

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

As we head into the heart of the summer season, I'd like to take a moment to proudly acknowledge the achievements of our recent Convocation graduates – and to thank all the employees who helped guide them to success. I have no doubt these new Algonquin College graduates will go on to achieve extraordinary things and work to positively impact their communities.

With the recent difficult news of the finding of 751 unmarked graves on the site of a former residential school in Saskatchewan, we need to make a positive impact on our communities – and that begins with each of us.

On the occasion of Canada Day this year, a day that has historically included celebration and festivities, let us use the time to reflect on these events, and strengthen our commitment to be better allies by reading the recommendations of the [2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report](#). This is an opportunity to educate, and acknowledge how Canada can play a role in our future by reconciling the past. At the College, we can play a part in building a country based on empathy, education, and mutual understanding.

As a step toward reconciliation, the College is introducing new plans in our work toward Indigenization and Truth and Reconciliation. Over the next year, Algonquin College will be developing a multi-year Truth, Reconciliation and Indigenization Strategic Plan, in consultation with the College community and our Indigenous partners. We are also developing a Student Leadership Pack that will create opportunities for Indigenous learners to share and celebrate Indigenous culture with the College community, as well as foster the development of strong student leadership.

The summer also brings news of progress with COVID-19. As of June 30, as province-wide vaccination rates and key public health indicators continue to improve, the Province of Ontario will move into Step Two of its three-step [Roadmap to Reopen](#) plan. This change will not impact academic operations; however in terms of services, our Connections: The Campus Store will increase capacity to 25%. (For the latest update on services on all campus, visit [here](#). We will continue to notify learners and employees immediately of any further changes to our services.)

Your continued support throughout this gradual and encouraging process is truly appreciated. As Ontario continues on the reopening path, we are able to gather and connect with family, friends in a more 'normal' way – while following public health and safety guidelines and restrictions. To ensure we continue on this path, the College strongly recommends vaccination for everyone who is eligible, in accordance with public health guidance. Individuals aged 12 and over in 2021 across Ontario [are now eligible](#) to book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. As of June 28, all Ontarians aged 18 and over who received their first dose of an mRNA vaccine are also [now eligible](#) to book an appointment to receive their second ahead of schedule. Appointments can be made through the [provincial booking system](#) and call centre.

You can find local vaccination information at the websites for [Ottawa Public Health](#), the [Renfrew County District Health Unit](#) or the [Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit](#). You can also book an appointment to receive a vaccine at the new [Algonquin College Vaccination Clinic](#) on the Ottawa Campus. If you reside in Québec, you can find vaccination information [here](#).

Finally, I want to remind you that the College will be closed on Thursday, July 1 for Canada Day and on Friday, July 2, 2021 for Employee Appreciation and Wellness Day. This day has been designated for this year only to recognize the amazing dedication and resilience our employees have demonstrated throughout the pandemic, and to acknowledge the importance of mental health. Please take the day to do what you need for your own well-being, whether it is spending time alone or with loved ones, relaxing with a book or enjoying the outdoors.

Enjoy some relaxing time, take care, and stay well.

Sincerely,

Claude Brulé

President, CEO

Algonquin College