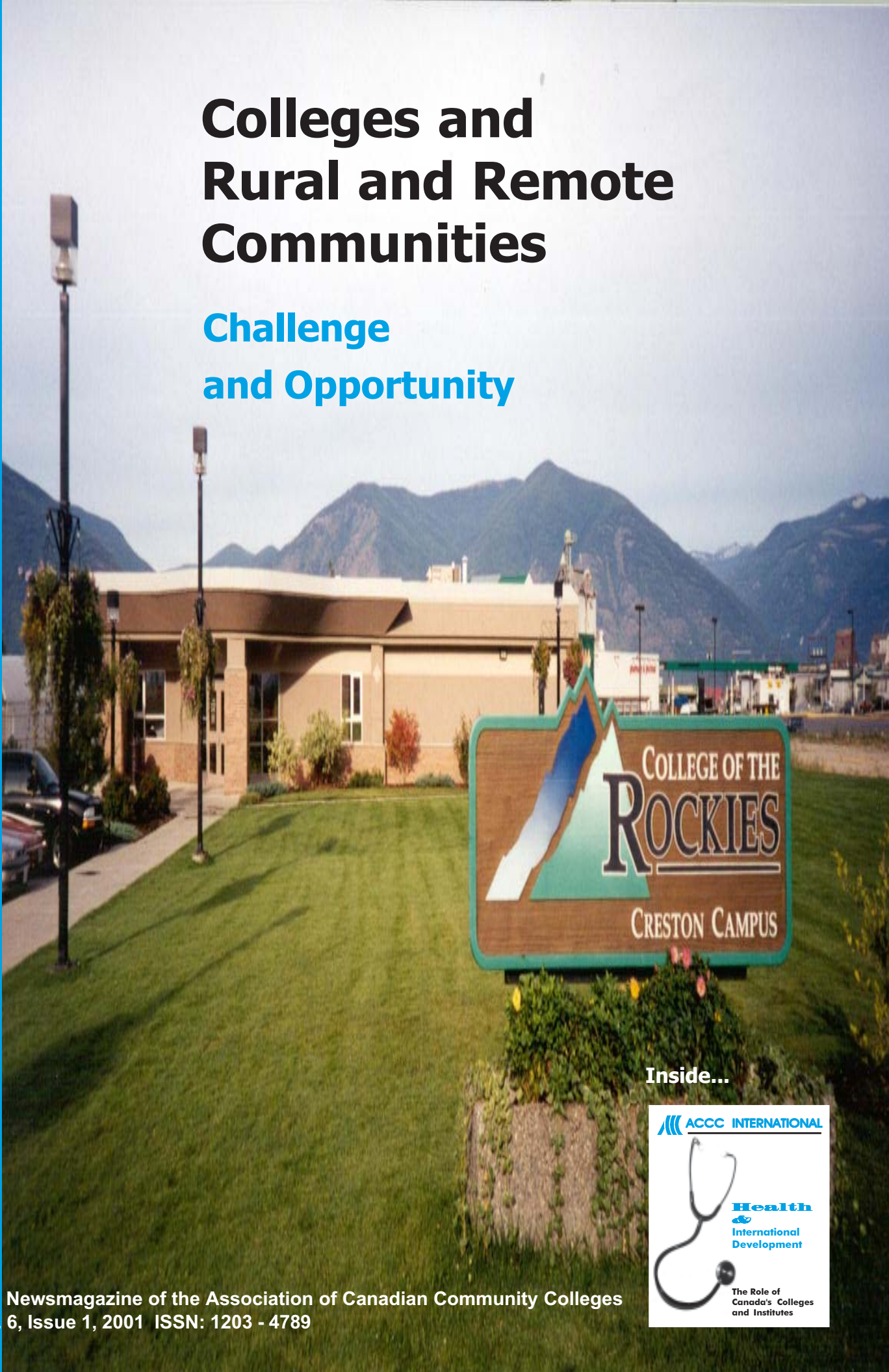


Colleges and Rural and Remote Communities

Challenge and Opportunity



Inside...



ACCC INTERNATIONAL



Health
International
Development

The Role of
Canada's Colleges
and Institutes



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Passion and Pain

Colleges Serving Rural and Remote Communities

Whether urban, rural or both, Canadian colleges and institutes are fundamental partners in the socio-economic infrastructure and development of their local communities. Whether working with local hospitals, winegrowers in the Niagara region, the Atlantic fisheries, agricultural producers, robotics manufacturers in Windsor or the film industry in Toronto, these post-secondary institutions have adopted community involvement and responsiveness as a defining characteristic.

Colleges serving the rural and remote regions of Canada are often viewed as the hub of community response and local socio-economic well being. When a community needs to build alternate industries or generate sources of employment to keep it economically viable, the local college must feel the pulse and determine, design and deliver the requisite training options.

But in an era of increasing urbanization, globalization and a trend towards any and all “izations,” our institutions are facing challenges in preserving their inherent community feel. Are we, as Canadians, supporting their mission to respond to their local communities? Are we acting on the realization that demographics and knowledge-based economic trends are affecting those institutions that serve rural and remote communities in different ways than those based in large urban centres?

This issue of *College Canada* looks at some of the broad issues facing colleges serving rural and remote communities across the country and the impact of collective trends on the system as a whole. The articles are passionate and diverse, and based on the authors’ profound conviction that colleges must be truly, irrevocably community-based. They also offer some valuable insights into the creativity and innovation of these institutions as well as their struggles.

Showcasing the enormous contribution of colleges and institutes to the rural and remote communities would be such a huge undertaking, with so many innovative and unique examples, that doing them all justice on the pages of this magazine would be an impossible task. Suffice it to say that the majority of rural and remote communities benefit tremendously from the ongoing commitment of their local college.

Recognizing the importance of these issues and their influence on an important sector of its membership, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges established a Task Force on Colleges Serving Rural and Remote Communities. The Task Force is working to strengthen the national voice of these institutions and highlight their truly essential role in 900 communities across the country. Canada is not a country of 10 or more major cities, it is a country of diverse but complementary communities which must advance into the 21st century with an awareness of each other’s contributions and value. ■

Gerry Brown
President, ACCC

Gather 'round, let's talk ...

Anchoring the community college in cyber-space

By Michael Hill

Rural and remote colleges in Canada, as conceived and mandated in most provinces, are not yet dead but they are most certainly breathing irregularly. Their heartbeat is weak ... their pulse fading. Indeed, the same might be said for the principles and ideals that gave rise to the creation of community colleges in Canada.

Strong words? Certainly! Sensationalism? Perhaps! Such sharp sentiments might be justified if they prompt a dialogue that is overdue and essential to the future well being of the community college movement in this country. I use the word *movement* quite deliberately, knowing that it is now passé to speak of such things. The word connotes fundamental social change based on a coherent vision of the future and its possibilities. We live in a world that is rapidly becoming urbanized, centralized and digitized in the interest of participating in and benefiting from a global economy. Are those who speak of the importance of space and place, of neighbourhood and community, of the principles of equity and social justice to be relegated to the category of sentimentalists or even Luddites – with nothing to say that can be understood by those whose first language is cyber-speak?

What now of the ancient tyrannies of smallness and remoteness that gave rise to community colleges as solutions to a less than just society and to a geography that helped form our identity, and that was essential to our development. The work

of hauling ore out of the ground, felling trees in the forest, pulling fish from the sea, growing wheat on the prairie, and raising livestock is fast diminishing in importance to our economy and to our identity as Canadians. I do not begrudge this for the moment, but I do ask that Canadians pause and ponder the phenomenon – not just those who live in rural and remote areas – but all Canadians. What now of Canada in a global economy where the majority of our wealth is generated from our knowledge and not our landscape?

What becomes of the ideas and principles that led to the creation of community colleges? What happens to equitable access and social and community development in a cyber-world?

I believe there was a time when Canadians were thought of by the rest of the world and, indeed, conceived of themselves as pioneers in a vast northern land. Today, it would be difficult to find an influential government policy-maker, a senior bureaucrat or a charismatic politician who has a professional appreciation for rural and remote Canada. Is there a Justice Berger championing

unprecedented sympathetic northern perspectives and the creation of policy and law to back it? What is the Canadian identity in a digital world?

What of the need for a trained and educated citizenry where the new geography to be explored and developed consists of zeroes and ones, floating in an ether landscape? What of the original college mandate for access when we are now lit in the glow of technologies that purport to allow access to training and education anytime, at any pace, serving everyone, any place? Is the panacea for Canada truly found in new technology? Or does it lie in the more ancient and increasingly disparaged idea that we will progress because of the interaction of real people, acting in real time, in real places, working in service to each other in a self-imposed organizational, social and economic unit called *community*? Are these amazing new technologies to be used to enhance human development and social interaction or are we to use them to replace and fundamentally reconfigure these things? Could it be that technology is in some unintended and ironic manner serving to further distance us from each other rather than overcoming the vast geography that separates us?

What becomes of the ideas and principles that led to the creation of community colleges? What happens to equitable access and social and community development in a cyber-world? Is there a place for

traditional notions of neighbourhood and community when new technology allows everyone to chat across an electronic fence at the speed of light and where the world is your community for want of an Internet connection?

Some of us are still labouring hard, perhaps foolishly, at realizing the original dream. However, we are becoming increasingly marginalized and impoverished by the hotly pursued and much adored global economy. I am speaking of those who work in colleges that serve rural and remote Canada. Although small colleges serving vast, sparsely populated geographies comprise the majority of the colleges in this country by a considerable margin - by measure of students served, resources expended, and peoples employed - we are only a small fraction of the disparate amalgam which we label *college* today.

