



## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# **Province invests \$15.4 million in skilled trades training at Niagara College**

*Funding will help College meet demand for highly skilled graduates*

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty announced \$15.4 million in provincial funding to expand Niagara College's capacity for skilled trades training. The announcement was made at Niagara College's Welland Campus today.

The funding will support a 70,000 square foot expansion of skills training spaces at Niagara College, and will create 730 new spaces for apprenticeships and skills training. It will support trades such as welding, metal fabrication, construction, carpentry, cabinetmaker and electrician.

"A lot of employers are having a hard time finding workers with the right skills, so there are jobs going begging. Investing in Niagara College means giving our people the opportunities they need and improving our economic advantage," said Premier McGuinty.

"Like the provincial government, we at Niagara College recognize the growing need for skilled workers in Niagara and in communities across Ontario," said Niagara College President Dan Patterson. "We're extremely pleased with the funding announced today, which will strengthen our ability to deliver the highly-skilled, job-ready graduates who will help drive the economy of Niagara and Ontario."

The funding is part of the Provincial Government's Skills to Jobs Action Plan, which supports new skills for new careers, expanded postsecondary student aid and programs, and funding to support the construction of new places to learn.

Demand is high – from both employers who seek skilled workers, and by students who want to pursue skilled trades training. Currently, almost all Niagara College skilled trades programs have a waiting list and, on average, there are more than four applicants for every spot available. Due to this high demand, the College is already constructing a new addition to the Technology Skills Centre to accommodate a new welding lab and new classroom space for skilled trades programs.

The provincial funding was welcomed by representatives of key Niagara industries.

"This generous financial support will greatly assist the college and the residential construction industry's efforts to encourage young people to see trades and technology as viable career options," said Mark Basciano, Owner of the Mountainview Group and President of the Ontario Homebuilders' Association.

"While today's announcement is obviously good news for Niagara College, it's great news for businesses like ours, because it will expand the College's ability to provide the skilled workers that are in such high demand," said Bob Benner, owner of Hamill Machine Company in Niagara and recent recipient of a 2008 "Minister's Apprenticeship Employer Recognition Award" from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

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***Enriching lives and fulfilling dreams by preparing students to pursue and achieve career success.***

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The provincial funding announced today is also a key component of Niagara College's comprehensive campus redevelopment master plan. Full details of the master plan will be unveiled later in 2008.

Niagara College is a leader in Technology and Skilled Trades education and training, and introduces new programming every year that responds to the needs of employers in our community and the provincial economy. In recent years, Niagara College has introduced new programs in construction techniques, renovation technician and welding techniques, and we will soon introduce new programs in welding technician, electrical techniques and civil engineering technician. These programs are in addition to existing skilled trades programming in the areas of automotive, construction, mechanical and welding.

With 6,350 full-time and 15,000 part-time students, Niagara College offers more than 90 certificate, diploma, post-graduate and degree programs at campuses in Welland, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines. Areas of specialization include technology, skilled trades, hospitality and tourism, viticulture, business, community safety, and media studies. The College is home to the globally recognized Niagara Culinary Institute and to Canada's first commercial teaching winery.

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# Niagara College Skilled Trades and Technology Centre Expansion

- **Creates over 700 new spaces in skilled trades and apprenticeship programs**
- **70,000 square feet of new and renovated lab and classroom space**
- **Enhanced ability to deliver highly skilled work-ready graduates to help drive key local and provincial industries**



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Niagara College is expanding its skilled trades and technology programs, providing both enhancements to existing facilities and expansion to the current programs offered. These changes will complement and enhance Niagara College's ability to support the Niagara region's transitioning economy.

This project will provide an expanded central technology and skilled trades centre, located at the Welland Campus. The project will provide new space to accommodate expanded enrolment in construction trades, with support for construction techniques and construction technician programs, and consolidation of these projects with other related construction trades, such as electrical techniques. The provision of flexible training facilities will allow the College to offer apprenticeships and short term skilled trades training in areas such as masonry, plumbing and welding responding to changes in the economy and flexible responses.

The culinary apprentice program will also be supported through the addition of a food lab and central support space, located at the Niagara Culinary Institute. This portion of the project will provide expanded capacity, improving the ability to respond to demand from the growing hospitality and tourism sector. The culinary trades are in high demand in the Niagara region, with this sector continuing to be a cornerstone for economic growth in the region.

The project includes classroom space to support academic assessment and upgrading, ensuring that students are provided appropriate credit for prior learning and the necessary academic skills to be successful. Together with investments in equipment and staff, and on-going development of strong, integrated technology programs, this project represents our response to the ever-evolving needs of industry. Employers have told us that they require graduates who are broadly skilled, who have been exposed to a diverse range of architectural, mechanical and electrical disciplines so they can contribute to the whole team. Innovation will be supported through enhanced space for applied research.

# Niagara College Skilled Trades and Technology Centre Expansion

## Enrolment Capacity Plans

The expansion will support enhanced space for a range of current programs and support expanded enrolment in both existing and new programs. The expanded programs are identified below:

Program Cluster	Program Name	Increased Capacity
<b>Skilled Trades &amp; Technology</b>	Construction Techniques	60
	Construction Renovation Technician	60
	Welding	60
	Cabinet maker	60
	Metal Fabrication	60
	Industrial Millwright/Machine Repair	30
	Electrical Technician – Powerline	30
	Electrical Techniques	60
	Masonry	60
	Plumbing	60
<b>Culinary</b>	Culinary Skills – Chef Training	90
<b>Academic</b>	Upgrading and Literacy	100
<b>Total</b>		730

## Project Construction

This expansion project has been divided into phases to speed implementation. Construction on the first phase will start in summer of 2008. This phase includes welding and construction trades facilities at the Welland Campus. These facilities will be ready for occupancy by January 2009. The construction on the balance of the program will commence in the fall of 2008 with completion for the fall of 2010.

## Funding Sources

This project will be funded through a combination of provincial government capital funding and internal reserves designated to support this project.

Provincial Government funding	\$15.4 million
College Funding	\$ 2.9 million
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>\$18.3 million</b>

**Niagara College**  **Canada**

*Welcome to Success*