



# Algonquin Students' Association

CORPORATION

Monday, November 2, 2009

Dear Members of the Algonquin College Board of Governors:

The following will provide for you a brief summary of the vision for a Student Commons on the Woodroffe Campus of Algonquin College. This vision is shared by the Students' Association and the Algonquin College Administration. I look forward to presenting to you the details of our vision at your meeting scheduled for November 9th.

## The Students' Association's Request for the Algonquin College Board of Governors

It is the desire of the Students' Association to achieve two objectives:

- First, to inform the Algonquin College Board of Governors of the urgent need for the development of non-academic student space on the Woodroffe Campus of Algonquin College.
- And second, to partner with Algonquin College by securing the approval of the Algonquin College Board of Governors to fund and develop a Student Commons on the Woodroffe Campus.

## Understanding the Problem

Based on years of experience, ongoing student consultations, plenty of unsolicited student feedback, and finally, a comprehensive survey conducted by the IBI Group, the Students' Association is confident in asserting that, from its perspective, the number one problem faced by students at the Woodroffe Campus is *the lack of student space on campus*.

Space for group study, space for silent study, space to just hang out: it simply does not exist. This lack of space has reached such a degree of severity that it is now beginning to adversely affect the quality of student life and the post-secondary experience for students at the Woodroffe Campus. Add to this the growth in the number of academic buildings. These buildings are needed, yes, but as a result there is no central social hub in the Algonquin community. In short, there is no *heart* to the Woodroffe Campus.

## Embracing the Opportunity

Again, the most frequent requests from students are study space, common space and group space. For years now, students have also been demanding that Algonquin College work toward a 'one-stop' shopping concept to address their needs.

The proposed Student Commons has the potential to better serve the broader student community by offering new and improved facilities, a wider variety of student events and other possibilities, while bringing into one location many of the Students' Association and College student support services most desired by students to be located in proximity to each other. Combined, these amenities will create a student experience in Algonquin

College that will be second to none and will, ultimately, create the 'heart' of our community.

### An Irresistible Vision

A new building alone will not achieve this. A facility of this nature must be guided not just by a compelling vision, but by an irresistible and shared vision. After many meetings between the Students' Association and the College, I believe we have achieved this. Our vision speaks to our highest aspirations and will guide all decisions regarding the creation of this student facility. I am proud to present it below.

*A gathering place for renewal and friendship,  
created to inspire a passion for student success.*

The design, development and construction of this Student Commons will be eminently successful if the students' voice is heard and a functional space is created that has the flexibility to meet not only the students' needs, but also the needs of the entire College community. Well-designed, attractive, functional and valued student space will be the main themes of this facility.

Interior/architectural design themes will capitalize on natural lighting and 'greening' of the adjacent landscape to bring the outdoors inside, open and airy spaces, glass walls and doors, comfy furniture, the use of multi-media, and creative architectural design to separate functional spaces without walls, projecting a grand sense of place and, of course, sensitivity to the natural environment. A two or three storey facility is anticipated.

Included for consideration within the proposed Student Commons are an auditorium, large common spaces and lounge areas, study spaces, silent study spaces, food services, a bookstore, numerous student services, Students' Association Board and Administration Offices, and the usual building auxiliary space and service. Circulation will allow for wide walking areas throughout the facility also providing for barrier-free access.

### Students Are Committed

As a demonstration of students' commitment to this vision, but also to illustrate the urgency of this problem, the Students' Association has committed \$30 million to fulfilling this dream. As you can see, the Students' Association has done a considerable amount of homework and we believe the time is now to pursue this vision.

I look forward to meeting you and to building on the partnership between the Students' Association and the College.

Yours truly,



Mike Hirsch, President  
Algonquin Students' Association