



# President's Report April 2009

## *News and Special Events*

**Niagara College has completed the "Drive for Five."** For the fifth straight year, Niagara College is ranked number one in student satisfaction among all Ontario Colleges. This outstanding result is a testament to the hard work and dedication of Niagara College faculty and staff, and their unwavering commitment to the success of our students. In all, 85.2 percent of students said they are satisfied with the education they're receiving here. This result is especially remarkable in light of our record enrolment growth this year.

The **Seafood Gala** on April 3 was a resounding success with a sold-out crowd, and a record amount raised through sponsorship and live auction revenue. This was a significant achievement in a year with so many economic challenges. Proceeds will support the scholarship and bursary component of the Building Futures Campaign. The photo gallery is available on the College website:

[www.niagaracollege.ca/seafoodgala/photogallery](http://www.niagaracollege.ca/seafoodgala/photogallery).

**Five May Start Programs Launched** – In response to the increasing demand for Niagara College's programs in today's transitioning local economy, Niagara College has launched a series of new "May Start" programs this spring. Five May Start programs will be offered, including: Business - Accounting (2 years), Construction Techniques (1 Year), Office Administration - General (1 Year), Practical Nursing (2 Years), Personal Support Worker (1 Year). All May Start programs begin on May 19, except for Construction Techniques, which starts May 4.

The College's annual **In Your Backyard** event, held March 21-22, included the 40th Annual Horticultural Open House and Plant Sale, and treated visitors to horticultural speakers, exhibits, expert garden, wine and culinary advice and demonstrations showcasing the work and talents of students in the College's Winery and Viticulture, Culinary, Esthetics, Event Management, Golf Management, Hairstyling, Hospitality and Tourism and Environmental programs. Visitors took advantage of guided tours of the College's Wetland Ridge Trail and "Backyard Marketplace" featuring local Niagara businesses.

## *Niagara College Students*

Niagara College hosted its **"Student Appreciation Day"** on Tuesday, April 7 to thank students for choosing Niagara College as their place of study, work and play. Departments across all college campuses treated students to food, snacks, games and prizes. Campuses were transformed with the "It's Tropical" with a twist of "green" theme. A focus on "going green" was visible in the use of environmentally friendly products and giveaways.

**5 on 5 Student Chef Showcase** – Fifteen student chefs who will be graduating this June were showcased at three events aimed at providing an opportunity for employers in the Hospitality and Tourism sector to recruit these top notch students. All three evenings very quickly sold out and were wait-listed.

**Niagara College Varsity** teams brought home winning medals this past month. The Men's Curling Team won its Provincial Silver at the Ontario College Athletic Association (OCAA) Championships held in Hamilton, while in Ottawa, the Men's Basketball Team won its second Provincial Bronze. Nick Fadayel (Police Foundations Program student) and second team OCAA All-Star during the regular season, was selected to the tournament all-star team. Coupled with the Provincial Gold and Silver medals won by our Varsity Golf Team, Niagara Knights finished with an impressive winning season, and have built a solid foundation for the 2009/10 athletic year.

Niagara College Paramedic and Advanced Care Paramedic students competed in the **National Paramedic Competition** in Oshawa on March 28. This national competition brings in teams from British Columbia, Alberta, the Armed Forces and Ontario. The competition consists of 6 practical scenarios, written examinations, oral examinations, skill stations and interviews. In the student division, Niagara students **Shane Eickmann** and **Brock Browett** placed first and another team from Niagara, **Mike Huber** and **Robert Downie**, placed third. In the Primary Care Division, **Carolyn Chandler-Hill** and **Kate MacArthur**, students in the Advanced Care Program, placed first.

The Niagara News, a community newspaper produced by students in Niagara College's Journalism - Print program, has placed in all four campus newspaper categories in the **Canadian Community Newspaper Association (CCNA) Better Newspaper Competition**. The Niagara News won third place in Outstanding Campus Newspaper category for the Remembrance Day Edition (Face of Valour). **Laura Wikston** won third place in the Best Campus News Story for her story titled Uncovering the Truth about meeting Bob Woodward of the Washington Post. **Camille Hollett** won third place in the Best Campus Feature Story for her story on "Coping at Christmas". A great photo by **Joseph Cassidy** of a pool shark demonstrating his skills at After Hours won second place for the Best Campus Photography. This national recognition reflects the hard work and dedication of our students and our program faculty, and their desire to produce one of Canada's top campus newspapers.

