

A newsletter about achievements, innovations and leadership in Ontario's college system

New name and new leader strengthen colleges' voice



The advocacy organization for Ontario's colleges has undergone a major facelift.

There's a new name: Colleges Ontario.

And a new brand identity, launched this month, which reflects the organization's commitment to being the definitive voice on college issues in the province.

"College education and training is essential to our province's success and long-term prosperity," said Linda Franklin, the new president and CEO of Colleges Ontario. "The new look and name will help us strengthen our effectiveness as the voice for Ontario's colleges."

The timing for the launch of the new name and image is near perfect. Ontario is in an election year, and the state of the economy is troubling, with significant job losses already occurring in manufacturing and other sectors. The

province needs a comprehensive strategy to promote economic growth and opportunities for all, and colleges are central to that strategy.

To ensure Ontario has the highly trained workforce that will be needed in the years ahead, the province must be committed to producing greater numbers of college graduates.

Colleges Ontario will work to make training and re-training of the workforce in all sectors a top-of-mind issue for politicians and opinion leaders.

"College graduates will be crucial to the province's strength in the years ahead," said Ian Howcroft, the Ontario region vice-president with the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters. "We look forward to working with Colleges Ontario in its efforts to promote a stronger province."



New President and CEO

Linda Franklin

A new name and brand image aren't the only big developments at Colleges Ontario. The organization also has a new leader.

Linda Franklin, a veteran advocacy and communications specialist, was appointed last month as the new president and CEO of Colleges Ontario. She comes to the colleges from the Wine Council of Ontario, where she served as president for 13 years.

"I look forward to working with colleges, students and industry partners in advancing Ontario's extraordinary system of colleges," said Franklin.

Franklin achieved much for Ontario's wine industry, including partnering with the LCBO and the Ontario government to develop a 20-year strategic plan, supported by \$40 million in government and industry funding.

She is no stranger to the role of colleges, having worked with Niagara College in establishing a teaching winery and related programs.

"Ontario is depending more and more on its college graduates," said Franklin. "We must have a healthy and well-resourced college system."

Premier's Awards celebrate success

Recognizing outstanding graduates

Accomplished Canadian documentarian **Peter Wintonick** is one of six winners of this year's Premier's Awards for outstanding college graduates.

Wintonick, a graduate of Algonquin College, is best

known for the 1992 film, *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media*. He also received the Ecumenical Prize at the Berlin Film Festival for his 2000 release, *Cinema Verité: Defining the Moment*.

The awards recognize the achievements of college graduates in a variety of categories, from business to health sciences and technology. The

other award recipients are:

- **Jeffrey S. Boyce**, a graduate of Durham College, who is the founder of Clear Energy Inc.
- **Marni Flaherty**, a graduate of Mohawk College, who is the Chief Executive Officer of Today's Family – Caring for Your Child
- **Kerry Smith**, a graduate of Algonquin College, who has established Cana-

da's most-successful cornea-retrieval program

- **Andrew Robert Crow**, a graduate of Seneca College, who helped develop synthetic IVIg, a breakthrough treatment for people who suffer from ITP, an autoimmune disease.

- **Vicky Cheng**, a graduate of George Brown College, who has won a number of culinary competitions.

Vincent Lam's college connection

Giller Prize-winning author honed skills at the Humber School for Writers

Vincent Lam doesn't hesitate when asked how his current writing project, a novel, is coming along. "Every day is a struggle," he laughs candidly. "It's immensely difficult."

But the emergency room doctor and winner of the 2006 Giller Prize for his book, *Bloodletting and Miraculous Cures*, soldiers on, devoted as keenly to the art of writing as he is to the science of medicine.

"It's the single biggest challenge," Lam says of juggling two careers and spending time with his young family. "You can't be a dad for one hour a week or a doctor one day a month. It's the same with writing. To do things well you must do them continually."

Lam treats his writing like he would a patient - with the same degree of care and professionalism, an approach instilled in him as a student at the Humber School for Writers.

