

# Driving innovation in Ontario

Colleges Ontario's annual conference, now called the Higher Education Summit, will explore how colleges can further drive innovation and promote greater prosperity.

"This is a terrific opportunity to discuss the many new possibilities that colleges can capitalize on," said author and strategist Tod Maffin, who will be speaking at the conference. "Social media, for example, has a multitude of applications for the education sector, including student recruitment."

Keynote speaker Peter Mansbridge, anchor of CBC-TV's *The National*, will discuss Canada and Canadians in a changing world. And panels will focus on issues such as Canada's growing innovation gap, and how Ontario can better position itself in the new global economy.

Presenters focusing on the economy will include Glen Hodgson, senior vice-president of the Conference Board of Canada; Len Crispino, president and CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce; Jim Stanford, economist with the Canadian Auto Workers; and Warren



Jestin, economist for Scotiabank.

Other speakers include Bob McDonald, host of CBC Radio's *Quirks and Quarks*, who will address the key trends in science and technology and how these trends could shape the careers of the future. And panels focusing on both social and traditional media will include speakers such as Maffin and Steve Paikin, host of TVOntario's *The Agenda*.

"These issues are vital to Ontario's public colleges, as we are mandated to offer career-focused education and to work closely with

local employers, businesses and industry," said Linda Franklin, president and CEO of Colleges Ontario. "Innovation and economic needs drive the education we provide, which serves our communities and businesses, while producing skilled, job-ready graduates."

The conference will also include a forum with Ontario cabinet ministers, as well as a gala awards evening emceed by Prof. Rod Carley of Canadore College in North Bay. Carley was the winner of TVOntario's 2009 Big Ideas Best Lecturer competition.

## Ottawa promotes research at colleges

The federal government's recent announcement of \$32.5 million to support applied research in Canada is further evidence of new thinking about the value of postsecondary research.

Traditionally, research funding has gone almost exclusively to ideas-based research at universities – academic research that advances higher learning.

While that research is important, governments are now recognizing the importance of applied research – research that is done to develop new products and innovations that have commercial value and can help businesses grow, supporting job creation and economic prosperity in communities across Ontario.

"The (government) is investing in science and technology to create jobs, strengthen

the economy and improve the quality of life of Canadians," Science and Technology Minister Gary Goodyear said last month at a news conference announcing the \$32.5 million.

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businesses need to develop new technologies and innovations," said Goodyear, who made the announcement at St. Lawrence College in Kingston.

Applied research projects range from the development of specialized software for 3-D

games to the development of customized graphic information system maps that improve wine production and farming.

"We applaud the government for taking a leading role in promoting research that has economic value," said Tony Tilly, chair of Colleges Ontario and president of Fleming College in Peterborough. "This will be very helpful to Ontario colleges, which have been working with businesses to actively promote applied research initiatives."

Twenty colleges belong to the Colleges Ontario Network for Industry Innovation (CONII), which helps small- and medium-sized businesses solve technical problems and develop new products and processes.

To date, the network has established more than 210 industry-led applied research projects. These projects have led to innovations in alternative energy, environmental technologies, health and life sciences, and much more.

### Recognizing excellence

Surprise!

For the first time ever, the winners of the Premier's Awards for outstanding college graduates will be a guarded secret until the night of the gala event.

"The element of surprise adds even more excitement to this annual celebration of excellence," said Linda Franklin, president and CEO of Colleges Ontario.



CBC Radio host Mary Ito, left, and former United Way president Frances Lankin were members of the awards selection committee.

"All I can say at this point is the winners are people who have made remarkable contributions to the success of our province and our country."

In previous years, the award winners were announced prior to the awards ceremony. Colleges Ontario changed the timing for the announcements this year to help strengthen the celebration of the graduates' achievements.

The Premier's Awards were established in 1992 to recognize the accomplishments of college graduates in six categories: business, community service, creative arts, health sciences, technology, and recent graduate.

This year's awards ceremony takes place Nov. 22 at the Sheraton hotel in Toronto, as part of Colleges Ontario's annual conference. More than 100 graduates were nominated for this year's awards.

A distinguished panel of judges was assembled for this year's judging:

- Kevin Costante, Deputy Minister of Education in Ontario.
- Don Drummond, the former senior vice-president and chief economist at TD Bank Financial Group.
- Laura Formosa, president and CEO of Hydro One.
- Sue Graham Parker, senior vice-president of public, corporate and government affairs at Scotiabank.
- Mary Ito, host of Fresh Air on CBC Radio.
- Jamie Kennedy, chef and owner of Jamie Kennedy Kitchens.
- Frances Lankin, the former president and CEO of United Way Toronto.
- Gisele Quenneville, host of Panorama on TFO.

Previous award winners have included cookbook author and columnist Bonnie Stern and Clear Energy Inc. founder Jeffrey Boyce.

### Results report released

The Ontario Colleges' 2010 Results Report was released this month. The report shows the province's 24 public colleges are providing higher education to greater numbers of students and producing more graduates, while at the same time maintaining a high quality of postsecondary education. The report can be found at the Colleges Ontario website at [www.collegesontario.org](http://www.collegesontario.org).

### Program meets national standard

Niagara College's Environmental Management and Assessment Graduate Certificate program has received national accreditation from Environmental Careers Organization Canada, marking the first time this type of program has received the accreditation in Canada.

"This accreditation tells employers that our graduates have completed a curriculum that meets a national standard and are able to hit the ground running," said Martin Smith, chair of the School of Environmental and Horticultural Studies at the college.

### Training childhood educators

Nearly 700 people have returned to school over the past two years to train to become early childhood educators, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities says. This will help produce more educators for the province's implementation of full-day kindergarten classes.

The training is supported by the province's Second Career program for laid-off workers.

### Ultrasound program accredited

The Canadian Medical Association has extended the accreditation for the Ultrasound program at College Boreal in Sudbury until 2016. College Boreal is the only Canadian institution that offers the Ultrasound program in French.

### Ignatieff pledges to boost access

Speaking recently to party supporters in Sault Ste. Marie, federal Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff pledged to increase access to postsecondary education if elected. "We want to get to the vision of postsecondary education in Canada where if you've got the grades, you get to go," he said.

College Voice  
Published by Colleges Ontario  
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### Partnership strengthens training

Durham College in Oshawa has partnered with three other leading Canadian colleges – Lethbridge College in Lethbridge, Alta., Nova Scotia Community College in Halifax, and Okanagan College in Kelowna, B.C. – to advance the national and international sustainability agenda.

"This is a great example of co-operation between colleges from across Canada that are fo-

cused on training and innovation that is vital to the national sustainability agenda," said James Knight, president of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges.

The agreement allows the colleges to work together in areas such as curriculum devel-

opment and program planning for the training of workers for the energy sector.

The agreement also provides for cooperation in areas such as data sharing.

"Durham College is committed to a vision that will see new opportunities for students in areas that are critical to the local, provincial and national economies," said Don Lovisa, the president of the college.

Durham College's efforts to address the growing need for skilled professionals in the renewable energy field include a \$30-million, three-phase expansion of the college's Whitby campus.

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