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EMILY CARR STUDENTS RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH U-PASS BC

VANCOUVER, BC | Emily Carr University of Art + Design students have good reason to celebrate the New Year and return to classes – they'll be first in line to receive the U-Pass BC. The University will begin pass distribution at noon today, January 4, 2011.

"We're excited that after years of work our students will be the first to have Canada's only provincial program and standardized U-Pass program," said Samantha Lefort, Chair of the Emily Carr Students' Union.

A collaborative process in Metro Vancouver between Students' Unions, TransLink, the Province and post-secondary institutions, the U-Pass BC program encourages students to make transit part of their lifestyle, leading to fewer cars on the road and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

"We have worked hard with all of the U-Pass BC partners to finalize the new contract," said Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Shirley Bond. "We're excited that Emily Carr is the first school to implement U-Pass BC, and we hope others follow quickly so students can get reduced fare transit passes by early 2011 and have safe, sustainable choices for their travel needs."

On June 9, 2010, the Province announced Canada's first standardized U-Pass Program for post-secondary students. The new program will give Metro Vancouver students access to a \$30/month U-Pass, a savings of over \$50 per month and thousands of dollars over the course of their studies.

"U-Pass BC serves a dual function," said Cathy McLay, TransLink Chief Financial Officer, who helped negotiate the agreement with the institutions and the students. "It gives students a much-needed financial break and helps cultivate a 'TravelSmart' sense that they'll take with them beyond graduation. Achieving this has taken a lot of hard work by a lot of dedicated people and we're gratified to see it all bear fruit."

The program was approved via student referendum in October 2010.

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