Medalta to assume control of Plainsman Clays Ltd.

Medicine Hat, Alberta, CANADA – As part of Medalta’s long-term sustainability plan, it is assuming control of Plainsman Clays Ltd from I-XL Ltd, effective May 1, 2015. This move into social enterprise will have a positive impact on Medalta’s ability to achieve its vision of creating a world-class cultural hub for the benefit of the entire community.

Plainsman Clays Ltd. was established by renowned ceramic artist Luke Lindoe in 1962 and has been owned by I-XL Ltd since 1985. It specializes in providing clay and pottery supplies across Western Canada. Headquartered in Medicine Hat, Alberta, it owns retail outlets in Edmonton, Surrey and Parksville, British Columbia. Plainsman also services dealers across Canada and parts of the United States.

Social enterprise is an innovative approach that is increasingly being adopted by not-for-profits to help them achieve sustainability. Under this approach, a business is linked to a not-for-profit and the revenues are used to contribute to healthy communities through a shared vision. This move into social enterprise is another example of how Medalta employs innovative strategies to deliver programs to tens of thousands of people annually in a sustainable, responsible manner.

Medalta benefits the community through its Artistic, Community and Education programming. It supports artists at all stages of their careers, provides a year-round venue for small local businesses to connect with customers through the Market@Medalta, and hosts thousands of young and adult students for hands-on educational experiences. The industrial museum preserves and interprets our industrial past and provides opportunities for academic study and research.

“The plan is for Plainsman Clays to continue full operations as an independent business,” explains Dave Sherwood, Friends of Medalta Society Chair. “It is important that all of Plainsman Clays’ loyal employees, customers and suppliers experience no change in the daily operations. It has proven to be a successful business that is built on trust and solid relationships – two things that we take very seriously.”

Sherwood believes Plainsman Clays will add to Medalta’s reputation as an innovative industrial museum, small-scale pottery, and contemporary ceramic arts centre. “Plainsman will be an important part of the Medalta family and is a major piece of our long-term sustainability plan. The idea behind social enterprise is that business profits directly benefit the community. Profits from Plainsman Clays will help Medalta achieve its vision and we are proud to be moving in such an innovative direction. Medalta has emerged as a model of how a not-for-profit can sustain itself through innovative thinking,” explains Sherwood.

“This is an exciting time,” explains Barry Finkelman, Executive Director of Medalta. “The Plainsman Clays site has tremendous historic and academic value, which will further solidify Medalta and Medicine Hat as a cultural hub for all of Canada.” Finkelman further acknowledged the positive impact I-XL Ltd continues to have in Medicine Hat’s cultural stewardship. “Time and time again, I-XL has proven that they are serious about cultural and heritage advancement. We are proud to recognize their long-term leadership in our community.”

The continued growth and success of Plainsman Clays will be an important contributor to the sustainability of the entire Historic Clay District, providing Medalta the means to achieve its vision of being a world-class cultural district with a heart of clay.

For more information, visuals or interviews, contact:

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