Frankly, by these measures we are less and less important to the college *system* with each passing day. Indeed, even our numbers are threatened in a world that has merger mania. The most common solution to dwindling profits or decreased government funding is to close small arms of the company (campuses) or merge whole companies (colleges), typically accompanied by convincing rhetoric about achieving *efficiencies* in the interest of greater profit and/or debt and deficit reduction. I italicize the words *system* and *efficiencies* because each has become a dreaded euphemism to those of us who work in rural and remote colleges. There was a time when a distributed, diversified set of colleges with locally determined missions was the goal and, indeed, was seen to be an efficient, even elegant, system – albeit, a highly decentralized one. “It’s no longer affordable” I hear some say. “Then what should we spend our money on?” I reply.

You need only look at the last few issues of this publication and articles which speak of colleges “positioning for success in a global economy,” “partnering to [the] economic community,” and “serving

employers.” With little or no discussion of things local, social or community-oriented, the agenda seems skewed and the discussion that I am trying to prompt is practically non-existent. What triggered community college champion, Paul Gallagher, to co-write a paper entitled “A Vanishing Vision” in 1985, and then to revisit it in 1999 with a decade and a half of further elaboration and new experiences to support his thesis? The vision that Gallagher (1999) characterized as vanishing was of “locally responsive community colleges largely determining their own futures ... colleges that would reflect and respond to the communities they served.” Perhaps more importantly, why didn’t we talk about his thesis then, and why are we not talking about it today?

We appear more interested in building *K-Mart Colleges* that are led by gifted CEOs who thoroughly understand both the marketplace and the corporate world but who are unlikely to have contemplated that a community college might just be a larger concept than business. Are colleges to become places whose offerings happily reflect the programs and services that see society and the people that comprise it as creations meant only to consume and produce and nothing else?

Ask yourself, where are today’s college presidents likely to be found at a given hour? Not spending much of their time in their communities it seems - as likely as not to be found in another part of the globe trying to attract the lucrative, budget balancing, international student or attending interminable meetings in Canada’s largest, typically southern cities catching up on the latest bureaucratic nuance. Are those of us who work in Canada’s hinterlands foregoing our only competitive advantage when we use our time in this manner? Maybe it’s the

case that our only passage to the global economy is by taking the path of being locally relevant? We do not have the might of size or the traditional tags of status and all of the benefits that accrue from them; however, we are of a place and can form close

relationships characterized by trust and understanding with our communities. Perhaps that was the point and the real strength of the college *system* as originally conceived?

Could it also be true that we are guilty of playing at *wanna be* universities and thereby forgetting the context in which we were created

and the mission we were built to pursue? Are we succumbing to academic drift and arrogance trying to follow a pathway to another organization’s definition of success? “Ah, but” you say, “the degree is the recognized and valued currency of education and we are second-class citizens until we have the right to grant them.” Of what community are you aspiring to be a first-class citizen?” I reply. The community of scholars as defined by the university or the local community you were originally mandated to serve? Is it possible that the ‘inherited’ university tradition of relative detachment from ordinary community life has led colleges *not* to be full participants in the daily economic and social life of the communities they serve? Where are the pioneers now who saw the community college as ... “the crystallization of a dream of service to people” ... as ... “something more than and different from the old

Colleges were envisaged “not to be an extension of the public school, nor a mini-university – but a social invention, whole and legitimate in their own right, designed to solve a particular kind of problem created by a highly complex society.”

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community of scholars concept of higher education?" Colleges were envisaged "not to be an extension of the public school, nor a mini-university – but a social invention, whole and legitimate in their own right, designed to solve a particular kind of problem created by a highly complex society" (Beinder, 1965).

What of basic education,

Is it possible that current government funding policies and the resulting formulae tend to reinforce the separation between college and community by focusing exclusively on the classroom-training role of the college and by prohibiting, or at least discouraging, use of the college for the economic and social development of communities?

community development and social programs in colleges today? More often than not, they are relegated to the distant, poorer corners of the campus ... and, "rightfully so, since, these days, there is no money in it." Money now comes in envelopes scented with the fumes and bustle of the city – certainly not with the smell of the fertile earth of the prairie or the pine of the vast, quiet north. *Formula* funding, a product of the recession of the early 1980s and *envelope* funding, an invention of the centralizing forces of the 1990s, drive college administrations to grow enrollments rather than communities.

Using the attractive rhetoric of the "student-focused, learner-centred college," we can now safely ignore our mandate to serve whole

communities. A logical extension of this thinking will see us abandoning the existing educational infrastructure in rural and remote Canada, the buildings as well as the people, and serving greater and greater numbers of students either in urban locations or in cyber-space. Are we willing to forego the investment in the facilities, equipment, and human expertise that make up rural and remote colleges (often one of the richest resources present in the communities that they serve) in the interest of serving greater numbers of students more *efficiently*? Is it possible that current government funding policies and the resulting formulae tend to reinforce the separation between college and community by focusing exclusively on the classroom-training role of the college and by prohibiting, or at least discouraging, use of the college for the economic and social development of communities? In a global economy, what does it matter anyway if this is true?

Look around your neighbourhood, if you can even define it. Is there a real community about you - people with a common sense of purpose and a sense of belonging to a place? Does it matter? What is the relevance of place in a digital world? What of the early ambitions and values of Canadians that gave rise to colleges in the first place? Does it matter if rural and remote Canada withers as long as the intellectual capital and the wealth that is spun from it grow and Canada's place in the global economy is thereby assured?

I pose only questions and have no answers. I believe that the questions should be asked and answered in the course of a national dialogue. The well being and identity of all Canadians is at issue. It is fitting and not without irony that the current woes of rural and remote Canada might prompt such a dialogue. We have necessity on our side. We must transform ourselves, our economies and our communities, or we will perish. I use strong language and I sensationalize. My arguments are

neither even nor properly rounded and my bias is painfully obvious. I am a Northerner first – it's true. Forgive me for all that, my community is hurting, gather 'round, let's talk! ■

Michael Hill is the President of Northern College. He has worked in the community college system in Ontario and British Columbia in a variety of capacities for the past 19 years. Mr. Hill served as an advisor to the University of the Highlands and Islands Project in Inverness, Scotland while on sabbatical in 1997/98 and is presently working on a doctoral degree with Professor Urban Dahllöf at Uppsala University in Sweden. Their research interests include investigating ways and means of structuring and organizing educational offerings in remote regions.

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The National Task Force on Rural and Remote Colleges

By Brent Mills

Canada is a country of multiple realities: North and South, French and English, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, wealthy and poor, to name but a few dichotomies. The brilliance of the Canadian Community College System is that it makes itself available to all. Collectively, our colleges attempt to provide educational opportunity to citizens of all backgrounds within all regions of the country. This remarkable undertaking and the equally remarkable success of our colleges is a story that receives not a fraction of the recognition it deserves. Nor do the citizens and decision-makers of the nation always understand the impact the college system now has, and is capable of having, on the social and economic development of Canadian communities and regions.

Although Canadian colleges have much in common, the varied realities of regional Canada necessarily create differences in institutional focus and organizational challenge. One such dichotomy occurs between colleges that serve large urban populations and those that do not.

Discussions at the 2000 Annual General Meeting of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) and the most recent College Presidents' Network President's Academy identified a widely felt need among institutions that do not serve major urban areas to expand their collaboration and work harder at learning from one another. As a result, ACCC undertook to sponsor a national symposium for small colleges in Courtenay, British Columbia, in February 2001. Hosted by North Island College and co-chaired by Lou Dryden, President of North Island and myself, the symposium attracted representatives from approximately 50 colleges and provided a useful launching pad for ongoing discussion and action. ACCC also established a national advocacy Task Force to examine the role of rural and remote colleges and recommend actions to ACCC designed to enhance the ability of colleges to fulfill that role. The Task Force has met twice and will meet again in February, 2002.

The first challenge for both the symposium organizers and the Task Force participants was one of definition. How were we to describe the colleges for whom the symposium would be of interest and in whose interest the Task Force was to work? This challenge has not yet been fully met. "Rural and Remote" has been tried as has "Small Colleges," "Rural and Small" and "Remote and Northern." None is quite right. Labels aside, the Task Force has determined that the colleges in question have certain characteristics, as follows:

1. They collectively represent the vast majority of ACCC membership;
2. They collectively serve over 90 percent of Canada's land mass;
3. They encompass virtually all of Canada's First Nations communities;
4. Within their trading area, they seldom cover large urban centres;
5. Their budgets and student counts are often relatively small;
6. They usually serve agricultural and resource based economies;
7. Geography and distance frequently create barriers to access for at least some of the student body;
8. Their regions are often characterized by shrinking populations;
9. Multiple campuses and delivery sites are common;
10. Under-enrollment is more likely to be a problem than waiting lists. Small class sizes and low student teacher ratios create financial challenges;
11. Communities within their regions expect the college and its staff to show leadership in terms of economic and social development initiatives; and,
12. Governments frequently underestimate the huge and positive impact that these colleges can and do have within their regions.

The purpose of the symposium, which has now been annualized, will be to allow colleges to share best practices and to seek opportunities to collaborate in the interest of their students and communities. Much like the many cooperative movements born in rural communities, we recognize that there is strength in numbers and folly in not cooperating. Our self imposed challenge is to find mechanisms for the delivery of a sufficiently broad range of high quality educational opportunity so as to ensure that residents of the rural and remote regions are as well served by Canada's college system as are their large urban counterparts. Solutions will lie, no doubt, in the worlds of collaborative program development, brokering of programming, distance education, technology-mediated learning and other collaborative efforts. There is much exciting and promising work to be done as we continue to learn from one another.

