



MEDIA RELEASE

Association of Canadian Community Colleges

Serving Canada's colleges, institutes, cégeps, university colleges and polytechnics

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BUDGET INCREASES SUPPORT FOR APPLIED AND INDUSTRY-DRIVEN RESEARCH AT COLLEGES, INSTITUTES AND POLYTECHNICS

Ottawa, March 4, 2010 – Today's federal budget acknowledges and supports the key role of colleges in supplying the advanced skills and applied research that underpin economic growth and productivity improvement.

"The budget demonstrates an understanding that colleges, institutes and polytechnics are integrated with the industrial and technological drivers of the economy" says James Knight, President and CEO of ACCC.

"They help businesses start, develop and grow. They support the private sector's need for applied research, product and process innovation, technology access and commercialization. They are the prime providers of graduates with the advanced skills required by Canadian employers."

Canada lags behind other countries in commercializing the fruits of research, in part because we have heavily invested in pure research while providing little support for applied research. Colleges support the applied research needs of industry, especially small and medium enterprises, the source of most new jobs.

The government has listened to colleges and their business partners. Today's budget strengthens the College and Community Innovation Program, a partnership of ACCC with the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), in concert with the other federal granting councils.

Budget 2009-2010 began to address the shortage in advanced skills faced by industry. Investments in college infrastructure through the Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP) have made a dent in the \$7 billion required to modernize and expand colleges to meet the demand for advanced skills and to reduce the long waitlists of qualified students for many programs. KIP will continue to March 31, 2011.

Today's budget also announced investments in retraining and apprenticeships, much of which will be delivered by Canada's 150 colleges, institutes and polytechnics. Finally, the focus on aboriginal education is welcome. We trust it will translate into increased post-secondary access.

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