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# News Release

## **Imperial Announces \$350,000 Literacy Grant to Northern School Boards**

Yellowknife, N.W.T., October 2, 2002 - Imperial Oil Limited announced today that the Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation (IOCF) has approved a grant of \$350,000 to Northwest Territories school boards to promote literacy programs.

The grant, payable over four years to school boards in the Northwest Territories, is to provide funding for school library resources. The objective of this grant is to support the improvement of literacy among youth in the NWT and enhance their employability skills. The school boards will share the grant money equally, to be spent on library resources of their choosing to support the improvement of literacy skills of children from Kindergarten through grade 6. The IOCF will be working with the recently-formed Commission Scolaire Francophone to extend the program to French students in the Northwest Territories.

"There is no more important gift we can give children to equip them for the future than literacy -- it is the key to opening minds and opening doors of opportunity," says K.C. Williams, senior vice-president and director of Imperial. "Imperial has a long history of working in and with Northern communities, and a long-standing commitment to supporting education. So, we are particularly pleased and excited to be working with school boards in the Northwest Territories on this program."

The Honourable Jake Ootes, Minister, Education, Culture & Employment for the Government of the Northwest Territories, says, "The need to improve education levels is one of the most fundamental issues in the Northwest Territories -- literacy is at the heart of education. Imperial Oil's financial contribution to this basic need is sincerely and greatly appreciated."

Cate Sills, executive director of the Northwest Territories Literacy Council, says the funding contributed by Imperial will definitely help, as "every child, here and across the world, benefits from donations to literacy."

Imperial is Canada's largest integrated petroleum company, and a major petroleum products supplier in the Northwest Territories. The company has maintained continuous operations at Norman Wells, Canada's most northerly producing oilfield, since the 1920s. In the 1970s, Imperial discovered a large natural gas resource at Taglu in the Mackenzie Delta, and today is leading an effort to develop Northern gas reserves, in cooperation with other resource developers and the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, which represents aboriginal peoples of the Northwest Territories.

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