



## **Richard Ivey's LEADER Project Partners with Macedonia 2025**

Founded in 1991, the LEADER Project has been sending MBA students from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario, to the new and emerging markets of Eastern Europe. This May in cooperation with Macedonia 2025, LEADER will be sending a group of students to lead a two week interactive course that will hone the entrepreneurial acumen of the Macedonian business community.

"We are dedicated to strengthening and enhancing the economy of Macedonia, and investing in human capital through projects like LEADER is very important to us" said Mike Zafirovski, a volunteer member of the group Macedonia 2025, also the President and CEO of Nortel Networks Corp. "Our group is non political and is very much looking forward to working with all individuals and organizations interested in developing medium and long term strategies aimed at growing the Macedonian economy" said John Bitove another volunteer member of the group and Chairman of XM Satellite Radio Canada and Prizm Canadian Income Fund.

Macedonia 2025 was founded in 2006 by eight business people. Comprised mostly of Canadian and US business executives of Macedonian heritage, Macedonia 2025 seeks to promote, advise and support investment in the country and to stimulate economic development by overcoming challenges, and laying the foundation for growth and development in Macedonia.

"I see a great synergy that exists in our two organizations, we are thrilled with our partnership with Macedonia 2025 and we are very excited about adding Macedonia to the LEADER Project." said Robert Davis the Executive Director of the LEADER Project. In addition to Macedonia, LEADER will be sending teams of students to Russia, Moldova and Ukraine.

LEADER uses a unique yet proven teaching method based on case studies. The simulated business scenarios place an emphasis on strategic thinking, prioritizing and decision making. The desired outcome is to equip the participants with the skills and knowledge to make calculated decisions in both predictable and in unanticipated environments.

Macedonia 2025 is working with the Macedonian government to develop strategies that will deliver real changes and opportunity at the macro level. Indeed the government has adopted a number of impressive economic reforms, resulting in some of the most investor-friendly destinations in the world.

Economic reforms can help to stimulate economic development, but they also require a thriving commercial class to respond to the new opportunities. Recognizing this Macedonia 2025 is working with Richard Ivey's LEADER Project, and with a number of leading business people in Macedonia, including entrepreneurs and small-medium size business owners to provide sales, accounting and marketing advice and guidance in order to foster the growth of the business community.

The founding members of Macedonia 2025 are determined to continue to build the organization, and further its cooperation with LEADER. They will also continue to seek out additional business opportunities for Macedonia. International capital and strategic investors need to know the little land-locked country in the middle of southern Europe, not only for its ancient history or ethnic make-up, but also for its growing reputation as an attractive place to do business.

**For more information, please contact:**

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