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College of the North Atlantic

Going the **D I S T A N C E** in Newfoundland and Labrador

By Pamela Walsh

The College of the North Atlantic (CNA) in Newfoundland operates 18 campuses serving a region three times the size of the combined area of the Maritime Provinces. The college is a member of the Atlantic Provincial Community Colleges Consortium which not only includes the Atlantic region's four provincial colleges, but also the four provincial government departments responsible for post-secondary education. By virtue of this broad membership, the Consortium provides a venue for college-province dialogue. The community colleges are able to put forward to the provincial governments the various challenges they face in terms of meeting the needs of their respective rural and remote communities and achieving their public goals of accessibility and responsiveness.

Economic Development

Being the only public college in the province - and offering more than 70 full-time, one- two- and three-year programs to approximately 10,000 full-time equivalent students - it is expected that CNA will play a major role in the economic development agenda of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Strategic planning for economic development in Newfoundland and Labrador is the prime mandate of government-established Regional Economic Development (RED) boards. The province has been divided along geographic lines into 20 regions or zones, each served by its own RED board. A campus of the college serves every zone.

Campus administrators and other staff serve on the RED boards or their sub-committees. As the boards produce economic development plans that address sector potential in their respective regions, the college not only has direct input into the plans, but also uses them to inform its own strategic planning process. The challenge lies in finding the appropriate balance between serving the immediate needs of communities and broader human and economic development goals for the province.

One of the keys to this balancing act is the institution's ability to be flexible in changing its core programming mix to meet changing workforce demands.

Often there are real barriers to such flexibility, such as a lack of infrastructure and appropriate resources. Unfortunately, cash-starved institutions are sometimes forced to ignore new opportunities.

Capacity Building

Most colleges need to continuously identify and monitor capacity building opportunities. College of the North Atlantic has found that collaboration with other institutions, agencies, industry and government has resulted in greater opportunities for resource sharing and acquisition, heightened awareness of the role that the college plays in human resource and economic development, and more opportunities for contract training.

For example, the college's most northerly campus in Labrador West is offering a three-year mining and mineral processing program in partnership with the region's largest employer – the Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOCC) and its union. This jointly designed and delivered program is being offered in anticipation of an impending large turnover in staff due to retirements. IOCC provides a 15-week paid work-term for students every year of the three-year program. The union provides on-the-job instruction and the college provides the classroom instruction. In April 2000, IOCC and the United Steel Workers of America won a "Canada's Top Employers of Youth Award" at the Conference Board of Canada's conference Partners 2000: Linking Education and the Local Economy.

Other successful capacity building strategies used by CNA have included:

- building on the strengths of its communities and campuses through the establishment of "Centres of Excellence" in aviation, multimedia, natural resources, music, recording and visual arts, engineering technology and trades;
- maintaining core program offerings at each campus to provide a critical mass of resources that communities can rely upon;
- placing greater emphasis on international opportunities; and,

- utilizing distributed learning offerings.

In light of changing demographics and skills shortages, colleges must build capacity by working closely with industry to offer training in a flexible manner using various modes of delivery. During the last five years, CNA has significantly increased its distributed learning courses and program offerings. Approximately 100 faculty members are involved in the delivery of on-line courses to almost 2,000 learners from 223 communities.

International Benefits

College of the North Atlantic has found that its institutional capacity building efforts have also started to reap benefits on the international front. It is sometimes assumed that rural and remote colleges cannot be competitive in this arena, however in May 2001, College of the North Atlantic was awarded the largest international educational contract ever undertaken by a Canadian post-secondary institution. Based on a 10-year agreement valued at more than \$500 million, the State of Qatar selected College of the North Atlantic to establish a Centre of Excellence in Technology in Qatar by September 2002.

In addition to the quality of its programs and the expertise of its staff,

characteristics of many colleges in Canada, the Qatari government was impressed with the dynamic involvement of CNA in the economic development efforts of the province. For example, the college played a primary role in the retraining of Newfoundlanders after the collapse of the Northern Cod fishery in 1992.

Covering the Distance

The travel requirements for a college with campuses serving a land area of nearly a half-million square kilometers are significant. Bringing people together for planning purposes is difficult and expensive. During the 2000-01 fiscal year, CNA's total gross travel expenditures amounted to \$1.83 million.

Notwithstanding the utility of teleconferencing, CNA has deployed a video conferencing infrastructure that enables campuses to communicate with each other on a point-to-point and multi-point basis over the college's data network. Multi-point conferencing can accommodate up to 16 separate sites and is currently deployed for administrative and professional development purposes.

Facing the Challenges

There are four main reasons CNA has been able to meet some of the challenges faced by rural and remote

communities. Firstly, the college has responded relatively quickly to change its core program offerings in order to seize new opportunities. Secondly, it has established a positive working relationship with its communities, industry and the provincial government and its agencies. Thirdly, it has strategically moved to establish itself in the contract training market. Finally, it has made a significant investment in the establishment of a high-speed network as well as the development of on-line courses and programs to meet the ever-growing needs for workforce development. ■

Pamela Walsh has served as President of College of the North Atlantic for the past two years. She has also served as Assistant Deputy Minister for Advanced Studies for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and has held positions as Vice President of Programming, Director of Continuing Education and faculty member in the provincial college system. Earlier this year, Ms. Walsh was appointed to the National Broadband Task Force, an arm's-length committee formed to advise the federal government on how to best make high-speed broadband Internet services available to all Canadian communities by 2004. The final report of the Task Force was released in June 2001.

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The purpose of the Rural and Remote College's Task Force is somewhat more "political" than that of the Symposium. We have to start from the premise that a broader and clearer understanding of the work and capacity of these colleges by Provincial and Federal Governments and local decision-makers would benefit both the colleges and the communities they serve. There is a great deal of evidence that colleges can play a huge role in leading economic and social revitalization and development within their communities. The day of the smaller community will rise again. Colleges can play a role in hastening that day, mitigating the hardships during transition and broadening the range of economic activity in the new rural Canada.

With that understanding and commitment the Task Force seeks to develop recommendations for ACCC

that will enable the Association to more aggressively and more effectively lobby governments concerning their support for our institutions and move the role of rural and remote colleges onto the federal and provincial radar screens. We seek a broader understanding of our college's capacities, and funding commitments that recognize their community and economic development roles. Although early in the lifespan of the Task Force, we already have evidence that the Federal and Provincial Governments are listening carefully. ■

Brent Mills is the President of Assiniboine Community College in Brandon, Manitoba. He is also Chair of the National Task Force on Rural and Remote Colleges.

The Canadian Rural Partnership

By Lynden Johnson

At the start of a new century, sustainable community development is the watchword for Canada's rural and remote communities. The Government of Canada and the country's community colleges will play an important role in helping to bring about that development.

An investment in community capacity – leadership training, the development of skilled labour, increased literacy and opportunities for youth – is essential. Community colleges and governments have responsibilities to meet these needs, in collaboration with citizens, rural and remote communities and the private sector.

Since 1998, the federal government has been working in collaboration with rural Canadians, through the Canadian Rural Partnership, to help meet their unique challenges. With a Secretariat housed in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Canadian Rural Partnership promotes greater consideration of rural issues and concerns in the design and delivery of federal policies and programs.

Through the Rural Dialogue component of the Canadian Rural Partnership, Canadians have made it clear that they want bottom-up approaches that build on their assets and strengths to help develop sustainable communities. Such approaches allow rural citizens to work together and make balanced choices about the long-term viability of their communities, taking into account environmental, economic, social and cultural factors. So how do federal officials assess the effects of their initiatives on the sustainable development of rural Canada?

There are two main tools available through which federal departments and agencies can scrutinize their policies and programs through a "rural lens." The *Checklist of Rural Considerations* and the *Principles and Vision in the Federal Framework for Action in Rural Canada* were constructed based on citizens' ideas expressed during the Rural Dialogue. With these tools, we can estimate and consider the potential impact of new federal government services, policies and programs on rural Canada, prior to their approval and implementation. This way, we can ensure, among other things, that federal programs and services are accessible in rural and remote areas, and that there is flexibility for decision-making at the local level.

Community colleges have their roots firmly planted in the communities they serve, enabling them to play a key role in local socio-economic development. This is especially true of rural communities, where colleges help provide locally developed leaders and

skilled labour, through apprenticeship training programs and continuing education and often through curricula designed to meet local needs. Rural and remote communities face lower rates of educational attainment than cities, and it is the community college that can provide adult education to help remedy that situation. Colleges also have unique ties with business and industry that make them essential to local economic development.

The federal government supports the community-centred approach to development and has recently invested in helping to lay the foundation for healthy communities and a higher quality of life in rural Canada. This investment focuses on people, physical infrastructure, environmental technologies, economic development, and connecting rural Canadians to the knowledge economy. These and other federal programs and initiatives in health and safety, agriculture, transport, natural resources, environment and in relation to aboriginal people are helping to ensure the fabric of rural and remote communities is protected and promoted.

Healthy rural communities benefit all Canadians. Their role in both traditional and new economies, their stewardship of our renewable natural resources, and their contribution to cultural diversity improves the quality of life for all. But there is more work to be done to move forward on sustainable rural community development. For example, the knowledge-based economy is overcoming the distance barrier, domestically and internationally. However, continuous learning and high-speed broadband infrastructure are key prerequisites to participation. Every community faces a unique combination of pressures and choices. Community leadership, collaboration and forward planning are key to progress.

Governments and community colleges provide services to rural and remote communities from *within* those communities as *members* of those communities. As such, there are many opportunities for partnerships between the two as we work to ensure rural communities are not left at the wayside and that they are able to contribute fully to the growth and stability of Canada. ■

Lynden Johnson is the Executive Director of the Rural Secretariat. He is currently on secondment to the ACCC Secretariat. For more information on the Canadian Rural Partnership, visit www.rural.gc.ca.

