



Algonquin College Board of Governors approves new Student Commons: Building to become the “heart” of the Woodroffe Campus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ottawa, December 10, 2009 – The Algonquin Students’ Association (SA) and Algonquin College administration have once again joined forces to enhance student life at the College. The two organizations are pooling resources to build an anticipated 110,000 square-foot Student Commons facility that will feature large common spaces and lounge areas, an auditorium, study spaces, food services, several student services in a one-stop shopping model, as well as Students’ Association Board and Administration Offices.

Scheduled to open in the Fall of 2012, the \$52 million investment will be shared by the College (\$22 million) and the Students’ Association (\$30 million). “There is an urgent need for more student space on campus. We’ve worked with the Students’ Association to come up with the vision, describing how a Student Commons will address this need,” said Deborah Rowan-Legg, Vice President, Student Services.

“This project means a great deal to the entire student body,” said Mike Hirsch, President of the Algonquin Students’ Association. “This new facility will not only provide our students with more space, but it will become the social hub, or heart, of the Woodroffe Campus.”

“Based upon years of experience, ongoing student consultations, and a comprehensive student survey, the number one problem facing students on the Woodroffe Campus is a lack of student space,” adds Hirsch. “Students need a place to work on group projects, a place for silent study, a place for friendship, a place to relax between the classroom and home; and this new facility is designed to deliver this to our students.”

In the new Student Commons, students can expect to find amenities never before available on campus including, increased space for student clubs and activities, further centralization of student services, more study space, and a 700-seat auditorium that can proudly host anything from keynote speakers to rock concerts.

“At this point, it is planned that several Student Services will move into the new building. Under consideration, among others are the Mamidosewin Centre, Employment Services, and the Centre for Students with Disabilities,” explains Rowan-Legg. “Bringing these services into the Student Commons means students will have ready access to them, in a space where they naturally gather.”

Continuing the College’s commitment to sustainability, the Student Commons will be designed using ‘green’ building technologies with an aim to achieve [LEED-certification](#). The multi-storey design of this new facility will capitalize on natural lighting and ‘greening’ of the adjacent landscape to bring the outdoors inside. “This will be an exciting and vibrant ‘green’ building that will fill a long standing need for more social space,” explains Hirsch.

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During a recent meeting, the College's Board of Governors approved the building of a Student Commons on the Woodroffe Campus, subject to provincial approval. Both Hirsch and Rowan-Legg note that this project would not be possible without the collective efforts of both the College and students. "The maturity of the relationship between the Students' Association and the College is impressive. Over the years, this partnership has led to many facilities and services that have improved student life at Algonquin," adds Rowan-Legg.

"We are looking forward to building on our past history of success with the College," said Hirsch. "We've worked together in the past to give our students a leading-edge fitness facility, soccer complex, and more."

This project is aligned with the College's [strategic direction](#) on several fronts, including increasing student success through the quality of the student experience and student engagement. "High-quality student life establishes a strong foundation on which to build student engagement and increase the student's likelihood for success," adds Rowan-Legg. "Simply put, a student who feels a strong connection to the College has a greater chance to succeed in his or her program."

The Student Commons is one of many expansion projects currently underway at Algonquin College. Along with this facility, the College has plans that include a new campus in Pembroke, a new main building in Perth and the Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence in Ottawa. For more information on all of these projects please visit www.algonquincollege.com/expansion

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For more information and artist concepts please visit:

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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 35,000 part-time registrations in over 170 programs and is committed to student success. For more information please visit www.algonquincollege.com.

About Algonquin Students' Association:

The Algonquin Students' Association is a not-for-profit corporation with over 30 years of service. It is the Association's mission to create an environment that inspires a passion for student success. A Board of Directors governs the Students' Association, advocates on behalf of the student body and makes the key decisions that affect their constituents, the students.

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