



Sean Kilpatrick SUN

GERRY DAVIS, who has been nominated for the 2005 Premier's Awards for her involvement at Algonquin College, works in her furniture studio near Manotick yesterday.

School ties that bind

Algonquin College graduates up for provincial awards

By **LAURA CZEKAJ**

A hunk of wood in Gerry Davis' hands becomes a work of art.

The owner and operator of Heartwood Custom Furniture Designs, constructs and finishes custom furniture pieces.

A graduate of the furniture technician program at Algonquin College, Davis is self-employed and loving it. She recommends her career choice to anyone willing to listen, including current Algonquin College students who come to visit her shop near Manotick.

"The college has also directed a number of young women out to meet another woman who is working in the trade," she said. "There isn't a whole heck of a lot of us."

Even four years after graduation, Davis has maintained a re-

lationship with the college and praises the program where she honed the tricks of her trade.

"It really did cater to a wide variety of people so that people who wanted to go it on their own could try it and those that really wanted to just work for somebody else, those options were there," she said.

Six alumni

Davis is one of six college alumni who have been nominated for the 2005 Premier's Awards which will be presented on Feb. 20 in Sudbury.

The annual awards are given to graduates of Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology and recognize the important contribution graduates make to the province.

There are six award categories and the winners receive a medal

and a \$5,000 bursary, which is directed to their graduating college.

Algonquin College has also nominated Dr. Donna MacPhee-Brunet, a dentist and co-owner of Baseline Dental Centre; Chris Gordon, vice-president and general manager of CHUM Radio Group (Ottawa); Stephen Beckta, proprietor of Beckta Dining and Wine; Kim Hiscott, director of the Kanata Research Park Family Centre; and Michael Tremblay, senior vice-president, public services, Canada with SAP Canada Inc.

Tremblay is also a member of the college's board of governors.

"I see it as my way to contribute back into the college system," he said.

"I see it as important. I certainly take it quite seriously."

laura.czekaj@ott.sunpub.com