

Algoma  
UNIVERSITY

MARCH 2021  
PRESIDENT'S  
REPORT

Algoma  
UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - *Finding our Way*

As we shift seasons and prepare to welcome Spring, I am looking forward to warmth and sunshine and all that comes with it. As you will see in this copy of the President's Report, this Winter has been a time for strategic and long-term planning, collaborating and thinking across the University.

As we prepare to enter the 2021-22 year, we are now in a position to begin shifting our budgeting and planning processes from a focus on sustainability and crisis response to a more long-term strategy and outlook that prepares for growth to 3000 FTE. As such, a number of important planning pieces are actively underway across the organization:

### 1. Strategic Plan (extended to 2023)

Through discussions between the Board, Senate Executive and Senior Administration (via the annual retreats), it was determined that the current strategic plan should be extended to 2023. A retreat was held mid January to begin this conversation with the goal of recasting the narrative where necessary of the existing sub-objectives (based on the current context), and removing sub-objectives already accomplished. An ad hoc committee has been established to draft a refreshed Strategic Plan extended to April 30, 2023.

### 2. Academic Plan (2021-2026)

The university community is in the final stages of consultation for its new academic plan; conversations have been underway across many departments, faculties, townhalls and focus groups as together, we lay out a roadmap for the next five years. This plan will reflect our strengths, it will identify areas for innovation and improvement and will capture our vision for what we want to accomplish. Thank you to the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee for your leadership on this exercise. The *Strategic Enrolment Management Strategy* will be informed by the Academic Plan and Strategic Plan moving forward.

### 3. Technology Plan (2021-26)

Led by the new Director of IT, John Peters, the University is completing a 5-year technology plan that will focus on modernizing systems and processes including the student information system, timetabling software, human resources planning, financial software, classroom modernization efforts, virtual teaching and learning enhancements and more. The plan is being guided by the efficiency audit and earlier consultation.

### 4. SSM Capital Plan (2021-2026)

Based on the Campus Master Plan, our Director of Plant, Shane Maurice is building out the implementation strategy through the capital plan. While a number of construction projects and renovations are underway (Speakeasy, School of Computer Science and Technology), a number

of other projects will be completed over the next five years to enhance academic and non-academic spaces and to provide the infrastructure required to grow this campus to 2000 FTE. Brampton is ready and now has the infrastructure in place to welcome 1000 FTE over the next three to five years.

### 5. Growth to 3000 FTE

As we move through the final stages of the pandemic, academic and operational departments and faculties are being asked to think deeply about staffing and resourcing needs for the next three years. A comprehensive staffing document will be developed by HR to ensure that we have the employee base that will compliment the documents above.

These collective leadership efforts from across the university have and will continue to position Algoma University for the 2021-22 year and beyond. The updates on our five institutional priorities highlighted in this month's President's Report provide another opportunity for the community to better understand the continued progress we are making on our journey.

Thanks to all members of the Algoma University family - your efforts, your innovation and your ongoing support for our students is nothing short of remarkable.

Chi-Migwetch,

Asima Vezina, *President and Vice-Chancellor*

### ***“Thunderbirds protecting Thunderbirds – Thunderbirds protecting Community.”***

The March 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.

#### SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS



PRIORITY  
#1

## 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 FTE (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 Networks on Northern Food Security and Renewable Energy

### What We've Accomplished...

Increasing  
**GLOBAL**  
ENGAGEMENT

**1 OF ONLY 7** universities  
TO EXPERIENCE GROWTH THIS YEAR

**OUAC 105** applications **UP**  
**4.4%**

#### Recruitment

- Increase in domestic 101 applications, one of only seven Ontario universities to experience growth this year
- Growth in OUAC 105 applications, 4.4%
- Enrolment growth in key markets – 14% increase from African markets
- International deposits on pace to hit Spring enrolment target
- A record, 178 participants attend virtual open house

#### Retention

- Continued outreach by Student Success staff to monitor the wellbeing of returning students

#### Vibrant Programming

- Pilot of Cultural Safety Learning Program
- Increased the number of students who participated in outbound student mobility projects from 11 students in 2019/20 to 99 students in 2020/21 (international virtual exchanges and course embedded projects)
- Successful transition of Experiential Learning activities to virtual environment
- Working with Northern College on Dual Credential Program in the area of computer science
- Planning underway to welcome a cohort of women learners from Pakistan in partnership with the Canada-Pakistan Business Council (CPBC)

### What's Next?

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

PRIORITY  
#2

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

Key Metrics/Areas of Focus

Student Experience

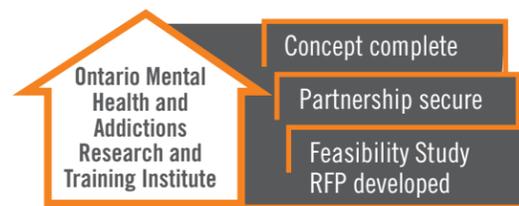
- Expand Brampton campus footprint
- Finalize and implement SSM Campus Master Plan (CMP) initiatives to support growth to 2000 FTE
- Student Health & Wellness Supports in place to ensure student needs are addressed during COVID
- Review of Student Success Central restrictions and planning for Spring and Fall semesters post-COVID

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

What We've Accomplished...

