

Press Release

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Timmins sees in 3D with world's first library VR Studio

Sudbury, ON, December 1st, 2006 – Timmins is the first city in the world to host a Virtual Reality Facility in a public library. Friday, December 1st, 2006 marked the Official Opening of the Timmins Virtual Reality Studio. The facility is funded in part by the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation, within a \$3.4 million project called the Northern Advanced Visualization Network (NAVNet), managed by Laurentian University's Mining Innovation, Rehabilitation and Applied Research Corporation, MIRARCO. The Official Opening included attendance by the Honourable Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Northern Development and Mines and Chair of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation.

The Timmins Virtual Reality Studio is housed in The Tembec Room as part of the newly-built Timmins Public Library. Chief Executive Officer, Brian Nimeroski, was thrilled that the Timmins Library was chosen as the destination for the VR Studio. "The goal of our new library was to be a resource to the community beyond books," says Nimeroski. "This space achieves that purpose and more, bringing tools on the very edge of today's technology for our city's decision makers, companies and for students, our future leaders."

MIRARCO's Start-up Director, Andrew Dasys, considers the development of this NAVNet milestone as a true testament to the benefits of collaboration. "Virtual Reality has made a convincing case in the oil & gas industry and in gaming. Mining is starting to catch on that this is more than just pictures. Fine tuning your exploration program or developing better methods to 'read' your data is just the tip of the iceberg. When you have the brightest technical minds in the same room, looking at your models, it's almost magical. Imagine the impact on making an investment pitch, achieving community buy-in for land use, or making a multi-million dollar planning decision."

MIRARCO President Dr. Peter Kaiser concurs but indicates that the benefits would not have come without partnerships, saying, "We are pleased that NAVNet is going to add capabilities to Timmins, and know that it wouldn't have been possible without our partners at the NOHFC, the City of Timmins, the Timmins Library, and the private sector. We hope that junior mining and exploration companies will seize these new capabilities to more effectively explore and sell their properties."

"I am very pleased that our government is a supporter of this initiative," said Rick Bartolucci. "There is huge potential in Northern Ontario, and projects such as NAVNet will help bring that potential to the surface. This project will not only help mining and exploration companies to access more effective ways to interpret their data, it could possibly lead to new ore finds, new Ontario investments, and new jobs. We look forward to seeing the success stories that arise from this project."

www.mirarco.org <http://www.mirarco.org/havnet.php> <http://tpl.timmins.ca> <http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/nohfc/>

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