The win comes on the heels of Journalism - Print graduate *Monica Keyes* top finish in the Student News Writing category of the **Ontario Community Newspaper Association (OCNA) Better Newspaper Awards**, and builds on last year's impressive showing at the CCNAs, where the paper and its student reporters placed second in three campus-newspaper categories.

## *In Recognition of Excellence*

**Paul Gelinas**, **Justin Larsen** and **Graham Walker**, students in the College's Business Administration - Marketing program, struck gold at the **Vanier College BDC Case Challenge** Feb. 14-15, which drew 16 teams from Ontario and Quebec. Teams were given a case study for analysis, and presented solutions to a panel of judges. The Niagara College team placed first overall. We're very proud of our students, and the faculty members who provided coaching and guidance for this event. Faculty coaches included Beth Pett, Terri Champion and Agostino Menna.

Josh Gal, one of our recent BRTF graduates, has been nominated for a prestigious **Writers Guild of Canada Award**. Josh is nominated in the Category of "Episodic ½ Hour" for his script for Rent-a-Goalie. He is up against some very impressive names including Brent Butt and Andrew Carr of "Corner Gas" fame.

Matt (M.J.) Wallace, a BRTF graduate of 2007, has won a Radio Advertising Bureau of Canada award. He was honoured with a **Crystal award** for a radio commercial that he produced in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

The Student Administrative Council (SAC) honoured Niagara College faculty during the **SAC Educator of the Year Awards**. Faculty member and Coordinator of the Motive Power Programs, **Wayne Toth**, was voted as the Full-Time "Educator of the Year." Receiving the "Part-time Educator of the Year" award was **Robin McCulloch**, teacher in our new Acting Program. This is a student-driven award which began five years ago, originally as a student project. Nominees are judged on criteria relating to the individual's willingness to go above and beyond teaching duties, his/her ability to inspire students and the positive influence that this individual has had on students.

Niagara College received the '**United Way Silver Employee Award**' for employee participation in the United Way campaign and, once again, the award for the 'United Way Best Public Sector Campaign 2008.' Thanks to all Niagara College staff for supporting the local community.

## ***On the Academic Front***

The 2008 **Continuing Education Survey** results have been released and Niagara College's results were excellent. The Division and the service departments have improved in 39 of the 59 attributes. We were the top medium college in 20 attributes and were above the medium college average in 57 and above the provincial average in 55 of the attributes. We were the top medium college in registration, special needs services, cleanliness of building and general safety to list a few. In addition, CE was above average in all of the teaching/learning attributes.

**Libraries of Niagara College** have partnered with four public libraries: Pelham, Fort Erie, Lincoln and Niagara-on-the-Lake to investigate the next generation of integrated library system. All libraries currently run the same proprietary software which will no longer be supported in 3 years. Initial investigation by a group of staff representing all libraries recommended migration to an Open Source model (Evergreen). The group applied to the Ministry of Culture, Library Strategic Development Fund, for funding to hire a consultant to do the feasibility study, including all specs required for the group to implement this system as a consortium. The grant application was successful — the consultant will begin work in May and deliver recommendations in July.

**Dr. Thomas Keenan**, of the School of Liberal Arts & Science, has just published the second edition of his best-selling book, *An Introduction to Child Development* (2009) with Sage Publishers (London, UK). The text, co-authored with Dr. Subhadra Evans of the University of California Los Angeles, covers children's development from infancy through to adolescence, taking a topical approach to children's development. The textbook is widely used in university psychology programs, nursing colleges and faculties of education in Canada, New Zealand, the United States, and Europe.