Certain Issues Faced by Regional Colleges in Québec

By Gilles Bacon

In the late 1960s, Québec introduced changes to its post-secondary education system affecting geographic and financial accessibility. Forty-eight collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (cégeps) were established throughout the province to deliver programs to 150,000 students. The decision to make this education free resulted in government funding measures and standardization.

However, Québec's population is not evenly distributed throughout the province: some urban colleges have an enrolment of about 9,000 students while others in remote regions have barely 600 students. Between these two extremes there are cégeps of every size, with an average of 2,000 - 3,000 students. In a system of equivalent standards for all, these geographic and proportional disparities obviously raise issues that benefit some cégeps and place others at a disadvantage.

Funding Arrangements

Progressive reductions in funding to cégeps have had a more serious effect on small colleges than on the larger, urban-based institutions. Cuts to the fixed amount (see Figure 1) translated to just 2.5 percent of the total FAB funding to the largest college in Montréal, while the smallest rural college suffered a 15.3 percent decrease.

The size of the rural colleges, their close relationships with their local communities and remote locations gave rise to demands for funding

Figure 1

The provincial government funds cégeps in Quebec based on a formula known as FABES, which stands for:

- F** fixed amount, identical for all institutions;
- A** activities other than instruction, based on the client base;
- B** building maintenance prorated to square footage;
- E** the total payroll for instructors based on the number of students in each program; and,
- S** special projects.

arrangements and working conditions that reflect these characteristics. To strengthen their demands, 18 small rural colleges formed a special group within the Fédération des cégeps. Seventeen members of the group are small rural colleges and one is a small urban institution – all have enrolments of 2,000 or less.

A large percentage of funding to cégeps is directly proportional to enrolment. Since 1994, system-wide enrolment has declined by six percent, with greater demographic erosion seen in regional colleges. The regions hardest hit are the Gaspé peninsula (30 percent), the North Shore (23 percent), the Outaouais and La Mauricie (14 percent) and the Lower

St. Lawrence (13 percent). This has a direct effect in roughly the same proportion as the prorated portion of our funding, while costs remain for the most part fixed.

In response to the advocacy efforts of the Small Colleges Group, the Fédération and the Ministry of Education agreed to review the fixed portion of the funding mechanism and to limit the decrease in proportional funding to 15 percent of a specified client base. Those experiencing a 15 percent decline will be compensated. Although this solution is acceptable, the compensation is inadequate. The Cégep du Rivière-du-Loup expects to receive compensation of \$22,300 for 2001-2002, while the reductions in proportional funding due to declining enrolment since 1994 have amounted to approximately \$200,000.

Funding for instructors' salaries was traditionally tied to the cégep's obligations under the collective agreements. A few years ago, the funding model was changed to a linear model based on training programs. The number of instructors in a program is directly related to the enrolment for that program. Given that contractual obligations have not changed, colleges had to respond by maximizing the number of students in each group, placing voluntary quotas on some programs to avoid creating groups with too few students, shutting down multiple options in some programs and narrowing the range of complementary courses.

Even after introducing severe program management constraints, several colleges have continued to incur a deficit in their budget for instruction - a situation that is generally attributable to insufficient enrolment in some programs. For this model to be financially viable, a program must have a minimum of approximately 60 students. In regions with declining enrolment, many programs fall short of this threshold and suffer the resulting

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financial consequences. Yet we cannot simply discontinue these programs, for the following reasons:

- Programs may be experiencing a temporary decline and enrollment may be restored;
- Colleges have had to cover their own costs for placing instructors on call (80 percent of salary). The collective agreement stipulates that a person on call cannot be compelled to accept a position in another college unless it falls within 50 km (which rules out most regional colleges). Since colleges still have to pay the instructors' salaries, they have chosen to maintain programs with funding problems; and,
- Family incomes and other factors tend to severely limit the mobility of the institution's clients, therefore the college has a community responsibility to provide the broadest and most appropriate range of programs possible.

Financial and/or Ministry incentives to discontinue programs with insufficient enrolment unfortunately lead to a steady deterioration in the availability of education in the region. Accessibility carries a cost, and that cost must be determined and accepted. Funding for the instructor payroll should include funding guarantees for programs with low enrolment, at least for a few years.

Regional colleges are not the only institutions suffering from inadequate enrolment. In the city, student and staff mobility provide some solutions. In rural areas, we must identify and implement suitable solutions tailored to our specific context and look at how some colleges have managed to avoid deficits. Discounting a virtual miracle and/or blind luck, the following steps have been taken:

- strict, proactive management;
- community cooperation;
- employee cooperation; and,
- development of financially self-supporting activities.

There is also a funding mechanism specific to isolation, paid as part of a specific grant, to cover the costs of transportation and administrative travel, shipping for goods and service charges for colleges located far from Québec City or Montréal. Based on a funding factor and distance ratio, 17 cégeps share \$1.2 million a year. Funding exceeds \$100,000 in only four cases. The Cégep du Rivière-du-Loup receives \$32,000, for a total college budget of \$12 million.

The Geographic Factor and Client Base

The advantages and disadvantages caused by the geographic location of regional colleges are not strictly financial. Studies conducted in the Lower St. Lawrence region show that 90 to 95 percent of secondary school students enrol in the local cégep. The local client base therefore is very loyal for reasons of proximity, cost, sense of belonging, range of programs available, etc. In remote villages, however, where distance requires students to leave the family home to attend a cégep, enrolment ranges between 60 and 80 percent. It is estimated that 20 percent of our client base is lost from the rural/remote recruiting pool to urban colleges. To offset these losses, most colleges offer special programs that draw students from across the province. In the past few years, however, approval of new programs of this type has been granted very rarely if at all, and mostly to urban colleges, for several reasons:

- The cost of introducing new programs in an era of budget restrictions;
- A paradigm favoured by the Ministry of Education to adapt education to regional employment;

- Declining client bases; and
- Reluctance on the part of the colleges themselves in the face of applicable funding rules.

Business

The proximity of businesses and the fact that their management is much more accessible than in an urban setting constitutes an advantage when seeking partnerships for some activities. However, these businesses are also generally smaller, often quite diversified, less prosperous and reluctant to invest in training.

Our competition with private-sector training services often draws criticism. We therefore must be cautious in the services we offer to the business sector and factor in this specific context. Some regional colleges may benefit from proximity to large companies such as Bombardier in La Pocatière, Alcan in the Saguenay, paper mills in La Mauricie, or their provincial centre of expertise, such as the Institut maritime in Rimouski. However, these colleges run the risk of dependency on a single industrial sector, with the ensuing risks of cyclical downturns in that sector. For other cégeps, one solution is to develop products that target a broad client base in their specific area of expertise, and to forge strategic alliances with private consulting firms.

Community Relations

The communities where regional colleges are located are very closely knit, and this occurs in inverse proportion to the size of the community. The college is often the most senior local education authority and is viewed as a hub for local economic, social, cultural and sporting development. The direct economic benefits to the community amount to approximately \$15,000 per student each year. The students form a large recruiting pool for part-time jobs; the presence of employees with a wide range of qualifications enhances community

knowledge; and, the colleges often have local cultural and sports infrastructure. Last, but not least, the proximity of post-secondary education is a significant benefit for young people and parents, and provides employers with a valuable source of skilled labour. Given these factors, colleges can always rely on the community to support their projects. The community also remains willing to intervene to combat any threat that might affect “its” college.

This very close relationship between a college and its host community also has a down side. The college has a duty to perform and must play a complete and effective role in supporting local development under the close and often critical scrutiny of local media and the general public. These obligations can entail associated costs in terms of making facilities and equipment available or facilitating active participation by staff in community organizations, not to mention conducting specific projects such as sporting events, exhibitions, competitions or charitable activities.

For historic or circumstantial reasons, many regional cégeps own and operate cultural or sports facilities that they must maintain. Some manage to balance the budget for these facilities in partnership with their community, but others must incur large operating deficits despite beneficial partnership agreements.

This reality of cost, time and exposure to criticism has not yet been factored into our funding, much less into the working conditions of our staff. For the moment, the Small Colleges Group plans to further document this problem and organize a symposium to determine some solutions.

Isolation

With a few exceptions, the size of colleges tends to decline as the distance from major urban centres increases. Is isolation adequately factored into the funding formula and into the working conditions of staff?

Unionized staff enjoy virtually the same salary conditions in all colleges, except for a few benefits linked to remote or isolated locations. Their compensation is generally tied to their education, experience and job classification. Management staff essentially fall into three salary categories linked to college enrolment, which therefore favours larger colleges. The differences are not very large, however, with a difference of only 2.6 percent between the top level of the lowest category and that of the highest classification. On the other hand, there is almost a 20 percent gap between the highest paid senior management positions (Presidents and Academic Vice-Presidents) at large, urban institutions with high enrollment and the equivalent positions in the smaller, rural institutions.

Regional disparity bonuses are paid to unionized and managerial staff, and can range from \$4,000 to \$16,000 depending on the place of work and family status. The locations covered are based on characteristics of isolation rather than remote location.

Collective agreements cover costs for professional development and there are certain allowances for remote locations. However, since the amount available to cégeps is insufficient to cover travel, accommodation and registration costs, compared with current costs (not even counting the staff replacement costs covered by the college), the rural/remote cégeps are forced to favour professional development activities of close proximity or very short duration. For managerial staff, the college must establish its own policy and cover the costs.

