



Algoma
UNIVERSITY



NOVEMBER
PRESIDENT'S
REPORT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: *"This is Resilience"*

Resilience - *the process of adapting well in the face of adversity* - is a term that continues to resonate as we navigate through this unprecedented period. Elizabeth Edwards, who wrote extensively on resilience from her own experiences, hoped her children would one day describe her in the following way...

*"she stood in the storm and when the wind did not blow her way--and it surely has not
-- she adjusted her sails."*

By the very nature of its history, Algoma University can be characterized as a resilient organization. From our humble beginnings in 1967 as Algoma University College, a small affiliate of Laurentian University, offering classes in a select group of academic disciplines within a portable classroom located on what is now a Sault College parking lot, to our relocation to the site of the former Shingwauk Indian Residential School in 1971, it often appeared as if the winds were not always blowing our way.

Throughout our history, we have continuously adjusted our sails to confront the winds of change. Through the perseverance and commitment of many, the Sault Ste. Marie campus saw the expansion of academic programming from 14 subjects to over 30 degree programs, securing its official charter in 2008 and becoming Ontario's 19th university. With this growth we saw the addition of facilities such as the Arthur A. Wishart Library, the George Leach Centre, student residences, the Convergence Centre, and much more. Today, we are moving forward with a bold vision for the next ten years as described in our [Campus Master Plan](#) - this is resilience.

Just over a decade ago, the concept of an expanding Brampton campus was little more than a fledgling dream. After struggling in the early years to solidify its presence with a pathway program of less than 100 students, a bigger vision was developed. Through the determination and perseverance of a strong core team and partners, today, over 600 students are pursuing post-secondary credentials in the heart of downtown Brampton. By 2021, the campus will house newly designed and renovated spaces featuring the School of Business and Economics, the School of Computer Science and Technology, the Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation, a new student centre, a new welcome centre and modern state of the art classrooms - this is resilience.

In Timmins, after annually supporting the post-secondary needs of approximately 35 students during phase one development on the Northern College campus, the perseverance of a small group of faculty, staff and community leaders committed to partnership and innovation has resulted in a reimagining of our strategic efforts. As the strategy unfolds, our Timmins campus will grow to 300 FTE students with expanded programming being introduced through the Schools of Business and Economics and Computer Science and Technology - this is resilience.

This October, we learned that the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre had been awarded the National Trust of Canada Ecclesiastical Insurance Cornerstone [Resilient Places Award](#) recognizing the extraordinary work of the residential school survivor community (Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association) - this is resilience.

SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS

LOVE AND
KINDNESS

RESPECT

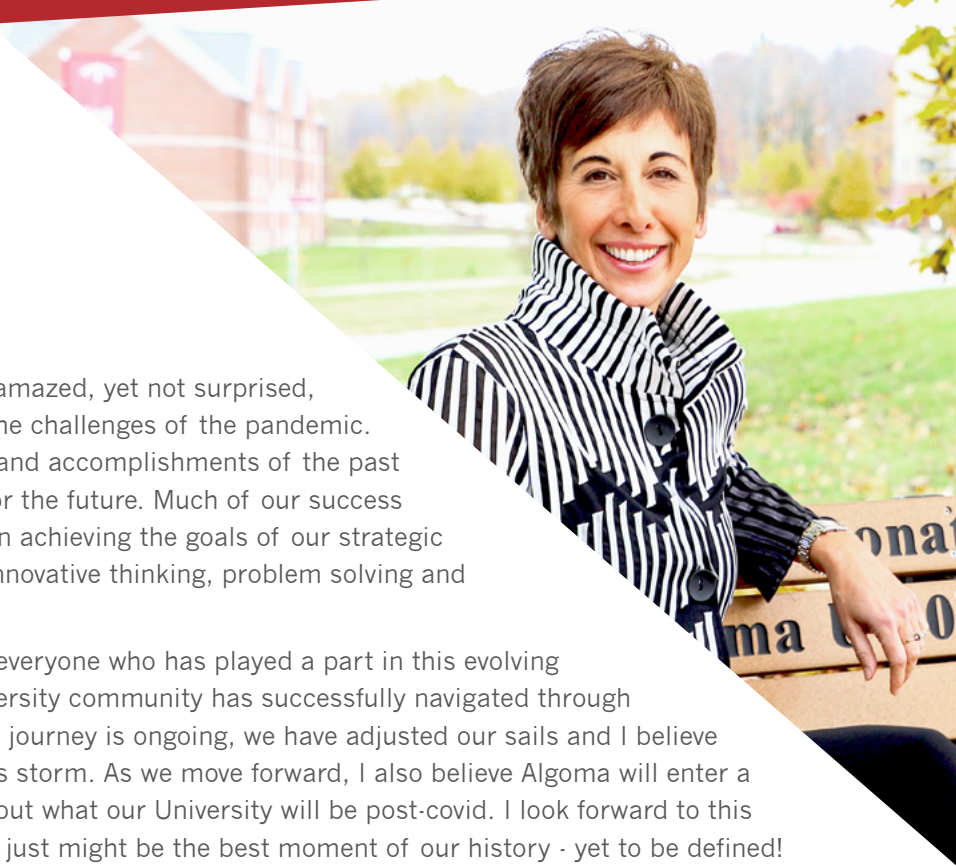
BRAVERY

WISDOM

HONESTY

TRUTH

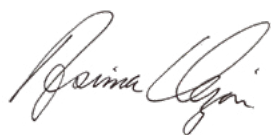
HUMILITY



When I look back on the past year I am amazed, yet not surprised, at what we have accomplished despite the challenges of the pandemic. We continue to acknowledge the efforts and accomplishments of the past while keeping our sites on our dreams for the future. Much of our success is tied to our ability to remain focused on achieving the goals of our strategic priorities in a period that has required innovative thinking, problem solving and creativity - this is resilience.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has played a part in this evolving chapter of our history. The Algoma University community has successfully navigated through this unprecedented period. Although the journey is ongoing, we have adjusted our sails and I believe we have and will continue to weather this storm. As we move forward, I also believe Algoma will enter a period of true innovation as we think about what our University will be post-covid. I look forward to this next adjustment of our sails as I think it just might be the best moment of our history - yet to be defined!

Believe in our future - believe in each other - believe in yourself.



Asima Vezina, *President and Vice-Chancellor*

“Thunderbirds protecting Thunderbirds – Thunderbirds protecting Community.”

The November President’s Report offers another opportunity to provide both the Board and the broader community with an update on the continued progress Algoma University has made on our five strategic priorities:

- institutional sustainability through an **enrolment growth strategy** focused on recruitment, retention, and vibrant programming;
- target activities and investments that enhance the **student experience**, academic and operational excellence;
- through partnerships, advance the University’s leadership and commitments to truth, and reconciliation, and our **Special Mission** to cultivate cross-cultural learning;
- cultivate a culture of **research and innovation** that enhances the University’s economic and community engagement and its impact; and
- **institutional excellence**: facilitate the ongoing improvement of the University by focusing on problem solving, teamwork, and leadership.

A range of highlights are noted within the body of the report.



CONTINUE FOCUS ON INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ENROLMENT GROWTH STRATEGY: **RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, VIBRANT PROGRAMMING**

Key Metrics/Areas of Focus



Recruitment

- Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) plan with clear strategies for achieving enrolment targets: 1740 FTE (2020/21); 2050 (2021/22); 3000 stretch target
- Diversify international enrolment across five key international markets
- Expand academic programming in Brampton – growth to 1000 FTE by 2023



Retention


- Confirm Student Success Strategy: retention metrics identified for various student groups: international, domestic, eLearning, college pathways, Anishinaabe



Vibrant Programming

- Consultation is underway for AU's next five-year Academic Plan (2021-2026)
- Working to amend the *Algoma University Act, 2008* to expand degree-granting authority, including Master's degrees
- AU faculty have joined the University of the Arctic Thematic Research Network on Northern Food Security

What We've Accomplished...



FALL ENROLMENT
exceeds target
BY 8.2%

Stakeholder Survey
complete for 2021-26
ACADEMIC PLAN

PROPOSAL REVIEWS FOR
BRAND ARCHITECTURE
STRATEGY



Recruitment

- Fall enrolment exceeded the revised target by 8.2% (74% of the pre-COVID enrolment target)
- The Federal Government approved Algoma University as one of only 14 Ontario-based Designated Learning Institutions (DLIs) able to facilitate the intake of new international students
- Evaluation of proposals resulting from RFP for new marketing strategy, including sub-strategies for external relations, student recruitment, and advancement currently underway

Retention

- 98% of Fall students reported positive well-being
- Student Success provided virtual mid-term check-ins with 593 first-year students, a nine percent increase from Fall 2019 levels
- 2020 Spring term Student Success indicators comparable to three-year average (+/- two percent)
- Wellness Services, including counselling, continue to operate virtually with no waitlist

Vibrant Programming

- Stakeholder survey completed for our next Academic Plan (2021-26) which will define Algoma's vision, or roadmap, for academic programming for the next five years.
- Continued implementation of strategic partnership with PowerEd by Athabasca University
- 66 of the 90 targeted courses for this year will be developed by the end of the 2020 Fall term – project remains on track to exceed our 2020-21 goal

What's Next?

