COLLEGES ONTARIO | COLLÈGES ONTARIO

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

AS THE ONTARIO COLLEGE SYSTEM CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2017, MASSIVE CHANGES ARE AFOOT.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is rapidly reshaping the province in almost unimaginable ways. Every sector is being transformed by computerization. It is critical that more Ontarians acquire the professional and technical skills to succeed in a transforming economy.

To ensure that people seeking meaningful employment have the right qualifications and skills, Colleges Ontario and Ontario's 24 colleges are working to promote public policy measures that will help more people complete college programs that align with the new economy.

For example, colleges continue to promote programs that train people for the clean economy. A 2016 report, *Moving to Net Zero: Colleges Leading the Way,* highlights new programs and initiatives to reduce Ontario's carbon footprint.

A new pathway to a degree in the college system has also been created. Ontario's colleges are developing new engineering degree programs in specialized fields after the provincial government approved the expansion of engineering degrees at colleges in fall 2016.

Colleges Ontario continues to pursue the goals outlined in the 2015 strategic plan, *Fuelling Prosperity*. The five-year plan advances a bold agenda to promote economic growth and stronger communities.

Below are some highlights of how the sector fulfilled the goals in 2016.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

DEVELOPING A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS AND INNOVATORS

Groundbreaking partnership promotes opportunities in Ireland

In 2016, Colleges Ontario renewed a groundbreaking agreement with the Irish Institutes of Technology. The agreement between Colleges Ontario and the Technological Higher Education Association – or THEA – allows Ontario college graduates of diploma programs to complete degree programs in Ireland.

At the same time, it allows graduates of degree programs in Ireland to come to Ontario to pursue post-graduate studies.

The agreement provides a unique opportunity at a system-to-system level for students in both countries to travel overseas to build on their credentials.

The program is still going strong. Currently, there are about 85 Ontario students taking advantage of the chance to study in Ireland.

The agreement has been a real benefit to students in both countries – and the engagement between Ontario and Ireland continues to get stronger. It is producing a more highly qualified and technically skilled workforce for both Canada and Ireland. And it is enriching the lives of countless students who are learning more about the world as they build on their studies.

Launch of landmark agreement providing greater access to management training

The implementation of a groundbreaking agreement between Colleges Ontario and McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Limited began in 2016.

The agreement allows McDonald's managers who have completed specific levels of management training to receive credit recognition for the equivalent of a first year of study at college. This means the managers can be fast-tracked into the second year of business or business administration programs at any one of Ontario's 24 colleges.

This innovative approach to delivering higher education to people in the workforce earned national media attention, including prominent coverage in the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star*. It encourages McDonald's managers to pursue post-secondary programs that will help them advance further in their careers.

"We're so pleased to work with the colleges on this new program that not only recognizes the quality of McDonald's training, but also empowers employees to apply the skills they've learned to reach their career and academic goals."

– Sharon Ramalho,
Chief People Officer of McDonald's Canada

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: INVESTING IN LEARNING AND TEACHING EXCELLENCE

New funding rolled out for applied research

Following successful lobbying efforts to secure more funding for college applied research projects, Premier Kathleen Wynne announced the creation of a new provincial fund at a January 2017 event at Conestoga College in Waterloo.

The new $20-million Colleges Applied Research and Development Fund will promote new economic growth and is part of the Ontario government's business growth initiative. It will be coordinated by the Ontario Centres of Excellence.

College-based applied research projects continue to develop innovations that help businesses throughout the province grow and create new, high-quality jobs. By supporting the colleges' applied research work, the new fund will strengthen Ontario's competitiveness in key sectors.

Business leaders participate in symposium on powering up the economy

Colleges Ontario hosted a symposium on labour market challenges in June 2016 that brought together CEOs and senior business leaders from across the province.

The half-day event, *Shifting Into High Gear: Powering a High-Performance Economy*, was held in Toronto and was moderated by TVO's Steve Paikin. In addition to the business leaders, the audience at the invitation-only event included representatives from government, education and students groups.