A recent survey on the movement of senior management staff between colleges has very clearly shown migration to the same position from smaller to larger colleges. Of course, the reverse does not occur, so smaller colleges serve in some sense as an incubator for senior managers, at great cost and high risk. As such, this issue appears in the current year’s

work plan of the Fédération des cégeps and the Association des cadres (management association).

Conclusion

As in many cases, there are lots of good intentions and models to remedy the above issues, but very little money to do so. Free access to college education makes the small Québec cégeps highly dependent on government funding (approximately 80 percent of our budgets) and this dependency leads to growing standardization and uniformity of practices and working conditions. The particular characteristics of size, community relations and isolation are either ignored or insufficiently factored into the funding formula, working conditions and approved course offerings. Therefore, the issues of the small rural colleges translate into demands in these areas. Ultimately, there is reason to question whether our representation by a single Federation for all cégeps is appropriate. ■

Gilles Bacon is the Director General of Cégep du Rivière-du-Loup. He has chaired the Small Colleges Group within the Fédération des cégeps for the past year and is a member of the ACCC Task Force on Rural and Remote Colleges.

A Rural College in Saskatchewan – Meeting the Knowledge Challenge

By Fay Myers

As the 21st century transforms the world into a knowledge-based society, the need increases for individuals to be well-educated and highly skilled. These global trends impact and challenge even the smaller, rural and remote communities in provinces such as Saskatchewan. Shifting demographics, skilled labour market shortages and economic changes are making lifelong learning essential and causing educators to expand their roles to become facilitators of knowledge.

With a mission “to provide access to lifelong learning opportunities that respond to the needs of our adult population, communities and organizations to adapt to changing environments,” Parkland Regional College has become the facilitator of learning in East Central Saskatchewan.

One of nine Regional Colleges in the province, Parkland is not a credit granting institution; it brokers educational programs through other credit granting institutions. By delivering 600 courses per year to a rural population of almost 65,000 spread over 50 communities covering approximately 10,605 square miles, Parkland Regional College plays a key role in facilitating a strong rural revitalization strategy through local and regional economic and social development.

Operating under the Regional Colleges Act of the Government of Saskatchewan, Parkland has a community-based mandate. It responds directly to the needs of the communities that it serves. But as the socio-economic environment of rural Saskatchewan changes, so do the issues and challenges of service-oriented institutions and organizations. Some of the major issues now facing the province and the College are the growing labor market shortage; low adult educational levels; the education needs of a rapidly expanding aboriginal population; a shift towards a knowledge-based economy; and, the growing demand for greater accountability and performance management for institutional effectiveness.

The changing demographics of rural Saskatchewan are contributing significantly to a growing labour market shortage. The “baby boom” generation is retiring, youth are out-migrating for job opportunities, the agriculturally based economy is in transition and many services are being centralized to the urban centres. A substantially higher proportion of the adult population has less than a grade nine education while a relatively low proportion of the population has attained a post-secondary education. This gap in terms of educational attainment has contributed to skill shortages in the trades, health care, information technology and service sectors.

Through a Rural Access Project, Parkland Regional College is extending education and training off campus to

reach rural adults who require educational and skills upgrading. The Project involves a virtual instructor, classroom literacy tutors, counselling staff as well as part-time classroom instructors and technical staff.

Aboriginal youth account for a rapidly increasing percentage of the regional population thus creating a higher demand for educational upgrading, literacy and employability skills training. However, aboriginal youth and adults experience more “education and employment gaps” compared to the non-aboriginal population. This trend will continue if participation and success rates for aboriginal students do not increase through the K-12 and post-secondary systems. As these students represent the future work force of Saskatchewan, the development of strong partnerships with aboriginal organizations is essential to assist in heightening educational attainment. The College has initiated a joint facility with the Treaty Four First Nations at Fort Qu’Appelle and delivers basic education and skills programs on the Reserves. It has also initiated the joint delivery of health and business programs with provincial aboriginal educational organizations and developed an employment equity plan that supports a representative work force within the College itself.

Another issue facing rural Saskatchewan and thus affecting the College mandate is the shift towards a regional and national knowledge-based economy and the resulting increase in demand for skilled workers with highly developed interpersonal skills. At the same time, the agricultural sector is experiencing a transition towards more diversity, value-added related industries and a declining number of producers, thus further increasing demand for new skills development.

Parkland Regional College is preparing workers, through the delivery of more sophisticated technical programs, to use new technologies and participate productively in “new” economy jobs. It is also providing customized niche training to unique businesses as well as ongoing learning and “upskilling” within the workforce where required. However, the College faces constraints in terms of time and effort, as there is a prevalence of small sized business in rural Saskatchewan thus creating a challenge to maintain contact with employers and employees to assess their collective needs.

To address such major issues with limited funds and resources, the College must seize all opportunities for partnership development and integrated delivery systems with other educational organizations and businesses. The College has developed active partnerships with many community-based organizations to jointly deliver life skills, career and academic planning, testing and assessments and technical training directly related to employment. It has also partnered with school divisions to deliver skills upgrading and retraining programs and establish joint-use facilities; health districts to deliver health-related and technology training; and, business organizations to prepare people for the labour market.

The College has also been involved in the development of a provincial initiative for distance education delivery through technology enhanced learning. This initiative will add a computer-based component to the range of multi-mode distance delivery methods currently in use in Saskatchewan. While broadening accessibility, online education assists only those who are computer literate and comfortable with this type of tool. It also requires that a great deal of support be available to learners to ensure their progress, and to College staff to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge regarding quality on-line curriculum content and its translation to learning and career outcomes for the student. If this method is to be effective and efficient, access needs to be made available as close to home as possible. As students demand increased access to quality educational options and accelerate pressure for technical training, the resulting and necessary expansion of distance and technology enhanced learning opportunities will tax both the financial and human resource capacity of the College.

Concurrently, escalating demands from the public and government for greater accountability and performance management for institutional effectiveness have resulted in Parkland Regional College allocating resources to the development of a student information system for public educational institutions to quantify achievements. The College is also involved in developing effective key performance indicators for the college system based on the government’s Sector Strategic Plan and a Training Needs Assessment for the region.

Such public accountability to the community and its learners forms the backbone of any Canadian college. But we need to realize that accountability costs. While the College responds to the needs of its rural and remote communities for a well-educated and skilled workforce, and seizes opportunities at every avenue to maximize resources, decision-makers must recognize that post-secondary funding formulas do not always account for changing socioeconomic, demographic and fiscal forecasts. In keeping abreast of the lifelong learning needs of what is becoming a knowledge-based society, Saskatchewan and its many rural and remote communities cannot be allowed to fall behind. ■

[Fay Myers is the Chief Executive Officer of Parkland Regional College. Ms. Myers has an extensive background in educational leadership and is ready to meet the challenges facing Canada’s post-secondary educational institutions.](#)

The British Columbia Small Colleges Report (1997) Revisited – A Perspective on Small Rural Colleges

By Terry Weninger

It is not often that one is able to revisit and analyze a project retrospectively. Four years ago, the *Small Colleges Report* was released. What were the findings? What were the recommendations? What were the results? What was missing?

Early in 1997, Ministry and college officials identified a common belief that funding constraints and the changing post-secondary environment in British Columbia were having a disproportionately negative impact on small colleges compared to the other publicly funded post-secondary institutions in the system. The need to analyze and validate this common belief was acknowledged and the BC Small Colleges Study was born. In BC, the small colleges are defined as the six colleges located outside the densely populated region of the Lower Mainland and the southern part of Vancouver Island.

The *Small Colleges Report* was written in the early stages of a changing post-secondary environment. An examination of developments in the post-secondary system during the four years since the release of the *Report* provides insight regarding the significant impact of these changes and evidence that the BC agenda for change was quite dramatic.

The first phase of change involved a major restructuring by increasing regional access to degree programs, the “Access for All” initiative. This initiative began in 1989 with the introduction of the university-college model. In 1994, legislative amendments increased the number of degree-granting university colleges to five. Several other key changes also occurred. The British Columbia Institute of Technology and the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design acquired degree-granting status; three universities were established between

1990-1997; the Langara Campus of Vancouver Community College was designated as a separate college; and, two institutions operated by the aboriginal community became part of the system. The province also experienced an expansion in the number and variety of private training institutions.

What were the Findings of the Report?

Amidst these significant changes, the small colleges were struggling to fulfill their mandates. The small colleges study set out to document and analyze this situation. A series of interviews with Ministry officials and senior administrators from small colleges as well as a review of numerous documents revealed that small colleges share many common qualities that make them unique as a group. All small colleges deliver a comprehensive array of programs through multi-campus networks distributed over large geographic regions and serve small resource-based communities undergoing rapid change. The six BC small colleges serve 78 percent of the province’s geographic area (approximately 700,000 square kilometres) and 16 percent of the BC population. At the time the study was conducted, they also received 16 percent of the Ministry budget allocated to the college, university-college and institute system. There was no evidence that this population-to-funding relationship was actually a policy position of the Ministry.

Beyond the operational similarities, there was a universal belief that government policy when applied system-wide had an adverse effect on small colleges. Several examples were noted:

- a. The funding formula devised and applied in the early 1980s did not take the characteristics of small colleges into account;
- b. The “Access for All” initiative had unintended negative effects; and,
- c. The “Community Skills Centre” initiative, involving about 20 government funded training centres in the regions served by small colleges, resulted in administrative duplication and confusion over roles and responsibilities.

What were the Recommendations of the Report?

