

Algonquin cuts into new Transportation Technology Centre

Special to NTW

Algonquin College president and area politicians cut the ribbon to the new Transportation Technology Centre earlier this week.

The centre replaces the College's 39-year-old automotive training facility where thousands of Ottawa-area technicians and apprentices learned their trade. The new centre is outfitted with up-to-date equipment and is designed with over-sized doors and an open concept interior to easily accommodate large trucks and buses in addition to cars.

The facility received funding from the Government of Ontario.

"The transportation industry is one of the largest employers in Canada," said John-Paul Tapp, dean of the school of Transportation and Building Trades. "Algonquin College is the largest provider of automotive and transportation training programs in Eastern Ontario."

However, there is a substantial shortage of skills workers across the automotive repair and service industry throughout North American.

This scarcity is expected to get worse as nearly half of the more than 200,000 skilled technicians employed in the Canadian transportation services are over 40.

"Skilled trades today offer an exciting and financially rewarding career opportunities that in increasingly high demand," said Robert Gillett, the college's president. "Algonquin's new Transportation Technology Centre reflects the college's commitment to offer high quality training in an area that has been identified as essential in today's economy."

A recent provincial survey showed that all of the 2003 graduates from Algonquin's Motive Power Technicians program had found full-time employment within six months of graduation. A 2002 survey found that employers were outbidding themselves for qualified employees.

"We now have a highly practical building that combines to look and feel of the modern workplace with an effective educational and training workspace and one that reflects the rising caliber



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Algonquin College's Dean of Transportation and Trades, John-Paul Tapp, above left, and college president Robert Gillett cut the ribbon of their new Transportation Technology centre. Local politicians attended the event, including MP Marlene Catterall, below centre. The buildings will be used to train mechanics and can hold both large trucks and buses.

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