corporation with its head office in Winnipeg, we feel it is important to make a contribution to the further development of our city. Universities enrich our communities and attract students and faculty from around the world. The University of Winnipeg in particular, plays a vital role in the development of our downtown core,” added Asper.

The \$5.5 million project will feature state-of-the-art performance, production and teaching facilities for theatre and film students. It will feature a 120- to 150-seat theatre, and labs and studios dedicated to lighting, sound and recording, and film and media production. As well, the Centre will house specially-designed spaces for rehearsals, teaching, costume, make-up and prop development. The new Centre will fill a critical challenge faced by the University's burgeoning Theatre & Film Department and will be a welcome addition to the arts community and Winnipeg's cultural landscape.

“CanWest's inspirational gift will help The University of Winnipeg produce the brightest and best-educated graduates in theatre and film in Canada,” said University of Winnipeg President and Vice-Chancellor Lloyd Axworthy. “Thanks to CanWest's generosity, this new Centre—in the heart of downtown Winnipeg— will offer tremendous support to our national cultural industries and to our local arts community. We can anticipate truly outstanding opportunities for our students as they train to become Canada's next generation of playwrights, actors, stage managers, dancers, directors, film-makers and production experts.”

CanWest's \$3 million donation will go towards completing renovations of The University of Winnipeg's existing Theatre Building (known as T-21) located at 400 Colony Street in the former Salvation Army Citadel building. In 1999, the Province of Manitoba provided \$3.525 million to UWinnipeg for the purchase and renovation of the building. The University will also contribute \$1.2 million in capital funding to this next phase of the project. Today's announcement launches a campaign to raise an additional \$800,000 for new equipment for the acting studios and film editing facilities.

"The Province of Manitoba is pleased to see this investment at The University of Winnipeg moving ahead with the support of CanWest Global Communications," said the Honourable Eric Robison, Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism. "The renovation and expansion of UWinnipeg's Department of Theatre and Film will give Manitobans improved access to facilities for theatre and film production. With a proud tradition in theatre and a booming film and television industry in this province, the CanWest Centre for Theatre and Film will further our ability to do even more."

Since its inception in 1982, UWinnipeg's Department of Theatre & Film has seen many well-known Canadian actors and filmmakers pass through their programs including Tina Keeper, Pamela Sinha, Brian Drader and Larry Desrochers. Today, the Department offers 90 different courses in acting and directing; design; drama in education; filmmaking; playwriting; and stage management and production. Enrolment in the department has grown by 87 per cent in the past five years, due in large part to the University's reputation for excellence in theatre and film studies.

"CanWest's extraordinary gift creates yet another cultural gem for Canada," said R.M. (Bob) Kozminski, chair of the University's capital campaign. "This investment and lead gift will enable The University of Winnipeg to grow its already impressive stature as a national training ground for talented, educated performing arts professionals. This is a dream come true for our hard working and talented faculty, staff and students."

The University of Winnipeg's Department of Theatre & Film is now one of the largest in the country and is known for its high calibre courses and producing graduates well-connected to the local theatre community. Many Theatre & Film faculty members continue to work in their respective fields and graduates are employed throughout Winnipeg's theatre community including the Manitoba Theatre Centre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Manitoba Theatre for Young People, the Winnipeg Film Group and the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. The new Centre will address the pressing national need for more graduates with high level performance and production skills and enable the University to expand its theatre education and training capabilities.

"CanWest's outstanding gift to this University demonstrates the kind of vision we know and appreciate about CanWest," said Susan A. Thompson, The University of Winnipeg Foundation President and CEO. "We are seeing the emergence at our University of a theatre and film institution of cultural importance to our city, our province and all of Canada. Thank you CanWest for your demonstrated commitment to this University, to the city and the cultural fabric of our community."

CanWest Global Communications Corp. (www.canwestglobal.com), (TSX: CGS and CGS.A, NYSE: CWG) an international media company, is Canada's largest media company. CanWest is Canada's largest publisher of daily newspapers and also owns, operates and/or holds substantial interests in conventional television, out-of-home advertising, specialty cable channels, web sites and radio stations and networks in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Turkey, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Department of Theatre and Film at The University of Winnipeg offers programs in Acting, Design,

Drama in Education, Filmmaking, Playwriting, and Production/Stage Management. Our classes are small and our programs practical. Our faculty is comprised of highly respected and award-winning professionals who are experienced teachers and remain active in their disciplines, bringing relevant and up-to-date instruction to our students.

Located in the heart of downtown, The University of Winnipeg is a compact, diverse, multicultural academic community committed to access and excellence. Home to more than 9,200 full- and part-time students, UWinnipeg has been ranked by our graduates in the Top Ten of all Canadian universities when asked about their “Entire Educational Experience” (Maclean’s Graduate Survey, June 2006). The Globe & Mail 2006 Report Card gives The University of Winnipeg an overall ‘A’ grade in the areas of quality of education, teaching quality, class sizes, faculty-student interaction, and the availability of faculty outside classroom hours. Find out why. Visit www.uwinnipeg.ca

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Ilana Simon, Communications Officer

The University of Winnipeg

T: 204.786.9930 C: 204.782.3279 i.simon@uwinnipeg.ca