- Finalize scope for procurement of information system to monitor retention data (Jan 2021)
- Continue expansion and implementation of eLearning options and platforms, to offer full degree programs
- Finalize content and structure of new Master's degree programs in Biology and Computer Science
- Development of an Anishinaabe enrolment strategy to support growth



TARGET ACTIVITIES AND INVESTMENTS THAT ENHANCE STUDENT EXPERIENCE, ACADEMIC AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Key Metrics/Areas of Focus



Student Experience

- Expand Brampton campus footprint
- Finalize and implement SSM Campus Master Plan (CMP) initiatives to support growth to 2000 FTE
- Student Health & Wellness Supports in place to ensure student needs are addressed



Academic & Research Excellence

- Determine academic and research components aligned to the Academic Plan for:
 - » Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute
 - » Mukqua Waakaa'igan – National Cultural Centre focused on supporting healing, reconciliation, cross-cultural learning and teaching
 - » Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation (Brampton)

What We've Accomplished...



2nd VIRTUAL GRAD
CELEBRATION
A SUCCESS

 **QUSU**
Algoma University Students' Union LOCAL 82 CFS
supports \$1.7M
Speakeasy Renovation





Student Experience

- Construction of the current phase of new and expanded campus spaces in Brampton continues. Four new classrooms, one new computer lab and redesigned Welcome Centre on target for December 2020 completion.
- [SSM Campus Master Plan](#) approved by Board of Governors (September)
- Final planning underway \$1.7M Speakeasy renovation made possible through the generous financial support of AUSU
- Hosted “Virtual Grad Celebration” to acknowledge 349 Fall graduates

Investments to Enhance Academic & Research Excellence

- Arthur A. Wishart Library Strategic Plan drafted
- Funding proposal submitted to City of Sault Ste. Marie for a CityStudio Innovation Hub at Algoma University, aligned with the SSM Campus Master Plan
- Vision for Algoma’s Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation in Brampton and Sault Ste. Marie under development

What’s Next?

- Finalization of Student Success Strategy
- Implementation of CMP initiatives approved for Sault Ste. Marie
- Move forward with new academic programs to be offered at the Brampton and Timmins campuses in 2021 and beyond
- Establish academic program elements for the Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation
- Advance academic program development for five-year e-Learning Strategy
- Establish academic program elements for the Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute & the Mukqua Waakaa’igan
- Development of “Off Campus Housing Supports” to help offset reduced residence capacity and need for resources on all three campuses





THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, ADVANCE THE UNIVERSITY'S LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENTS TO **TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION**, AND OUR **SPECIAL MISSION** TO CULTIVATE CROSS-CULTURAL LEARNING

Key Metrics/Areas of Focus

Truth & Reconciliation

- Work with partners to develop the concept and secure funding support for Mukqua Waakaa'igan: a National Cultural Centre focused on supporting healing, reconciliation and a vision of cross-cultural learning and teaching
- Work with partners to develop the concept and secure support for the Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute
- Recommit to the TRC Calls to Action and the University's Commitments to Truth and Reconciliation

Advance the University's special mission to cultivate cross-cultural learning

- Strengthen relationships and build understanding of the roles key groups play in achieving the special mission (SASA/AUSU, AU, SET, SKG, CSAA, SRSC, JWG, APC, AID, Elders Council)
- Deepen collaboration among Anishinaabe research, academic departments, student success and those responsible for site significance

Strengthen the University's relationship with SET, SKG and CSAA

- Re-kindling relations, building strong ties for all students among these stakeholders on the Sault Ste. Marie campus location ultimately affects all three campuses in a good way; students, staff and faculty are becoming more familiar with the Special Mission. This important work is a part of the Covenant Addendum acknowledged and signed in Nov. 2018.

What We've Accomplished...



A photograph showing three people standing in the arched doorway of a stone building, likely a church. The person on the left is wearing a bright pink robe and a face mask. The person in the middle is wearing a red and black plaid jacket over a black top and a face mask. The person on the right is wearing a black and white plaid jacket and a face mask. The doorway is flanked by green foliage. Above the doorway, the words "BISHOP" and "CHAPEL" are visible on the stone structure.

