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MEDIA RELEASE

Opening to celebrate \$10 million teaching, research space

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File photos: <http://at.sfu.ca/HXebdx>

Media Advisory: *good visuals include science lab experiments and Mechatronics' helmet testing. Several researchers will also be available. Tours will run until noon.*

Simon Fraser University's Surrey campus will celebrate the grand opening of Podium 2 on **Friday, Nov. 4 at 10:30 a.m.** The \$10-million, 54,000-plus square foot newly renovated space is now home to everything from student science labs to a wide range of research.

Tours of the space (see below) will follow a brief official ceremony attended by SFU President Andrew Petter and federal and provincial representatives, including James Moore, MP for Port Moody-Westwood-Port Coquitlam, and Naomi Yamamoto, Minister of Advanced Education.

SFU received funding in 2009 through the federal and provincial Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP) to renovate the space adjacent to SFU Surrey's main public space, the Dale B. Regehr Grand Hall.

Podium 2's specialized teaching space includes large lab classes for first- and second-year science students, who, since the start of the semester, no longer need to trek up to Burnaby to carry out their experiments.

The space is also a hub of research, featuring a pain lab that applies virtual reality techniques to chronic pain management, a visual analytics lab that tracks massive data on topics from airplane safety to emergency management, and a centre for cybercrime-busting.

Meanwhile in a 3,000 square foot basement lab, **Mechatronics Systems Engineering (MSE)** researchers are crash-testing motorcycle helmets in a study to help improve their safety and investigating how energy can be harvested through automobile suspension systems.

"As an engaged university, SFU is committed to contributing in every way possible to the communities it serves," says Petter. "This investment by federal and provincial governments enhances the capacity of our Surrey campus to educate students, generate research, and contribute to the social and economic well-being of South Fraser communities."

Science

- First- and second-year science students in chemistry and biology are carrying out experiments at the Surrey campus thanks to Podium 2's new lab spaces. Ken McFarlane, manager of lab operations for chemistry, expects an increasing demand for chemistry courses. The lab accommodates 64 students per lab session while biology, with more than 3,000

sq. ft., can accommodate 50 students. There is also lab space for biomedical physiology and kinesiology and physics.

International Cybercrime Research Centre

- Associate director **Sara Smyth**, is conducting research for Public Safety Canada on computer fraud, and has recently completed a major study, *Measuring the Extent of Cyber-Fraud in Canada: A Discussion Paper on Potential Methods and Data Sources*. Smyth is also writing her third book on computer crime.
- PhD student **Richard Frank** developed a web crawler that enables the collection of massive web page samples – more than 200,000 at a time – while keeping researchers “safe” from content as they track websites that exploit children. His team’s latest study found that attacking hubs or nodes with the most connections inside these networks can best disrupt the criminal activity.

Virtual Pain Lab

- Researchers in **Diane Gromala**’s lab are developing new computerized therapies that help chronic pain sufferers deal with their pain. The School of Interactive Arts and Technology professor heads the Transforming Pain research group and runs the virtual pain lab, the only one of its kind in the country. *Gromala, on sabbatical at the Liebeskind Pain Archives at UCLA, will give a TED talk on her work on Nov. 11 <http://at.sfu.ca/bisVeB>

Aging

- The Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA), based in Podium 2, begins in January 2012. It will follow 50,000 Canadian men and women between 45 and 85 for at least 20 years, and collect data via interviews and clinical exams on approximately 1,500 individuals living near the Surrey campus. The data will provide information on the changing biological, medical, psychological, social and economic aspects of people’s lives. The study is led by gerontology chair **Andrew Wister** and managed by research associate **Heather Stewart**.

Mechatronics

- A basement lab underneath Podium 2 houses heavy equipment – from sheet metal cutters to fabricating machines – where Mechatronics researchers are designing, creating and testing new systems and materials. A research team led by MSE director **Farid Golnaraghi** and professor **Gary Wang** has built a test rig to measure the forces created when a motorcycle helmet impacts a surface such as a roadway. The team, supervised by post-doctoral fellow **Iman Ebrahimi**, is working on developing new technologies that can reduce these forces and consequently reduce the incidence and severity of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by these forces in motorcycle accidents, as well as many contact sports. An early prototype of such technology has shown the ability to reduce rotational acceleration during impact by more than 50 per cent. Researchers working with Maple Ridge electric carmaker **Future Vehicle Technologies** are also testing how suspension systems can convert vibrations transmitted through tires to charge batteries.

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