The *Small Colleges Report* presented the following five recommendations to the Ministry:

1. That the Ministry determine the service needs of each college and fund accordingly;
2. That a new system-wide funding formula be created;
3. That the Ministry designate the small colleges as the primary delivery agents for all its rural training initiatives and resolve the issues around the Community Skills Centres and the delivery of Adult Basic Education;
4. That the northern Colleges re-energize their efforts to coordinate and integrate the University of Northern BC in planning and delivery; and
5. That the Ministry and small colleges examine ways to become more efficient and examine the feasibility of amalgamating the Ministry’s rural field operations with small college operations.

What were the Results?

This is a difficult question to answer if one is to ascribe a cause/effect relationship. However, the developments that evolved are noteworthy. The Minister of Advanced Education established a task force that, after considerable in-depth review, issued a report entitled *Critical Issues in Financing Colleges and Institutes*. The findings documented the need for a new funding formula.

The Minister then commissioned a subsequent report to examine the financial circumstances of those colleges predicting or already in a deficit financial situation. It is interesting to note that three of the six small colleges reported a deficit or anticipated deficit. Another small college had its deficit addressed prior to the study. While this report was not distributed, it did support the need to re-examine the funding mechanism and resulted in a non-formula contribution to those colleges most in need. The Ministry then initiated an extensive review of the funding formula. The results of that review were released in the year 2000-01 but changes are not scheduled to occur until the upcoming fiscal year.

The "Community Skills Centre" Initiative was, for the most part, resolved with many of the Centres being integrated within the Colleges. An Adult Basic Education tuition policy was developed to provide a level playing field for small colleges so they could compete with School Districts delivering adult basic education programs.

Measures taken in response to the fourth recommendation are of peripheral interest to this article, and the fifth recommendation has not been addressed.

What was missing?

While these efforts did address the *Small Colleges Report* recommendations, the Presidents of the small colleges met on August 13, 2001 and once again reiterated the prevalence of fiscal problems and their impact on service requirements. The Presidents recommended that the *Small Colleges Report* be updated and that new efforts be made to resolve the historic and serious financial issues facing the small colleges.

It is interesting to note that two important qualitative observations were made in the original *Small Colleges Report* but further investigation was not pursued. The observation made on the title page states: "It is more than large distances and small populations that set aside the small colleges as a group," and a further observation stated "small colleges [are] unique in the system and unique from each other." Despite these observations, it would appear that the missing element from the *Small Colleges Report* was a definition and an elaboration of the "uniqueness" of the small college. The *Report* assumes that the role a small college plays in the community it serves is the same as that of its larger urban counterpart. This is a fundamental error and an omission from the original report.

In failing to define the uniqueness of the small rural colleges, the *Small Colleges Report* could not provide an insight into the mandate and role of the small colleges or an

underlying rationale for a different funding mechanism. Other flaws were that the *Report* did not proactively develop and initiate a plan that would provide the small rural colleges with a stronger voice; and, the initiative remained provincial in scope.

To strengthen their national voice, representatives from Canada's rural and remote colleges met at the ACCC sponsored Symposium on Serving Canada's Rural and Remote Communities in February 2001. Held in BC, the symposium began the exploration of the unique mandate and role of the small rural college. Participants strongly agreed that the small rural colleges are an integral component of community and economic development. They also agreed that small rural colleges should be recognized for this role and that the Federal and Provincial governments should more fully utilize the provincial and national network of small rural colleges to foster community and economic development agendas.

The ACCC Task Force on Rural and Remote Colleges is continuing the work begun at the Symposium by promoting a clearer definition of the uniqueness of the small rural college. It is also building a higher national profile and a broader awareness of the mandates, contributions and roles of these remarkable institutions in strengthening Canadian society. ■

[Dr. Terence Weninger is the President of the College of New Caledonia, Prince George, BC. Prior to joining the College in 1990, he held senior administrative positions at Medicine Hat College and was the Deputy Minister of Education and Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage Resources with the Government of Yukon. Dr. Weninger is a member of the ACCC Task Force on Rural and Remote Colleges.](#)

NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT (NATCON)

Ottawa, Ontario

January 21-23, 2002

The National Consultation on Career Development (NATCON) is the largest bilingual international conference addressing career development and employment-related issues. The 28th NATCON will offer over 150 sessions on career development and employment-related issues such as counselling methods and tools, employment-search techniques, career information and technological resources, labour market trends, as well as personal and professional development issues. For more information, visit www.natcon-conat.utoronto.ca.

ACCC SYMPOSIUM FOR COLLEGE AND INSTITUTE BOARD CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS

Vancouver, B.C.

January 25-27, 2002

Colleges and institutes function within a variety of legislative frameworks and are constituted differently in different regions. However, from a governance perspective, they also share a number of common interests and can learn from each other. The roles of Board Chairs and Vice-Chairs have become vital as institutions adjust to dramatically shifting landscapes of funding, community needs and globalization. Developed to meet the needs expressed by Board Chairs and Vice-Chairs of ACCC member institutions, this symposium will provide a venue for participants from across the country to meet and share approaches relevant to the challenges and roles of Board leadership. Participants will explore topics including: the community relations role of the Chair; leadership and mentorship of the Board; approaches to policy governance; the Board Chair/CEO relationship; advocacy and influencing public policy; and challenges and opportunities for Colleges. For more information, visit www.accc.ca/english/Events/index.cfm or contact the ACCC Conferences and Awards Office at tel.: (613) 746-5916, fax: (613) 746-6174 or email: gmulhall@accc.ca.

READY, SET, GO! IMPROVING THE ODDS THROUGH INTEGRATED RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

Ottawa, Ontario

January 30-February 1, 2002

Hosted by the Applied Research Branch of Human Resources Development Canada, Ready, Set, Go! Improving the Odds through Integrated Research, Policy and Practice is a national dialogue conference that will be of interest to researchers, government policy-makers, community practitioners and educators involved in social research, policy or practice. Conference participants will engage in dialogue about key social issues facing Canada

today such as: how to best support Canadian families and their children; how to help Canadians build skills and take advantage of the lifelong learning opportunities they need in the new economy; and, how to enable disadvantaged Canadians to move from positions of exclusion to those of full inclusion within Canadian society. For more information, visit www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/readyssetgo or call 1-800-342-7146, ext. 257.

2nd WORLD CONGRESS OF COLLEGES AND POLYTECHNICS

Melbourne, Australia

March 24-27, 2002

The 2nd World Congress of Colleges and Polytechnics will provide a forum for networking and sharing the most recent policies, programs, practices and products in college development. It will also examine the role of colleges as contributors to national human resources development strategies and national and international economic and social development. Keynote speeches, presentations, workshops and network sessions will explore the contexts of globalization, technology and youth, as a customer of vocational education and training, within the following themes: expanding accessibility to institutes, colleges and polytechnics; strengthening partnerships between institutions and employers; funding the vocational education and training sector; ensuring that the professional development of staff is up-to-date and relevant; and, establishing an international voice for the world's institutes, colleges and polytechnics. Approximately 1,500 educational representatives are expected to attend this event organized by the World Federation of Associations of Colleges and Polytechnics and TAFE Directors Australia. For more information, visit www.wfworldcongress.com.

WORLD EDUCATION MARKET

Lisbon, Portugal

May 21-24, 2002

The World Education Market (WEM) is the world's only professional event dedicated to the international business of education, training and lifelong learning. The annual marketplace provides an opportunity to network and build partnerships with government, education and technology executives from around the world. WEM facilitates business to business transactions and the development of a wide range of cross-industry partnerships. For more information, visit www.wemex.com.

ACCC ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2002

St. John's, Newfoundland

May 26-28, 2002

Hosted by the College of the North Atlantic and the Marine Institute, the theme of the ACCC 2002 Conference "Making Waves: Colleges, Skills and the Economy" was developed

to reflect the proactive approach that colleges and institutes must adopt in their daily initiatives, particularly their program delivery activities. Conference speakers and presenters will address the issues involved in designing programs that respond to skill needs and the benefits that can be realized by proactive institutions. Workshops will reflect successful models used by colleges and institutes to address sectoral skills shortages and the subsequent impact on local, provincial, national and global economies. Emphasis will be placed on highlighting best practices in colleges and institutes. For more information, visit conference.accc.ca, or contact the ACCC Conferences and Awards Office at tel.: (613) 746-5916, fax: (613) 746-6174 or email: gmulhall@accc.ca.

OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION: NEW STANDARDS FOR THE EDUCATIONAL MAINSTREAM

Calgary, Alberta
May 26-29, 2002

The first North American Regional Conference of the International Council for Open and Distance Education, this event will provide an unprecedented opportunity for industry and academic leaders in the field of open and distance learning in Canada, Mexico and the USA to gain

new insights and make new contacts. Based on the theme, "New Century - New Models: New Standards for the Educational Mainstream," the general focus of the Conference will be strategically directing open and distance learning towards economic and social issues. Open and Distance Education: New Standards for the Educational Mainstream is jointly sponsored by the Canadian Association for Distance Education. For more information, visit www.athabasca.ca/conf2002.

2002 APPRENTICESHIP CONFERENCE

Richmond, B.C.

June 2-4, 2002

Hosted by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, the 2002 Apprenticeship Conference will appeal to a broad audience including representatives from business, labour, provincial and territorial governments, apprenticeship officials, educators and equity groups with an interest in apprenticeship. While providing the Canadian apprenticeship community with an opportunity for shared learning and networking under the theme "Apprenticeship is the Future," the conference will showcase some of the new developments in apprenticeship training. For more information, visit www.caf-fca.org.