Advanced Education and Skills Development Minister Deb Matthews spoke at the event. Other featured speakers included Glen Hodgson, the senior fellow at the Conference Board of Canada; Jeffrey Lyash, the president and CEO of Ontario Power Generation; Jayson Myers, the then-president and CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters; and Georjann Morriseau, the director of First Nation relations and aboriginal affairs at Resolute Forest Products.

The symposium examined the steps needed to produce a high-performing economy in Ontario. There was a particular focus on how colleges and business leaders can work together to strengthen the qualifications and skills of the workforce.

Modernizing apprenticeship training

Modernizing apprenticeship is necessary to address the shortage of skilled tradespersons, especially women and people from underrepresented groups.

Ontario's colleges deliver close to 85 per cent of the province's in-school apprentice training. Colleges Ontario continues to encourage the provincial government to build an effective, modernized apprenticeship system that will lead to:

- Simpler, more flexible and convenient service levels for apprentices and employers.
- A more open, transparent and equitable process to allow more Ontarians to pursue and complete apprenticeship training.
- Greater participation of underrepresented groups, including women.
- Closer alignment with industry needs, encouraging more employers to engage in apprenticeship training.
- A higher profile for apprenticeship training, making it equivalent to diploma and degree education.
- Students, parents, guidance counsellors, and employment centres having ready access to comprehensive and clear information about apprenticeship training.
- A more cost-effective and efficient system.
- Far better socioeconomic and administrative data to compare the success of apprentices with other post-secondary students.

Premier's expert panel promotes college recommendations

Premier Kathleen Wynne's expert panel that explored measures to create a more highly skilled workforce embraced a number of policy changes that were recommended by Ontario's colleges.

The recommendations from the college sector were based on consultations held with guidance counsellors from across Ontario, along with the ideas discussed at the *Shifting Into High Gear* symposium in June 2016. The recommendations included exploring new ways to help students and parents learn about emerging careers, and the proposals to modernize the apprenticeship system.

The recommendations were provided in a report to the premier's expert panel that was chaired by former Ontario cabinet minister Sean Conway. Those recommendations and others from the colleges were incorporated into the expert panel's June report to the Wynne government.

The Ontario government is currently working to implement the recommendations from the expert panel.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: PROVIDING THE RIGHT EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS FOR TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

Colleges earn right to expand engineering degrees

Ontario's colleges will be developing new engineering degree programs in highly specialized fields after the provincial government announced in September 2016 that it had approved the expansion of engineering degrees at colleges.

The labour-market demand for the colleges' engineering degrees is in a range of specialized areas such as automation and robotics, power-systems transmission, and energy systems engineering management.

Colleges can now apply to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development for approval of specific programs, based on industry needs within the community.

"We know that engineers are vital to creating the highly skilled workforce that Ontario needs today and tomorrow," said Deb Matthews, the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

> **"By supporting the expansion of engineering degree programs, we're creating more opportunities for students to acquire and graduate with the skills that are in demand among Ontario's employers."**
>
> *– Hon. Deb Matthews*

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Promoting long-term sustainability

As part of advocacy efforts in 2016, PricewaterhouseCoopers Canada was asked to study the fiscal sustainability of Ontario's college system. The report projected colleges face an operating deficit that could exceed $400 million a year by 2024-25 and a cumulative shortfall of $1.9 billion by that time. The shortfall puts quality programs throughout the province in jeopardy.

There was comprehensive media coverage of the report, with articles in the *Globe and Mail* and elsewhere that said the colleges were calling for an urgent meeting with Premier Kathleen Wynne to discuss possible solutions.

The fiscal sustainability of the college system is instrumental in providing access to quality post-secondary opportunities.

The government has begun to take steps to address the issue. In April 2017, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development announced $50 million in one-time capital funding for the colleges.

High school students learn more about college

In 2016, Colleges Ontario once again ran the *Picture Your Future* tour that encouraged high school students to learn about the exciting range of careers that can be pursued through a college education.

This was the fourth year for the tour, which used green-screen technology to take high school students' photos in an array of career settings, such as firefighting, game development, nursing and aviation.

