



ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
D'INFORMATIQUE DE LA SANTÉ



NIHI and COACH Announce the Formation of the National Student Forum for Health Informatics

For Immediate Release

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(WATERLOO & TORONTO, ON) – The National Institutes of Health Informatics (NIHI) and COACH: Canada's Health Informatics Association announce a collaborative initiative to bring together students interested in health informatics across Canada through a National Student Forum (NSF).

Students represent the future and the actualization of the promised value of health informatics (HI) for our health system. Students will be tomorrow's leaders and practitioners and the first generation with the potential to deliver the full value of HI. Both NIHI and COACH see NSF as an important means of enhancing opportunities for students to pursue their education in HI, participate in HI research and better understand the array of options they have in pursuing a career in health informatics.

NSF will be managed by students and for students. **Julie Kim**, a Ph.D. student at the University of Toronto and practicing HI professional, will initially lead NSF with the assistance of other students and with the facilitation of NIHI and COACH. "I am very excited to be involved in what we plan on being an effective and meaningful vehicle to bring students together to advance the health informatics agenda in Canada," said Julie.

The Forum will be designed as a vehicle for connecting students who are involved in the increasing number of HI educational programs across Canada, in order to enhance their educational experience and provide opportunities for them to be involved in research and dialogue about new and emerging issues. Through active student involvement, the Forum is a vehicle to foster discussion, collaboration and learning among students, regardless of their academic discipline, level of study or location.

"NSF is a natural evolution of our commitment to advancing HI as a profession," commented **Neil Gardner**, Board director chairing COACH's HIP (Health Informatics Professionalism) Steering Committee. "We are pleased to collaborate with NIHI in bringing this new opportunity to our students."

Some of the initial NSF activities are expected to be the creation of a Student Registry (a part of NIHI's National Community of Scholars system), the development of a Student Track in the biannual Advanced Health Informatics Conference (AHI 2010), the development of a repository of recorded presentations on HI topics, and co-ordination of regular interactive discussion sessions. Initiatives like these leverage existing resources in the community and ensure that there are no registration fees involved for participating students and faculty which could become a barrier to participation in the Forum.

Shirley Fenton, Vice President and Director of NIHI, pointed out: "NSF represents a significant new initiative for NIHI where our students will both be the beneficiaries and the developers of resources that we have needed in Canada for a long time."

About COACH: COACH: Canada's Health Informatics Association is the diverse community of accomplished, influential professionals who work passionately to make a difference in health informatics (HI). Members are dedicated to realizing their full potential as professionals and advancing HI through access to information, talent, credentials, recognition, programs and a broad range of services and specialized resources. For more information, visit www.coachorg.com.

About NIHI: NIHI (www.nihi.ca) is a Canada-wide, virtual institute of institutes bringing together experts in Health Informatics. NIHI serves as a catalyzer, co-ordinator and facilitator that assists in defining, fostering and bonding together local initiatives dedicated to HI research and education.

For more information, contact:

COACH

Phone (416) 494-9324, Toll free 1-888-253-8554
communications@coachorg.com

NIHI

Toll free 1-800-860-7901
www.nihi.ca