

May 20, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

As difficult as it is to think about being in our tenth week of physical distancing, I hope that the warmer weather has provided a chance for you to get outdoors a little bit this past long weekend, and that perhaps it has also given everyone an additional boost of optimism.

Yesterday we marked AC Day 1 with an energetic start to the spring term — so many activities and creative ways to connect with our new learners and welcome them to Algonquin College. Thank you to everyone who helped organize this wonderful experience, and thank you to all our new learners for taking part. I am sure these virtual events will help you settle into your studies, confident with all of the information gained, and in the knowledge that we are here to help you succeed.

I know that just as the journey is beginning for some learners, that same journey is coming to an end for others. Even though we were unable to hold our spring convocation ceremony in our usual manner, I want our graduates to know that we are in the process of creating a special online keepsake page for all of you to mark this milestone and more information will be shared as it becomes available. We are also assessing the best format for our fall convocation ceremonies and will be able to provide more details about that at the end of June.

I would also like to mention some news released by the federal government last week that is of particular significance to our International learners. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the criteria for the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (PGWPP) limited an international student's ability to pursue a program via distance learning (inside or outside Canada) and time spent studying outside Canada was deducted from the length of the work permit for which they were eligible. However, the government has announced some new flexibility regarding these rules. You can read more about these changes [here](#).

I would like to remind all our learners that our COVID-19 Emergency Student Fund is accepting applications now until May 25. The application is available through ACSIS by logging in and clicking on the Bursary Portal, which is under the Financial Aid heading. (This fund will also be available to Fall term students starting on Tuesday, September 8, 2020.) Domestic and International students registered for the spring term, as well as winter-term students who were not able to complete their winter term due to required face-to-face learning activities including a co-op, a practicum or a placement (and who will incur costs associated with this completion), will be able to access this fund. Please also remember that learners who are in immediate financial need can reach out to Financial Aid and our Student Awards team directly at [bursaries@algonquincollege.com](mailto:bursaries@algonquincollege.com).

On this note, I would also like to thank the Algonquin College Students' Association for their generous contribution of \$20,000 to our Emergency Fund. Not only will this money help learners in need of financial assistance, but it is also a fine example of our College values at work.

Finally, on the topic of caring, I would like to make special mention of the many health-care workers in our community who have been on the front lines of this pandemic. I know many of them are your friends and family members. These individuals are true heroes, and I am proud to say that many are proud Algonquin College alumni. I hope their example of courage and selflessness can help us all face the future with confidence and even greater resolve.

As this will be my only communiqué to our College community this week, I would like to take this opportunity to address those who will be celebrating Eid al-Fitr this weekend, marking the end of Ramadan. Best wishes for health and happiness to everyone — Eid Mubarak!

Continue to stay well and healthy everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claude Brulé", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Claude Brulé  
President and CEO