The tour visited College Information Program events and high schools throughout the province. Students received general information about college education as well as graduates' success rates. They were encouraged to engage on social media by uploading their pictures and using the event-specific hashtag.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: PROVIDING STRONG COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Colleges leading the way in environmental sustainability

Colleges have developed and implemented broad and significant measures to reduce carbon emissions and combat climate change, in everything from the development of new programs in renewable energy and sustainable construction practices to building upgrades that have cut energy use and emissions.

In 2016, the sector's achievements were highlighted in a Colleges Ontario report on sustainability achievements at all of the 24 colleges.

The report, *Moving to Net Zero: Colleges Leading the Way*, highlighted the 24 colleges' achievements in everything from leading-edge research that promotes energy efficiency to the development of programs that prepare increasing numbers of graduates for careers in areas such as renewable energy and sustainable building construction.

The findings in the report included:

- Millions of dollars have been invested in retrofit programs and other upgrades at campuses across the province. The retrofitting projects have included weatherization initiatives, energy and greenhouse gas audits, the installation of wind turbines and solar panels, and the integration of new designs that include green roofs and pollinator gardens.
- Colleges throughout Ontario have led the nation in post-secondary applied research, including leading-edge research that promotes a cleaner economy. For example, colleges are developing a simple, reliable and cost-effective thermo-mechanical technique for recycling field-aged and defective solar panels, and developing innovative technologies and processes to improve the productivity and sustainability of recycling waste electrical and electronic equipment.
- Colleges have implemented many strategies to reduce the carbon footprint caused by transportation. For example, the rapid expansion of online programs and courses has significantly reduced the amount of time students spend commuting.
- More than 20,000 students were enrolled in 2015-2016 programs that prepare them for careers that address climate change. That represented an increase of more than 20 per cent over five years.

Colleges play a leading role in promoting a greater awareness of the environmental challenges facing Ontario today. This includes initiatives undertaken in partnership with municipalities, industries and community organizations.

Fifty years of higher education training

Ontario's colleges are celebrating a huge milestone in 2017 – the 50th anniversary of the college system.

The celebrations kicked off in 2016 with the public launch of the campaign, The Start of Something Amazing.

The campaign honours the college system's tremendous legacy and looks ahead to the next 50 years. Students, faculty, alumni and communities throughout the province are currently part of the celebration that runs to the end of 2017.

In addition to a new website (www.amazing50.ca) and social media activities, the campaign includes online scrapbooks and videos, a provincewide campus tour, guest lecturer events that will be available online, an online contest that promotes students' and graduates' creative ideas (the William G. Davis Innovation Fund), special community events, and much more.

Ontario's colleges continue work on sexual violence policy

Ontario's colleges continue to lead in sexual violence policy work.

An Ontario government regulation requiring colleges and universities to have processes in place for the reporting of sexual violence complaints came into effect on Jan. 1, 2017. Prior to the government's announced plans for addressing sexual violence, Ontario's colleges proactively developed a stand-alone policy that was publicized at each college in the spring of 2015.

Each college's sexual violence policy now includes descriptions of how a person should report an incident, how complainants will be protected from retaliation, the college's process for investigations, and more. The regulation is part of Ontario's Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act, which was passed in 2016.

The colleges are continuing their leadership role by providing feedback on a proposed campus survey that will be done by the provincial government. This includes highlighting concerns about the types of questions that might be included, the timing of the survey's release and the workload this represents for the colleges.

Annual conference tackles global issues

Colleges Ontario's annual conference – the Higher Education Summit – is one of Canada's premier conferences on post-secondary education.

The 2016 conference was another successful event, with hundreds of attendees and very high participant ratings. Highlights included an analysis of the Trump administration's impact on Canada by renowned former U.S. secretary of labor Robert B. Reich.

Other highlights of the two-day conference in November included addresses by internationally recognized climate-change activist Bill McKibben and Canadian Olympian Clara Hughes.

As per tradition, the Premier's Awards gala celebrating the achievements of Ontario's college graduates was held on the final night of the conference. Nearly 900 people attended the event, which celebrates college graduates' successes in fields such as business, technology, the creative arts and more. These college graduates have seen success both in Ontario and throughout the world.

College theatre arts students entertain attendees.