The E-learning E-volution in Colleges and Universities: A Pan-Canadian Challenge

A report prepared by the Advisory Committee for Online Learning, *The E-learning E-volution in Colleges and Universities: A Pan-Canadian Challenge* urges governments, universities, colleges and businesses to accelerate and coordinate efforts to offer Canadians online post-secondary education. The report also encourages the advancement of the learnware industry based on Canadian educational applications. It advocates the use of online learning through Internet or Intranet to meet individual needs, incomes, languages and learning styles. According to Industry Minister Brian Tobin, "Canada is well-positioned to be a world leader in online learning, and this report will serve as a valuable guide." A full copy of the report is available online at www.cmec.ca/postsec/evolution.en.pdf, or call 1-800-575-9200 for a printed copy.

New Website Showcases Education in Canada

Created by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, education@canada is a new website designed to inform the international community about Canada's education systems. The site provides educators, prospective students and governments from abroad with a wealth of

useful information on the education programs in any particular province or territory. A number of relevant links to national learning organizations are also provided. Visit the site at www.educationcanada.cmec.ca.

Cycle of Improved Practice: Putting Resources into the Hands of Educators

The Cycle of Improved Practice is a web-based database of 130 of the most effective resources available to post-secondary educators who wish to make better use of educational technology. Created by the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology, the website contains selected and annotated learning materials to support independent professional development. Resources include articles, research, Webber, books and courses collected and rated by Canadian educators. Designed to accommodate different levels of experience in using educational technology, the site will guide users through a cycle of planning, implementing, evaluating and revising the use of educational technology. Visit www.c2t2.ca/cycle.

Where Did All the Workers Go?

Where Did All the Workers Go? The Challenges of the Aging Workforce reports the results of a major survey of 800

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business and labour leaders in the public and private sectors undertaken by the Canadian Labour and Business Centre for the Industry Training Apprenticeship Commission in British Columbia. The report demonstrates a growing concern over the looming retirement of older, experienced workers and the ability to replace their skills in the Canadian workplace. An increasing percentage in all categories surveyed anticipate very significant problems in replacing retirees, with skills shortages cited as the number one concern of respondents. Visit www.clbc.ca/engdocs/reports/workersgo-01.htm to purchase or download the report.

Tools for Transformation - Components of Strategic Planning

Produced by the Consortium for Community College Development, *Tools for Transformation - Components of Strategic Planning* is a module specially created for strategic planning in community colleges. It is designed to enable institutions to develop plans using their own resources. The module contains step-by-step materials for colleges to systematically assess the emerging needs of their service regions, identify performance gaps and develop new organizational designs. The experience of more than 50 colleges involved in planned change over the last decade has been incorporated into the module which is intended to be a comprehensive guide to conducting and getting results from strategic planning. For more information, visit www.umich.edu/~cccd/resources/compplan.html or call the Consortium office at (734) 647-1973.

Media Awareness Network

The Media Awareness Network (MNet) is a non-government, non-profit media education organization with a mission to support media education in Canadian homes, schools and communities. MNet's aim is to encourage critical thinking about media information and new communications technologies and to explore the use of new technologies for professional development and lifelong learning for media and Internet literacy. MNet operates an extensive media education website at www.media-awareness.ca. A new addition to the site is a section called Web Awareness: Knowing the Issues, which is an Internet awareness and professional development program designed to highlight the new challenges and issues that arise as children and youth use the Internet.

Coming Soon: A Consumer's Guide to Online Education

Responding to a need identified by Commonwealth Education Ministers for better standards in offering online and offshore education, The Commonwealth of Learning is working with the Canadian Association for Community Education, FuturEd Consulting Education Futurists and other partners to create a set of quality standards for online learning products and services. From February to August 2001, FuturEd conducted a national consultation with providers and consumers of online education in order to create a set of quality guidelines that are consensus-based, consumer-oriented, comprehensive, futuristic and recommended. These guidelines will be used by students to help make informed choices from among online education and training options, and by

developers and providers to help them meet consumer needs and expectations. The finished product will include a set of questions for learners to ask in the process of choosing between online learning products and services in order to maximize the return on their investment. Watch for the Consumer's Guide to Online Education at www.FuturEd.com.

Electronic Commerce Programs in Canadian Community Colleges and Institutes of Technology

A report on electronic commerce programs offered by Canadian colleges and institutes entitled *Electronic Commerce in Canadian Community Colleges and Institutes of Technology* was recently produced by ACCC in collaboration with the Canadian E-Business Opportunities Roundtable's Talent Pool Team. The report details how Canadian colleges and institutes are responding to a call for high tech workers who possess the skills required to meet the demands of the Internet economy. Canadian colleges and institutes are presently offering a broad range of e-commerce-related programs such as E-Business Web Developer and E-Commerce Marketing.

The report represents the offerings of over 40 different institutions. To download a copy, visit www.accc.ca/english/advocacy/e-commerce.cfm or www.ebusinessroundtable.ca.

FAO Yearbook

A compilation of statistical data on basic agricultural products for all countries and territories of the world, the *Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Yearbook* includes data series on area, yield and production of crops; on livestock numbers and products; and on population, land use, irrigation and farm machinery for the years 1997-1999. It also gives total and per

capita index numbers that highlight trends in food and agricultural production across all countries and continents for the years 1998-1999. Statistical information in the yearbook is based primarily on data provided to the FAO Statistics Division by countries through questionnaires or in official statistical publications. To order, contact Renouf Publishing Co. Ltd. at tel.: 1-866-767-6766 or visit www.renoufbooks.com. (ISBN 92-5-004520-4, \$76.50)

OECD Agricultural Outlook: 2001 Edition

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) *Agricultural Outlook* analyzes how both global and domestic forces are impacting on the agricultural sector and shaping world and OECD agricultural markets up to 2006. Market fundamentals suggest that the low point of the international price cycle has now been reached after a number of years of declining world

prices to historical lows. Increasing demand and trade should lead to a steady recovery in prices over the projection period to 2006. To order, contact Renouf Publishing Co. Ltd. at tel.: 1-866-767-6766 or visit www.renoufbooks.com. (#51-2001-06-1, \$55.50)

Agricultural Policies in OECD Countries: Monitoring and Evaluation, 2001 Edition

An annual publication, *Agricultural Policies in OECD Countries: Monitoring and Evaluation* is the most comprehensive description and assessment of agricultural and related policy developments available for OECD countries. The report provides data on the level and composition of support and protection to agriculture and evaluates the extent to which countries are reforming their agricultural policies. To order, contact Renouf Publishing Co. Ltd. at tel.: 1-

866-767-6766 or visit www.renoufbooks.com. (#51-2001-10-1, \$96.50)

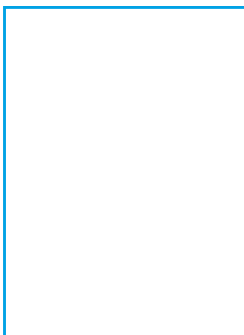
Environmental Indicators of Agriculture: Volume 3, Methods and Results

Environmental Indicators of Agriculture: Volume 3, Methods and Results is the first comprehensive study to review and take stock in OECD countries of progress in developing indicators to measure the environmental performance of agriculture. Using standard indicator definitions and methods of calculation, the book provides results of the state and trends of environmental conditions in agriculture; interprets trends and highlights linkages between indicators; and, outlines the limitations and key challenges for their future development. To order, contact Renouf Publishing Co. Ltd. at tel.: 1-866-767-6766 or visit www.renoufbooks.com. (#51-2001-01-1, \$112.50)

A recent graduate of Sheridan College's Illustration Program, **Katherine Bassett** was awarded a grant of \$10,000 in an international competition administered by the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation. The purpose of the Foundation is to aid talented young artists in the early stages of their careers, with awards limited to candidates working in the fields of painting, drawing, printmaking and sculpture.

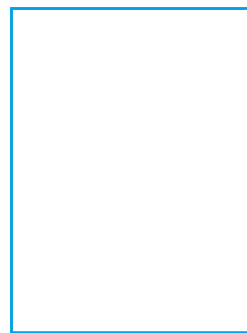
Chris Briggs, a third-year apprentice at Okanagan University College, was honoured as the best automotive service technician apprentice in the 7th Canadian Skills Competition held May 31 to June 3 in Edmonton.

Dr. Robert Browne, a chemistry instructor at Douglas College, won the Nova Chemicals Ltd. Award for Chemistry Teaching in Community and Technical Colleges. Dr. Browne was honoured for his dedication to chemistry education, his enthusiasm for introducing educational technology into chemistry teaching, and his extensive work with College Chemistry of Canada. The award is offered each year through the



Canadian Society for Chemical Technology to an outstanding chemistry teacher in Canada.

Melissa Craig, a third-year apprentice from Camosun College's Professional Cook Training program, was named top apprentice at the annual Canadian Federation of Chefs & Cooks National Junior Cook Championship. Ms. Craig is the third consecutive apprentice from Camosun to win the championship.



A Health Information Services Program instructor at Douglas College, **Joy Fletcher** won the Canadian Health Record Association's Special Achievement Award in recognition of her authorship of the ICD-10-CA/CCI Classification Primer, a text for teaching the classification of health care data. The Special Achievement Award recognizes a specific major accomplishment

which positively enhances the health record profession.

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A team of cooking students from **George Brown College** won a gold medal for Canada and placed seventh in the world at the International Youth Culinary Olympics held in Germany.

Susan Byrne, Roy Camara, Sarah Dunstan, Ben Hunter and team

captain **Leeann Rossitter** won the gold medal in the timed hot-food competition. Students were judged on their cooking, aesthetics, organization and hygiene. The team was coached by George Brown professors **Tom Gibson, Ian Grady** and **Ed Wright**.



A North Island College electronics student, **Desmond Hart** won the gold medal in electronics at the 7th Canadian Skills Competition held in Edmonton, May 31 to June 3. Designed to test a student's technical capability, the competition tests four components (theory, soldering, trouble shooting and prototype reboarding) over two days. Mr. Hart is the first student from North Island to win the gold medal.

