

Algonquin College breaks ground on new “Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ottawa, October 16, 2009 – Armed with shovels, backhoes, and help from elected officials from all levels of government, Algonquin College’s President Robert Gillett broke ground on the new \$77-million Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence today.

“We are tremendously excited to have this project officially underway. We couldn’t have done it without the support from the entire college community as well as all levels of government,” said Gillett. “This new facility will not only help to address the skills shortage in the construction industry, it will be a showcase for green construction and training in Eastern Ontario.”

Scheduled to open in the fall of 2011, the 180,000-square-foot building will house 600 additional construction seats and provide space for thousands more students studying in related programs. The uniquely green, designed to be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum-certified, building will also be a showcase and teaching laboratory for best practices in sustainable construction.

“This will be a truly memorable, green facility,” adds Gillett. “The Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence will be visually and functionally different as it aims to be the largest building in Canada to meet the exacting standards for Platinum LEED status.”

The new facility will feature a storm water recovery system that will capture rainwater to flush toilets; solar panels to provide some power and hot water and serve as a working demonstration of solar’s potential; and a “Biowall,” a five-story living, green entity covered with plants, that helps control humidity and clean the air.

“On top of this ‘super green’ construction will be a roof comprised of grass-like vegetation and knee-high plants that will look like a green meadow once construction is completed,” says Michael Leckman, Principal, with Diamond & Schmitt Architects. “This will add campus greenspace and help with insulation, lowering the demands on the heating and cooling systems.

“This is a great opportunity for students and faculty to learn first hand about the building of a leading-edge green facility,” adds Gillett. The Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence will also continue the greening of Algonquin’s curriculum, as its construction will serve as a model and applied learning laboratory for sustainable building.

EllisDon Corp. was selected in September as the design-build contractor for the Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence. “This building will be an architectural landmark in Ottawa’s west-end and will be the focal point of the CentrepoinTE redevelopment project,” says Mark Fazio, Vice President and Area Manager, EllisDon Corp.

Built on land donated by the City of Ottawa, and with \$35-million from both the provincial and federal governments, the Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence will connect a relocated Baseline bus station and a new below-grade transit roadway to the main Campus via a \$4-million pedestrian bridge to be constructed across Woodroffe Avenue.

1385 Woodroffe Avenue

Ottawa, Ontario

Canada

K2G 1V8

Public Relations

and Communications

Department

Office: 613-727-4723

ext. 7664

Fax: 613-727-7610

"This project has been at the top of my list as Algonquin's local Member of Parliament," said Minister John Baird. "Through our \$35 million federal investment in the new skilled trades centre, we are putting more trades people to work to help create jobs and stimulate our local economy right here in the City of Ottawa."

"The construction of this exciting new facility at Algonquin College will produce jobs and provide important economic stimulus for Ottawa and Eastern Ontario," said Jim Watson, MPP for Ottawa West – Nepean and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "Once the centre is completed, Algonquin College will be at the leading edge of Construction and Skilled Trades training, and will produce the skilled trades leaders of tomorrow. The Province of Ontario is pleased to contribute \$35 Million to this forward thinking initiative."

"Today's ground-breaking demonstrates the commitment of Algonquin College and all three levels of government to continually improve education and transportation," said Mayor Larry O'Brien. "The Southwest Transitway work at Baseline Station is an example of our long-term plan for sustainable transit that will support our community in years to come."

"Four years ago the Algonquin ACCE building, the re-design of the Centrepointe Community, the Pedestrian Safety bridge over Woodroffe, the new City Archives and the redesign of Baseline area transit were all proceeding as separate projects without integration," said Rick Chiarelli, City Councillor, College Ward. "The smartest thing we ever did was to see the power in working together and in the amazing synergies available to us. The community made it all work and they were the magnet that helped to pull everyone together to achieve double the value for taxpayers."

The Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence will be a hub for industry bringing together students, professors, and researchers, with local builders and tradespeople, creating synergies that will produce highly skilled graduates familiar with the team work requirements of today's modern construction sector.

With support from all levels of government, Algonquin is now calling upon industry and community partners to raise the final \$7 million through the Constructing our Future Capital Campaign.

"We have the support we asked for from all levels of government and construction industry is now stepping in and providing the final piece of funding for this project," says Gillett. "Our campaign is steadily building momentum, and today's \$1 million pledge by Roger Greenberg, CEO of Minto Group Inc., is also a significant milestone as it is the largest individual gift in the history of Algonquin College."

The centre has also received strong support from the community. During initial planning and advocacy phase of this project the college was inundated with over 700 letters of support encouraging the college to stay the course and make sure this facility gets built.

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For more information please visit:

www.algonquincollege.com/expansion

About Algonquin College:

Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology is located in the Nation's Capital and the Ottawa Valley and is the largest college in Eastern Ontario. Algonquin is a leader in the integration of technology into learning. Algonquin College has a diverse population of approximately 18,000 full-time students and more than 33,000 part-time registrations in over 140 programs and is committed to student success. For more information please visit www.algonquincollege.com.

Design-build company: [EllisDon Corporation](http://www.ellisdon.com)

Architects: [Diamond and Schmitt Architects Incorporated](http://www.diamondandschmitt.com), and [Edward J Cuhaci and Associates Architects Inc.](http://www.edwardjcuahaci.com)

For more information, contact:

David Hall, Communications Officer,
Algonquin College
(613) 727-4723 ext. 2091

Cell: (613) 220-7796

david.hall@algonquincollege.com

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