

# THE TRIBUNE

MAKING A DIFFERENCE...DAILY

## \$40M for college

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Niagara College will be breaking ground for its applied health institute as early as August after an announcement yesterday that the school is receiving \$40 million in infrastructure funding.

Minister of Industry Tony Clement and Ontario Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities John Milloy announced the college would receive \$20 million in funding from both the federal and provincial governments.

Funding for the institute was only a portion of the \$1.476 billion in federal/provincial funding announced for infrastructure projects at post-secondary institutions across Ontario.

Niagara's new 100,000 square-foot institute, at the Welland campus, will house the registered practical nurse and personal support worker programs currently operating from leased St. Catharines facilities, as well as create new spaces in the recreation therapy, paramedics, pharmacy technician, pharmacy assistant, dental assisting and dental hygiene programs.

New programs to be launched and housed in the institute include occupational therapist assistant, physiotherapist assistant, gerontology,

addictions counselling, mental health worker, children's mental health worker and elder care advocate.

Continuing education opportunities in areas such as maternal and child nursing, and oncology/nephrology nursing will also be available.

College president Dan Patterson called yesterday a "landmark day" for the college, adding the funding announcement was the largest in the school's history.

"Two years of hard work went into the Building Futures campus redevelopment plan. To realize this stage is outstanding."

Patterson said the funding has placed the college in "an important leadership role in the health and wellness field."

The construction of the building will also create many new jobs in the Welland area, he said.

The institute provides the college with "new opportunities to grow programs and attract people to Niagara," he said.

Patterson said the current capacity for Niagara's health care programs has left the college unable to accommodate the demand.

With a projected completion date of February 2011, the institute will provide the college with more than 1,000 new student spaces.

He said the anticipated August start puts the college on an "ambitious schedule."

"We've been involved in master planning for two years and are shovel-ready."

"While the announcement focuses on bricks and mortar, the creation of a quality learning environment will put us among the best."

Patterson said federal and provincial co-operation through the Knowledge Infrastructure Program, is to be commended.

The federal initiative is a two-year, \$2-billion economic stimulus measure to support infrastructure enhancement at Canadian post-secondary institutions, including universities and community colleges.

Patterson said the "quick response" from the federal and provincial governments was "remarkable."

"Their strong belief in our case for support has been very much appreciated."

The federal government's economic action plan "identified for the first time a dedicated funding envelop for college infrastructure projects," Patterson said.

"This has allowed Niagara College to access federal government funds that normally would not have been open to the college system."

Patterson applauded both levels of government for their efforts and investments, which resulted in "an unprecedented \$40 million in infrastructure" for the applied health institute, he said.

"Sometimes it's a challenge when both provincial and federal coordination is required," Patterson said.

"I can say (without hesitation) what a wonderful example of cooperation and focus by both governments on the important role that colleges play in the economic development of a community."

Patterson said he's "thrilled" to "lead Niagara College through this exciting part of its evolution."

More information about Niagara College's Building Futures campaign can be found at [www.niagaracollege.ca](http://www.niagaracollege.ca).