"The most useful thing I gained was a real sense of the level of professionalism that is required for a work of fiction to be successful," Lam says. "The courses gave me a much better appreciation for the kind of polish and attention to detail and level of refinement that are really a minimum requirement."

When he signed up at Humber in 2003, *Bloodletting*, a series of short stories that re-



volve a group of young doctors, was about one-third written. Lam took both the school's week-long summer workshop, conducted by author

"He's an exceptional human being in addition to being an exceptional writer," said Anatas Sileika, director of the Humber School for Writers.

Kim Moritsugu, and the Creative Writing by Correspondence course, where he was mentored by author Howard Norman. "Both writers helped me gain insight and perspective into the process," says Lam.

Now in its 16th year, the Humber School for Writers lays claim to helping

220 of its students get their books published, including Lam. "No other writing school student has ever won the Giller," enthuses Anatas Sileika, the school's director. "We're very proud of Vincent and to be associated with his success. He's an exceptional human being in addition to being an exceptional writer." Sileika said the school's instructors take on the role of tough coach, providing practical advice and feedback to aspiring authors. "They tell the truth about the manuscript in the most supportive way possible. We work on the assumption that students want to know what it takes to get published."

Catapulted into the spotlight last November with the Giller Prize win, Lam isn't planning any changes as a result of his literary success. "It is conceivable that I could stop practicing medicine, but I don't want to. I realize how important medicine is to me. Writing and medicine were equally important before the Giller and that hasn't changed."

Bloodletting and Miraculous Cures will be the subject of a TV series produced by Shaftsbury Films. Lam's first novel, *Cholon, Near Forgotten*, will be published by Doubleday Canada.

Conestoga addresses need for truck technicians with new program

A new tuition-free, pre-apprenticeship program at Conestoga College is helping to address the need for more truck technicians in Ontario.

"This new program is important in this region," says Brenda Gilmore, an employer liaison and marketing officer with Conestoga's School of Trades and Apprenticeship. "Many companies are facing a critical shortage of truck and coach technicians, and they indicate that a pre-

apprenticeship program would be an ideal avenue to fast-track promising candidates through the initial stages of apprenticeship."

Conestoga is offering the pre-apprenticeship program at its Guelph campus. It expands the programming capabilities of Conestoga's new Truck and Coach Technician Centre, which opened last fall.

With spaces for up to 24 students, this full-time program

consists of 23 weeks of in-college instruction followed by eight weeks of on-the-job experience. Participants will gain skills in communications, computer literacy, safety procedures, welding, basic electricity, along with skills in motive power systems such as brakes and drive trains.

The program, which is funded by the Ontario government, was launched in February.

In Brief

Seneca president chairs commission

Dr. Rick Miner, the president of Seneca College, has been appointed by New Brunswick Premier Shawn Graham to co-chair that province's Commission on Postsecondary Education.

"It is a great honour for a college president to be asked to chair a commission that will consider an entire postsecondary system," Miner said. "This shows that Seneca and our provincial college system are nationally recognized as leaders."

Sheridan grad up for Oscar

Sheridan graduate Michael Thurmeier has been nominated for an Academy Award in the Best Animated Short Film Category for the film *No Time for Nuts*, a spinoff of the popular *Ice Age* movies.

Thurmeier, who is an animation supervisor for Blue Sky Studios, in White Plains, N.Y., has also worked on *Ice Age* and the film *Robots*. The Academy Awards will be presented Feb. 25.

Awards celebrate teaching excellence

The Ontario government is accepting nominations for the new Leadership in Faculty Teaching (LIFT) Award to recognize excellence at colleges and universities. The nominations close on Wed., Feb. 28, and nomination forms are available at www.ontario.ca/facultyawards.

Live from Humber College...

Robin Duke, the seasoned comedic actor who is an alumni of the SCTV and Saturday Night Live television shows, is teaching students to bring laughter to a wider audience. Duke, who teaches in Humber's Comedy Writing and Performance Program, has spearheaded an initiative that has students taking their sketch comedy to seniors' residences and other community venues.

"I wanted to open doors for the students, and to create opportunities for them to work before a variety of audiences," says Duke. "They get a chance to connect with the community and create goodwill."

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