On Monday, March 16, CH News visited our **Forensic Science lab** to report on a new course developed by Gillian Eckhardt of the General Arts and Science department as a general education elective in science open to all students. Students were featured demonstrating Blood Spatter Analysis skills, and it made a big 'splash'! CH News filmed students making arterial spurt patterns, testing unknown stains with phenolphthalein indicators and luminol spray, and simulating cast off patterns. They spotlighted our 'blood booth', in which students had to apply the knowledge of blood pattern analysis learned in class to a unknown scenario in which blood stains needed interpretation.

Every Thursday at noon, **Inside Niagara** is LIVE on TV Cogeco in the Niagara Region. Second-year BRTF (TV Production and Presentation) students will produce 10 live broadcasts of Inside Niagara between early February and mid-April covering stories from Grimsby to Fort Erie and everything in between Lakes Erie and Ontario. Also back this year is the popular and innovative Inside Niagara; The Webcast! As most broadcasters in North America are now using the internet as another vehicle to reach their audience, so too is Niagara College. Each week a special, condensed version of the newsmagazine show Inside Niagara is re-packaged for a very targeted audience, in our case the Niagara College community. It's a 6-8 minute presentation filled with primarily college related news and information. It is uploaded to the college's streaming video server and distributed to staff and students via e-mail, blackboard and web sites.

In the month of March, **Tedde Moore**, accomplished and award-winning actor, producer, and teacher in both film and theatre, visited the Acting program to deliver a workshop on "working with props" as an extension of character work. Tedde also participated in an extensive Q & A with the students. The lecture and practical workshop that she delivered was quite remarkable in its scope and effectiveness.

## ***Marketing & Recruitment***

VIP Days, an event for incoming admitted applicants, were held Saturday, March 21 in Welland and on Sunday, March 22 in NOTL. Each year this event is a great opportunity to mingle with our prospective students, hear about decision making factors and provide that personal touch for which Niagara College has become famous.. It is a key component of our conversion strategy (converting applicants to enrolments).

Fifty-eight aspiring chefs and patissiers got a taste of their culinary futures at the **Fifth Annual Niagara Invitational High School Cook Off**, hosted by the Niagara Culinary Institute. Twenty-four culinary teams (of two competitors each) and ten individual baking competitors, representing 17 high schools from the Niagara, Halton, Peel, Waterloo and Durham Regions and the Greater Toronto area, competed for the gold medal, which includes a \$1,000 Niagara College scholarship for both the culinary and baking competition winners. The scholarships are sponsored by Chef Revival and Mercer Tools.

## ***Niagara Research***

Niagara College received a five year grant of \$2.3 million under a new national program, the **College and Community Innovation Program (CCI)**, administered by the federal Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). Niagara College was one of only six colleges across Canada to participate in the original 3-year pilot program, whose success led to the current permanent program. The pilot enabled Niagara Research to build capacity and expertise in advanced visualization to help regional land developers and planners develop 3D scenarios of their land use planning proposals. The new 5-year project for Niagara College, "Sustain Niagara: Supporting Innovation in Agricultural Land Management", builds on a core set of technologies developed in the earlier pilot, including remote sensing, GIS, and high performance computing and visualization technologies. In the new program, the research team will add real-time wireless sensor networks and advanced technologies such as photonics to help agricultural land managers make the best use of available land from an economical and land stewardship point of view.

Niagara College students and faculty (Lora Miani) of the Pre-Health Science Department, in partnership with Eastern Cape Department of Housing, Ikhwezi Wellness Centre and Walter Sisulu University (WSU), will be participating in a **community based research project** to predict housing needs of marginalized and/or vulnerable HIV/AIDS infected people in East London, South Africa in May 2009. Through the project research work, seven Niagara College students will serve as student research assistants and apply hands-on research techniques to real problems and engage in oral presentations and discussions. Additionally, students will participate in the design, execution, analysis and evaluation of the Department of Housing Project and at the end of the project; they will present their research results and will contribute to a final report which may result in publication. Most of the students participating in this research project will be entering into a nursing program in Ontario in the fall.