Two students from **Conestoga College** won gold medals at the 7th Canadian Skills Competition held May 31 to June 3 in Edmonton. **Andrew Hartholt**, a student in the Architecture - Construction Engineering Technology program, won gold in the Architectural CADD (computer-aided design drafting) category. A student in the Mechanical Engineering Technology - Design and Analysis program, **Jeff Lotz** took top honours in the Mechanical CADD competition.

A Senior Research Associate and Professor Emeritus of Sheridan College, **Robin King** was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2001 Canadian New Media Awards. Mr. King earned the award for his pioneering accomplishment in developing Canada's first fine arts programs in computer graphics and computer animation, both launched at the college in 1981. He



was also a driving force behind the new Sheridan Centre for Animation and Emerging Technologies which houses studies in broadcast journalism, new media, film and television, computer animation and information technology.



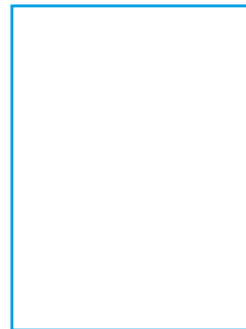
Stephen E. Quinlan, former President of Seneca College, is the first Canadian to be awarded the Chair Academy's Paul A. Elsner Excellence in Leadership Award. Mr. Quinlan was chosen for his foresight in educational leadership and for modelling transformational leadership qualities in Seneca College and for community colleges throughout the world. The award was presented at the Chair

Academy International Conference held in February 2001 in Florida. The Chair Academy is a premier leadership training and development program for organizational leaders.

Red River College student **Matt Shortridge** won the gold medal in Cabinetmaking at the 7th Canadian Skills Competition held May 31 to June 3 in Edmonton. The skills competition is designed to reward students for excellence, to directly involve industry in evaluating student performance and to keep training relevant to employers' needs.

Amanda Thibeault, a recent graduate of Cambrian College's Journalism program, was awarded the Edward Goff Penny Memorial Prize for Young Canadian Journalists in the under 25,000 circulation category. Ms. Thibeault won the award based on her portfolio of work as a reporter for the Simcoe Reformer, which included a two-part series on the poor air quality in the Haldimand-Norfolk region of Ontario and a sensitive look at the family of a sexual assault victim. Nominations for the Memorial Prize, administered by the Canadian Newspaper Association, are judged on purity of language and excellence of style, interest of subject, persuasiveness of presentation and depth or originality of thought.

Albert Brulé was appointed Vice-President, Development and Partnerships of Fanshawe College. Mr. Brulé was the Director of Development and Executive Director of the College Foundation at Grande Prairie Regional College for five years. He has extensive experience in fund development, partnerships and marketing and taught fundraising management at Grant MacEwan College.



Joy Dion was appointed Principal of New Brunswick Community College - Woodstock. Director of the Woodstock Mental Health Centre for over five years, Ms. Dion has also worked as an executive director, quality of life coordinator, social worker and teacher.



Pauline Gillanders was hired as the Vice-President, Finance and Operations of Lakeland College. Ms. Gillanders brings a wealth of experience in finance, operations management, management reporting systems and information systems technology to her new position, having served as a Principal Consultant with PricewaterhouseCoopers for over six years.



Cal Haddad was hired as Interim President of Mohawk College. Mr. Haddad served as Vice-President of Student Affairs at the College since 1985 and spent most of the past 32 years working in Ontario's community college system.



William C. Harlan was selected for the position of Vice-President, Business Affairs at the Open Learning Agency. Mr. Harlan brings an extensive background in the public and private sectors to his new role, having held Vice-President positions at Westcoast Energy Inc. and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers as well as various executive positions in the Alberta Department of Energy.

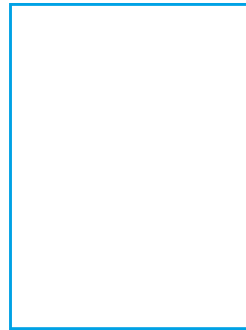
Gail Higginson is the new Vice-President, Academic and Student Services at Confederation College. Prior to this appointment, Ms. Higginson served for eight years as Academic Director of Georgian College.

Executive Director of Finance and Administration, Secretary and Treasurer of Confederation College for the past 12 years, **Reg Jones** is the new Vice-President of Administrative Services at the College.



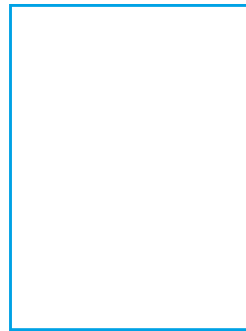
Former Dean of Business, **Gary Linford** assumed the position of Acting Vice President of Education and Student Services at Camosun College. Mr. Linford has led the School of Business at Camosun since 1994 and brings a wealth of administrative and instructional experience to his new position.

Ian McCormack fills the newly-created position of Vice-President, Community Development and Innovation at Confederation College. Mr. McCormack brings more than 20 years of experience in forestry-related operations, business development and consulting to Confederation.



Former Acting Principal of New Brunswick Community College - Woodstock, **Peter McGill** was named Principal of New Brunswick Community College - Saint John. For over 25 years, Mr. McGill has worked in several capacities in the community college system, including instructor of business technology, dean of electronic, mechanical and industrial studies

and dean of community services, health and business studies. He replaces **Cheryl Robertson** who is retiring after 17 years in the public school system and seven years as Principal of NBCC - Saint John.



Alistair McVey was appointed Principal of North Island College's Port Alberni Campus. The former Dean of the Science and Technology Division at the College of New Caledonia, Mr. McVey has also held faculty positions at the University of Northern British Columbia, the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia and the College of New Caledonia.



The Seneca College Board of Governors appointed **Dr. Rick Miner** as the fourth President in the college's 34-year history. With 25 years of diverse senior management experience in education, Dr. Miner brings a strong record of achievement and academic commitment to his new position. He is a former Vice-President at the University of New

Brunswick and has served as Director, Canada/China Language and Cultural Program, Dean of Commerce and Director of the Masters of Business Administration program at Saint Mary's University.

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Pierre Payeur was named Director of the Collège Boréal campus in Hearst, Ontario. A native of Hearst, Mr. Payeur previously practised law as an associate with a local firm.



Dr. Bob Priebe

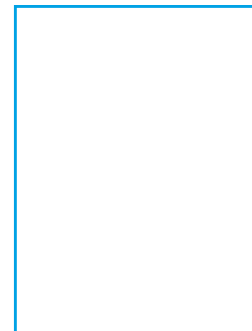
was named Acting President of Camosun College, replacing **Dr. Liz Ashton** who is on a six-month sabbatical to participate in discussions and studies in England, Ireland and Texas. Dr. Priebe has held the position of Vice-President of Education and Student Services at Camosun since 1998.

The new Associate Vice-President of Human Resources at Okanagan University College is **Richard Roy**. Formerly the Director of Human Resources and Organizational Development for the East Central Regional Health Authority in Camrose, Alberta, Mr. Roy was also Vice-President of Human Resources at Penticton Regional Hospital from 1981 to 1997.

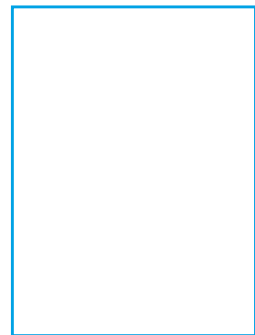
The College of the Rockies sixth President and Chief Executive Officer is **Dr. Nicholas Rubidge**. Former Director of the Colleges and Institutional Planning Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Training in British Columbia, Dr. Rubidge has been instrumental in shaping the landscape of B.C.'s post-secondary system. He was one of the educational administrators involved in creating a multi-campus college in the East Kootenay region which later became the College of the Rockies.



Claude St-Cyr was named Director General of Cégep de Drummondville for a five-year mandate, replacing retiring Director General **Paul Lemire**. Director of the Cégep régional de Lanaudière's Collège constituant de Joliette since 1998, Mr. St-Cyr has held various academic management positions at Cégep de Joliette and Cégep du Vieux-Montréal.

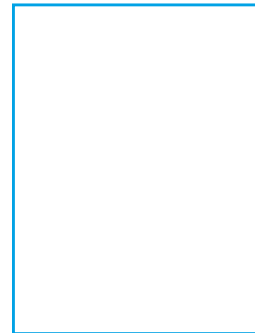


Former Grande Prairie Regional College President **H.J. (Tom) Thompson** is the new President of Olds College. Mr. Thompson's career in education spans 35 years and includes achievements in leadership, strategic planning, communications, business and financial management.



The Board of Directors of the Collège de la région de l'Amiante named **André Thivierge** as Director General. Mr. Thivierge held the position of Academic Director at the College for over three years and previously served as an instructor of specialized education techniques. He replaces retiring Director General **Claude Gagnon**.

Ralph Troschke was named the new Vice-President - Student and College Services at Portage College. Formerly Dean of Career Programs at the College, Mr. Troschke has 18 years of experience in post-secondary education, primarily in the development and delivery of business programs.



The Sheridan College Board of Governors appointed **Dr. Robert Turner** as the college's fifth President. Dr. Turner is the former President and Chief Executive Officer of Olds College. He also served as Chair of the Olds College Centre for Innovation and led the creation of the Alberta Centre for International Education.



Bob Wilson was named the new Academic Vice-President of Olds College. Previously Vice-President of Student and Support Services, Mr. Wilson has been acting Academic Vice-President since December, 2000. He has over 24 years of experience in senior management in post-secondary education and brings strong local business connections to his new post.

