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FIRST EVER SURVEY FOLLOWS UP ON BC UNIVERSITY GRADS

VICTORIA -- Almost 85 per cent of students graduating from B.C.'s universities are finding permanent work within two years of graduation as a result of their education, Education, Skills and Training Minister Moe Sihota and secretary to the University Presidents' Council Dean Goard announced today.

Nearly 12 per cent of respondents were continuing their education and only 2.9 per cent were unemployed, not attending school and actively seeking work.

The figures were gathered in a 1995 survey of 7,600 people who graduated from B.C. universities in 1993, the first ever conducted to follow up on university graduates in the province.

"The results highlighted in this report indicate the overall good health of our university system and the job it has done so far in preparing people for work," Sihota said. "By making the results of the survey available to the public, our universities are recognizing the need to be accountable to British Columbians about the quality of education they provide. The results also provide a benchmark for exploring areas where improvements can be made."

"We're happy to have completed this survey and report," Goard said. "It will be very useful for us to examine patterns in various programs and see what we can do to serve students better."

More than 90 per cent of graduates indicated the instruction they received during the course of their degree program was good, and 63 per cent indicated their transition to the workplace was relatively easy. Almost 36 per cent had found permanent jobs before they graduated.

"I'm pleased with the results of this survey," Sihota said. "It shows where students are satisfied with the education they receive, and where they feel changes can be made so that our post-secondary education system continues to ensure students can access the labor market."

The survey, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training and B.C.'s universities, was conducted in the fall of 1995 to determine how university education had affected the educational development and employment rate of 1993 graduates. The report expands on general information contained in a preliminary report released last spring.

The report examines enrolment, student satisfaction, skill development, post-graduate employment and earnings in the fields of arts, education, health, social professions, applied science, science, commerce and fine performing arts. Comparisons of programs at the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University are also included.

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The response rate to the survey was high – greater than 80 per cent.

"We are now developing a survey of 1991 graduates to see how they've fared five years after graduation," said Goard.

A similar survey of students who attended B.C.'s colleges and institutes has been completed annually since 1987.

The universities survey report is available from the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training at 356-8308 (Victoria). It is also available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.Inst.UVic.ca/tupc.html>

Attached: highlights of the Two Year Graduate Follow-up Survey of 1993 Baccalaureate Graduates From B.C.'s Public Universities

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