A New Director of Public Involvement for CPRN

Friday, April 26, 2002 – Judith Maxwell, President of CPRN, is pleased to announce the appointment of Mary Pat MacKinnon as the next Director of our Public Involvement Program.

Ms. MacKinnon is currently Director of Government Affairs and Policy at the Canadian Cooperative Association/Credit Union Central of Canada, where she has managed a large portfolio of government affairs and policy research projects. She has also been Social and Economic Policy Consultant with the Social Planning Council of Ottawa, Planner at the Department of Development in the Government of Nova Scotia, and Research Associate to the Pepin-Robarts Task Force on National Unity. She has a BA and an MPA from Queen's University, and is an active volunteer in her own community.

Ms. MacKinnon's appointment signals an important turning point in the development of CPRN. After six years of experimentation, the Public Involvement Program has reached the stage where it needs a full-time Director, and where it can be considered CPRN's "fourth network." Ms. MacKinnon has a mandate to develop a strategic vision for the Program and to lead it forward.

She will be replacing Karen Jackson who is returning to a position at the federal Department of Human Resource Development. Karen has done many tasks at CPRN, but most recently she has been working almost full time on the Public Involvement Program, as the Research Director for the Citizens' Dialogue on the Future of Health Care in Canada, in support of the work of the Romanow Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada.

The Public Involvement Program has a mandate to develop and lead projects to engage citizens in public policy discussion. Working with a large number of external partners, the team uses a variety of engagement techniques which can be used to suit different circumstances. The team develops new methodologies and also does research on public involvement.

Ms. MacKinnon will take up her new post with CPRN on May 7th.

New Labour Policy Paradigm Needed

In an article in the March issue of ***Canadian Public Policy,*** entitled, ***Employment Relationships as the Centrepiece of a New Labour Policy Paradigm***, Graham Lowe, CPRN Research Associate and Professor of Sociology at the University of Alberta examines changes in employment relationships in Canada during the late 20th century.

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It is clear that fewer workers fit the historical benchmark of the post-WWII ‘standard employment model’. Consequently, the labour and employment policy framework fashioned during the post-war decades no longer meets the needs of an increasingly differentiated workforce. The current policy emphasis on learning and skills for innovation and productivity requires a fuller understanding of how trust, communication and other elements of employment relationships influence human capital development.

Lowe argues that the ideal focus for the next generation of labour policies is the workplace, where the quality of relationships among co-workers, and between workers and management, can either hinder or help achieve major social and economic goals.

You can access or download a copy of his ***Canadian Public Policy*** article by clicking here.

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