## ***Foundation and Alumni News and Information***

With just one year into the **Building Futures** campaign, the Foundation has commitments of more than \$11.6 million or 70% of the \$16.5 million goal. The Regional Municipality of Niagara recently confirmed \$1.1 million in financial support. The campaign cabinet, led by co-chairs Mark Basciano and Anna Olson, has identified the top 20 prospects to cultivate and ask over the next few months. The internal family campaign is underway with commitments of \$37,000 from staff, and \$10,400 from Foundation Directors and the Board of Governors.

The Foundation had another very successful year, reaching the \$420,000 maximum target to be matched by the **Ontario Trust for Student Support (OTSS)** at \$1.45 for each \$1.00 raised. This further investment of \$1,030,508 will increase the College's endowment to more than \$8 million. In 2008-09, the foundation had 359 awards available to disburse, including 177 endowed funds and 182 declining funds. The Foundation increased its number of awards by 38 during the year. There is \$261,000 available in 2009-10 for scholarships and bursaries, with \$175,000 from endowed funds and \$86,000 from declining funds. There will also be new awards added over the year through the Building Futures Campaign.

## ***Student Services***

A **cross-cultural exchange event** was jointly planned by the College's First Nations Student Services and International Education Office. Sixteen (16) International students accompanied by Student Advisor Sue Fyke and International Division's Kyla Pennie travelled to Six Nations in Ohsweken, Ontario. The day included a visit to the Two Turtles Art Gallery, where proprietor and artist Arnold Jacobs talked about

Native Art and Legends, a traditional Native lunch, and a tour of our partner institution Six Nations Polytechnic, where 16 Niagara College students are studying Early Childhood Education.

Counselors Donna Putman and Jocelyne Briggs presented the retention video project “**Their Voices, Our Ears**” to external assessors visiting Niagara College as part of the Access programs’ review process. Their Voices, Our Ears came about as a result of a 2008 Innovation Grant, and has since been shown widely on campus to staff and students, as well as internationally at conferences.

Beginning March 2009, the physician serving Niagara College students through our **Health Services Office** (Dr. Tracy Dobson) began offering evening medical clinics at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus. The first two clinics were well attended, and will continue on the basis of student interest and demand.

Reverend Doctor Prince Conteh, the college’s first ever Multi-faith Chaplain, shared his knowledge and observations of Traditionalist, Muslims and Christians in Africa at a book launch held March 17 at the Niagara on the Lake Library. Several college staff, students, and out-of-town visitors attended. As a result of this successful initiative, the Library hopes to host similar events featuring college staff authors.

For the 14th year, Niagara College partnered with the Revenue Canada Agency to offer free Income Tax Preparation clinics on campus during March 2009. Community volunteers provided tax preparation and free e-filing services at the Niagara on the Lake and Welland Campuses, each attracting 200+ student filers.

## ***Student Administrative Council (SAC)***

**Student Administrative Council elections** were held March 16-20 and resulted in 16 new and/or returning student leaders for the 2009/10 academic year. General Arts and Science student and Ridgeway resident Jacquelynn Perzul was named President; Business Admin- Human Resources student Larry Baraniuk won the Student Governor seat – a race that included 4 candidates. The 2009 SAC elections took place online, with over 700 students (or 10%) of the student body voting – the highest turnout ever.

The Student Administrative Council’s (SAC) annual **Lifestyle Fair** included a presentation by nationally renowned sexpert and host of the Sunday Night Sex Show Sue Johanson. The fair enjoyed its largest turnout ever by students for the various activities associated with the event, including participation by dozens of community agencies whose work supports or informs students on lifestyle choices.

## ***Funding Advocacy***

Additional funding for access and quality and sustainability grants in the amount of \$150 million in immediate, one-time support for post secondary institutions in 2008-09 was announced in the 2009 Provincial Budget. Niagara College will receive \$2,987,482 of which \$1,983,851 directly relates to growth funding. This money will be used to address operating cost pressures. Colleges will receive 45.53 per cent of this funding significantly higher than the traditional 30 per allocation colleges typically receive; a tremendous accomplishment by the college sector and an indication that the advocacy by the Committee of College Presidents and Colleges Ontario is being recognized.

