
Nigerians to train in Canadian technical schools

Five hundred Nigerian students arrived in Canada this autumn for technical training at community colleges and universities across the country. The training has been arranged under a five-year agreement recently signed by the Canadian Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce (ITC) and the Nigerian federal ministry of education.

The Nigerian Government will pay the full costs of training, maintenance, and administration for 500 students a year until 1983, and ITC estimates that revenue for Canada will be about \$5 million a year.

Nigeria's education system has not been able to keep pace with the rapidly growing economy and the Government predicts a need for thousands of technically trained people in the next decade.

Negotiations involving the federal and provincial governments and the Canadian Bureau for International Education culminated in the signing in June of an agreement that forms part of a larger agreement of economic and technical cooperation between Canada and Nigeria.

Prehistoric reptile finds new home

The University of Calgary is now the home of what is said to be North America's oldest plesiosaur — a large, fish-eating, marine reptile that evolved during the Mesozoic era, 225 to 65 million years ago. Its small head, long neck, and four paddle-shaped limbs make it quickly recognizable.

Most of the specimens found in North America have been from the Cretaceous period and are about 65 million years old. The U. of C. specimen, however, is from the lower Jurassic period and could be as old as 180 million years.

Its slightly eroded vertebrae were found protruding from a creek bed in the foothills, about 48 kilometres north of Coleman, Alberta in 1970.

After the specimen was excavated, the Devonian Group of Charitable Foundations donated it to the university and, since 1974, Betsy Nicholls, a vertebrate paleontologist who recently completed her M.Sc. in the department of biology, has been preparing and mounting it.

Working mostly with a pen-sized air

hammer and with the advice and assistance of members of the geology department, she painstakingly removed the sandstone in which the fossil bones were embedded. Only one side of the fossil has been exposed, leaving it mounted in the rock that preserved it. The total weight of the wall case, plaster, rock and fossil is about 1,500 pounds.

The Jurassic plesiosaur, at about 12 feet long, is somewhat smaller than its Cretaceous descendants, which sometimes grew to 45 feet.

"We knew that the plesiosaur dated back to the Jurassic period in North America — specimens this old have been found in Europe where there are more outcrops of Jurassic rock — but this is the first confirmation we have had of its presence in North America that far back," comments Mrs. Nicholls.

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Royal Bank helps Junior Olympics

The Royal Bank of Canada and the Canadian Olympic Association (COA) recently signed a \$500,000-agreement for the extension of their on-going, national Junior Olympics program to the end of the next Olympic year in 1980.

Administered by the COA and sponsored by the Royal Bank, the program encourages as many young Canadians as possible to participate in amateur sports, especially those related to Olympic disciplines. Since its beginning in 1973, more than 1,700,000 youngsters have taken part in the program and officials expect that figure to have reached 2.5 million by the time the Moscow Summer Olympics take place in 1980.

Through provision of incentive awards and crests for participation, the program assists sports organizations, and any interested group or individual, to stage regional and particularly community level Olympic-related events. In late 1976, coaching clinics were introduced with the help of the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union to make young athletes familiar with a wider variety of Olympic sports.

At present, the program offers competition in archery, basketball, biathlon, bob and luge, boxing, canoeing, cycling, diving, equestrian, fencing, field hockey, figure skating, gymnastics, hockey, judo, modern pentathlon, rowing, shooting,

skiing, ski jumping, soccer, speed-skating, swimming, team handball, track and field, volleyball, water polo, weightlifting, wrestling and yachting.

Richard W. Pound, president of the Canadian Olympic Association and International Olympic Committee member for Canada, stressed in his remarks how the program had increased the number of competitive events and opportunities to compete available to young Canadians.

Health officials watch Yellowknife

A study by the Canadian Public Health Association has confirmed results of an inquiry by the Federal Government last year, stating that the 10,000 residents of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories face a potential health hazard from arsenic.

Private studies conducted two years ago by Indians, the United Steelworkers of America and the University of Toronto concluded that the arsenic level (created by the settling of tons of arsenic dust, a by-product of the refining process in gold mining) had increased deaths from cancer in the area.

The new study, which found insufficient data to support that claim, has provided physicians in Yellowknife with a scientific data base with which to monitor conditions properly.

CANFARM transfer discussed

Federal and provincial deputy ministers of agriculture and deans of agriculture colleges met in Ottawa recently to discuss possible alternatives and criteria for the transfer of CANFARM, the Canadian Farm Management Data System.

CANFARM, based in Guelph, Ontario, is operated jointly by federal and provincial governments and agricultural universities. It provides information on farm management for farmers and agencies.

In August, as part of the cut in federal expenditures, the Federal Government announced it was terminating its financial participation in CANFARM, at a saving of \$6 million a year.

Participants at the meeting voiced their support for CANFARM and urged the Federal Government to seek an agency or organization to maintain the service, recognizing the need for increased user fees to producers.