Truth & Reconciliation

- Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC) recognized by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO through inscription added to the Canada Memory of the World Register.
- SRSC awarded the National Trust of Canada Ecclesiastical Insurance Cornerstone Resilient Places Award recognizing historic places or landscapes that illustrate extraordinary resilience, significance, and benefit to a community.
- Working Group has begun developing Algoma University's 2020-2023 Recommitment to the Calls to Action – Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- Completed preliminary examination of requirements and implications for having the Shingwauk Site designated as a National Historic Site. Recommendation to be brought forward in Dec 2020

Advance the University's special mission to cultivate cross-cultural learning

- Tipi erected on the Sault Ste. Marie campus beside the newly renovated Fire Arbour; places being used for ceremonies and cross-cultural teaching and learning by site partners, faculty, staff, admin and community.

Strengthen the University's relationship with SET, SKG and CSAA

- SKG Board approved motion in support of AU's 2020 Campus Master Plan
- CSAA, SRSC and AU have developed an MOU detailing a five-year partnership with the University of British Columbia Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre; building on the exchange of information, expertise and knowledge in the sharing of responsibilities in co-developing, collaborating and use of archival data.
- AU, SKG and SET co-hosted a visit by Primate and Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada, to commemorate 30 years of reconciliation work on the Shingwauk Site.

What's Next?

- Finalize shared services agreement between AU and SKG
- Release new commitment statement to Algoma U's response to the "Calls to Action" (June 2021)
- Feasibility study for Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute
- Planning commencing for the 2021 SKG/AU BOG Retreat
- Mukqua Waakaa'igan project working group sessions (further design and program development)





CULTIVATE A CULTURE OF **RESEARCH AND INNOVATION** THAT ENHANCES THE UNIVERSITY'S ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACTS

Key Metrics/Areas of Focus

- Capitalize on scholarship and research to enhance student learning, support faculty growth, and contribute to local economic development
 - » Identify, initiate and leverage support for three new research projects that respond to local community needs
- Algoma U cultivates a culture of research and innovation among students and faculty to promote career readiness
 - » Target 10% increase in students directly involved with faculty research projects
 - » Target increase in both number and value of faculty research and dissemination
 - » Increase Experiential Learning (EL) opportunities for students

What We've Accomplished...



2 funding proposals
submitted to Universities Canada
**MOBILITY INNOVATION
PROJECT GRANTS**



5
FACULTY RESEARCH GRANT
proposals submitted for
**TRI-AGENCY
FUNDING**



- Funding proposals submitted to Universities Canada for two Mobility Innovation Project grants: Cross-Cultural Food Literacy, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Virtual Exchange
- Five significant faculty research grant proposals submitted for Tri-Agency funding consideration

What's Next?

- Build and expand research supports - expertise and funding
- Identify and develop research elements of key initiatives including the:
 - » Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute (Jan 2021)
 - » Mukqua Waakaa'igan (March 2021)
 - » Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation (Brampton) and the Northern Ontario Research and Technology Hub (Nov 2020)
- Implement targeted initiatives within the Experiential Learning Strategic Plan





INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE: FACILITATE THE ONGOING IMPROVEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY BY FOCUSING ON PROBLEM SOLVING, TEAMWORK, AND LEADERSHIP

Key Metrics/Areas of Focus

- Organizational Alignment
- Talent Management
- Modernization of Systems and Processes

What We've Accomplished...

NEW APPOINTMENT
Dr. Vivian Estrada
ACADEMIC LEAD

**DIVERSITY
& EQUITY**

NEW
Vice-President: Nyaagaaniid Student
Success and Anishinaabe Initiatives

MARY WABANO-MCKAY

PHASE
1 of new
ADP PAYROLL
SYSTEM
COMPLETE





- Senior executive restructure completed through the hiring of [Mary Wabano-McKay](#) in the role of Nyaagaaniid - Student Success and Anishinaabe Initiatives.
- Successful implementation of phase one of new ADP payroll system complete. Employee training ongoing.
- Appointment of Dr. Vivian Estrada as Academic Lead, Diversity and Equity.
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Team now in place (composed of EDI Officer, Nyaagaaniid - Student Success and Anishinaabe Initiatives, and Academic Lead, Diversity and Equity). Team will support measurable strategic actions for continued institutional progress in this portfolio.
- Improved/enhanced financial dashboards for administrative and faculty units.
- Engaging Fall Board Retreat where the Board expressed an interest to shift its governance philosophy to a more strategy/policy sophistication level.
- Scope and sign-off with external agency leading development of operational efficiency report to support the continued development of enhanced processes and standard operating procedures.

What's Next?

- Alignment of annual planning to achieve the strategic priorities (budget, human resources, leadership development, capital, risk management, academic and research plans) across the University (Jan 2021)
- Development of a five-year technology/infrastructure plan. The modernization of the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and the IT Service Management Tool (Jan 2021)
- Development of a capital five-year maintenance plan (Mar 2021)
- Comprehensive review of corporate policies (Mar 2021)





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