There were 107 graduates from across Ontario nominated in the awards' six categories. Advanced Education and Skills Development Minister Deb Matthews helped present the awards and also spoke at the event about the importance of college graduates to the province's labour force and economic evolution.

OUR PARTNERS

The Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS)

The Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS) is the oversight body for the college's self-regulatory system that was established in 2005. OCQAS operates two quality assurance services for the colleges: The Credentials Validation Service (CVS) at the program level; and the College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) at the institutional level. In 2016, OCQAS received and processed nearly 200 applications for validation from the 24 colleges.

Its focus in 2016 was to support the college sector's Committee of Presidents accreditation task force in its review of the outstanding issues that were brought forward by the sector, and the development of the report that was presented to the colleges' Committee of Presidents in November. A decision about creating an accreditation model for Ontario's colleges was deferred until 2019.

Ontario College Application Service (OCAS)

OCAS is the link between prospective applicants and Ontario's public colleges. Each year, OCAS helps roughly 200,000 individuals research college programs, connect with Ontario's colleges and complete their applications. OCAS is also a shared service provider for colleges and industry partners, delivering centralized technology and customer support solutions, financial services, business intelligence, and data collection and reporting.

2016 was a year of growth and transformation at OCAS, with a focus on expanding the organization's portfolio of shared services, exploring new pathways for applicants, enhancing existing technology and infrastructure, and developing a new brand that reflects the organization's evolution in recent years.

Building on the 2015 successes of the College-Branded Application (formerly College-Branded User Interface) and Tier 1 Customer Support, OCAS added website and technology services to its suite of service offerings. Leveraging the expertise of its in-house development and IT teams, OCAS provided hosting solutions for Colleges Ontario, the College Employer Council and Ontario College Quality Assurance Services, and collaborated with Canadore College to develop, host and support its new website. This service not only offered cost savings for the college, but also significantly improved the reliability and functionality of its major business tool.

With college applications at the heart of its business, the OCAS team continued in 2016 to investigate potential new pathways for applicants, leading to the kickoff of a major project – a centralized international application for Ontario's colleges. As a first phase of the project, OCAS has launched the International College Portal – an online tool that allows college staff to manage applications and admissions for international applicants. The next phase of the international application project will deliver a portal for agents acting on behalf of applicants in countries around the world, and an application for international applicants to use directly.

In 2016, OCAS also continued to raise the bar on its commitment to high-quality customer service, with the implementation of a new phone and chat system that provided significant improvements in call monitoring and tracking of call drivers. These new insights allow for easy adjustment of staffing levels within the OCAS contact centre and for Tier 1 partners as needed, as well as greater visibility into areas for improvement.

Finally, 2016 marked the biggest transformation for OCAS yet, with the launch of a new brand that better reflects the organization today – one that's driven by technology and innovation; eager to collaborate and engage with partners; and focused on finding new ways to enhance services to prospective college applicants and industry partners. Along with the new brand came the launch of a new website that features in-depth information about OCAS and its services, as well as dedicated microsites for college and high school staff, with tools and resources in one easy-to-navigate location.

With a fresh new look and many projects already underway, OCAS is looking forward to making 2017 a year of exciting new ventures and continued excellence in service and support.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS SUMMARY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

March 31, 2016, with comparative figures for 2015

Assets	2016	2015
Current assets	7,545,548	8,014,642
Capital assets	234,975	286,292
Total assets	**7,780,523**	**8,300,934**
Liabilities and net assets		
Current liabilities	5,356,742	5,971,005
Net assets	2,423,781	2,329,929
Total liabilities and net assets	**7,780,523**	**8,300,934**
Statement of changes in net assets		
Year ended March 31, 2016, with comparative figures for 2015		
Net assets, beginning of year	2,329,929	1,988,142
Excess of revenue over expenses	93,852	341,787
Balance, end of year	**2,423,781**	**2,329,929**
Statement of operations		
Year ended March 31, 2016, with comparative figures for 2015		
Revenue	10,971,877	22,088,784
Expenses	10,878,025	21,746,997
Excess of revenue over expenses	**93,852**	**341,787**