## ***Colleges Ontario / Provincial Update***

Media coverage of the February launch of the college sector’s new system-wide advertisements “**It’s all about M.E.**” has supported the goal of encouraging parents and students to rethink traditional biases about college and university. The ads promote the idea that students should pursue studies that best support their career ambitions and encourage parents and students to explore college as a viable postsecondary option. As part of the college sector’s long-term marketing campaign, a promotional contest tour is encouraging young people from across Ontario to rap on video about their goals for higher education. The students’ rap videos are being posted on the [myeducation.me](http://myeducation.me) website and on Facebook,

and people can vote online to choose their favorite videos (two winners will each receive \$5,000 toward their postsecondary education).

Five Ontario college presidents — Ann Buller from Centennial, John Davies from Humber, Dan Patterson from Niagara, Howard Rundle from Fanshawe and Anne Sado from George Brown — appeared Feb. 24 on TVO's current affairs program, **The Agenda** with Steve Paikin, to discuss issues affecting colleges today.

Deborah Newman, the Deputy Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, will chair the first meeting of the government's new steering committee to review the **postsecondary-credit transfer** issue. The first meeting was held March 9<sup>th</sup> and included representatives from Colleges Ontario, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and the student groups.

As part of its review of the Ontario Public Services Employees Union (OPSEU) application to certify part-time academic and sessional employees at the colleges, the **Ontario Labour Relations Board** (OLRB) has scheduled a series of follow-up meetings that will continue until at least September. The key issue continues to be whether OPSEU's recent membership drive succeeded in getting support from at least 35 per cent of the eligible employees. The ballot box from the votes held earlier this year will remain sealed until the issue about the 35 per cent threshold is resolved.

## ***Lest We Forget***

Saturday, March 14 was the funeral for **Warrant Officer Dennis Brown** who was tragically killed in Afghanistan. A team of volunteers arranged a reception after the funeral at the Four Points Sheraton by Brock University. Niagara College and the Niagara Culinary Institute supported this reception by preparing soup and fresh bread for the event.

Niagara College mourned the death of **Corporal Tyler Crooks**, a 2004 graduate of the Police Foundations program. Tyler was killed in Afghanistan March 20 as a result of a roadside bomb. He is the first of Niagara College's 50,000 alumni to die on duty while serving his country as a member of the Canadian Military. In memory of Tyler, flags at all Niagara College campuses were flown at half-staff, and condolences conveyed to the family. Also, the Student Administrative Council will dedicate a page to Tyler in its 2009 Graduate Yearbook. Tyler's father, Alfred Crooks, is a long-time supporter of the college and member of the Mechanical Trades Program Advisory Committee.

## ***Upcoming Events***

**Niagara College Annual Golf Classic** will be held at Thundering Waters Golf Club in Niagara Falls on September 15, 2009. The \$200 registration package includes 18 holes of golf, golf cart with GPS, golf clinic, a welcome package including a \$25 Thundering Waters certificate, lunch, wine and cheese reception, banquet dinner, silent auction and prizes. Proceeds will support the scholarship and bursary component of the Building Futures Campaign. For more information, call 905-735-2211, ext. 7551.

Niagara College staff, students, alumni and friends are supporting the **Rankin Cancer Walk/Run** to be held Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Last year the Niagara College Rankin' Walk/Run team numbered over 60 and raised more than \$5,000 for this highly successful community based event! We are hoping that we can encourage an even larger group to participate this year. To register to be part of the Niagara College team or to obtain more information: contact Shirley DeBeau at ext. 7856 or email Shirley at [sdebeau@niagaracollege.ca](mailto:sdebeau@niagaracollege.ca). Registration deadline is April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Under the leadership of our Alumni Council, the schedule for **Homecoming** events has been tentatively established and planning is well underway. Once again, Homecoming will be linked to the Niagara Food Festival with most of the events occurring from Oct 2 to 4. Information about homecoming is available on the alumni website at [www.niagaracollege.ca/homecoming](http://www.niagaracollege.ca/homecoming).