BRAMPTON SPACES COMPLETE	5	New classrooms
	1	Computer lab
	3	High-tech student meeting spaces
	1	Welcome Centre



Student Experience

- Complete review and cross-training of student-facing staff roles in Student Success Central (SSC); complete configuration of physical space allocated in SSM and Brampton to align with essential SSC personnel
- Brampton campus renovations (24 Queen St.) complete, including: five new classrooms, one computer lab, three high-tech student meeting spaces, and the Welcome Centre
- Renovations currently underway in Brampton (8 Queen St.), including: campus student centre and innovation centre
- 132 students participate in pilot Cultural Safety Learning Program
- Largest virtual student leadership conference in Algoma U history – 97 participants
- SKG, SASA and Anishinaabe Initiatives hosted a successful on-campus maple water harvesting event
- Virtual Drum Ceremony hosted by SASA and Anishinaabe Initiatives

Investments to Enhance Academic & Research Excellence

- Micro credentials development underway
- Improvements to Institutional Quality Assurance Program
- Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute
  - Concept complete and partnership commitments secured (AU, NOSM, SCAAT, SKG, SAH)
  - RFP for Feasibility Study developed

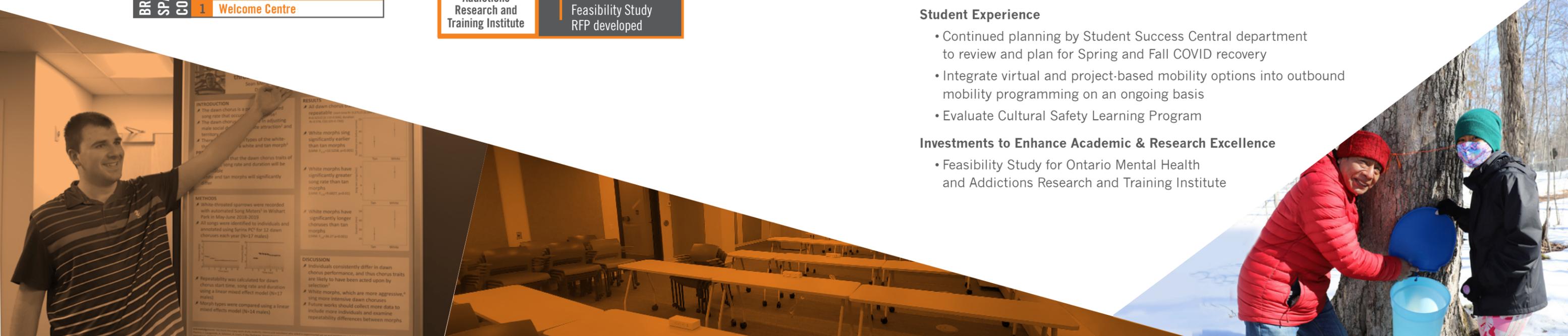
What's Next?

Student Experience

- Continued planning by Student Success Central department to review and plan for Spring and Fall COVID recovery
- Integrate virtual and project-based mobility options into outbound mobility programming on an ongoing basis
- Evaluate Cultural Safety Learning Program

Investments to Enhance Academic & Research Excellence

- Feasibility Study for Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute



# MUKQUA WAAKAA'IGAN

PRIORITY #3

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, cross-cultural learning and teaching
- Work with the five partners (SKG, SC, SAH, NOSM, AU) to develop the concept and a feasibility study for the Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute
- Recommit to the TRC's 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

## What We've Accomplished...

**2 PROPOSALS**  
co-written with SKG  
SUBMITTED FOR  
**FUNDING**  
CONSIDERATION

**SHIFT**  
\$350,000  
funding secured through  
**MCCONNELL**  
FOUNDATION

**MUKQUA WAAKAA'IGAN**  
Visioning document  
finalized

### Truth & Reconciliation

- Vision document for the Mukqua Waakaa'igan initiative finalized by working group

### Advance the University's Special Mission to cultivate cross-cultural learning

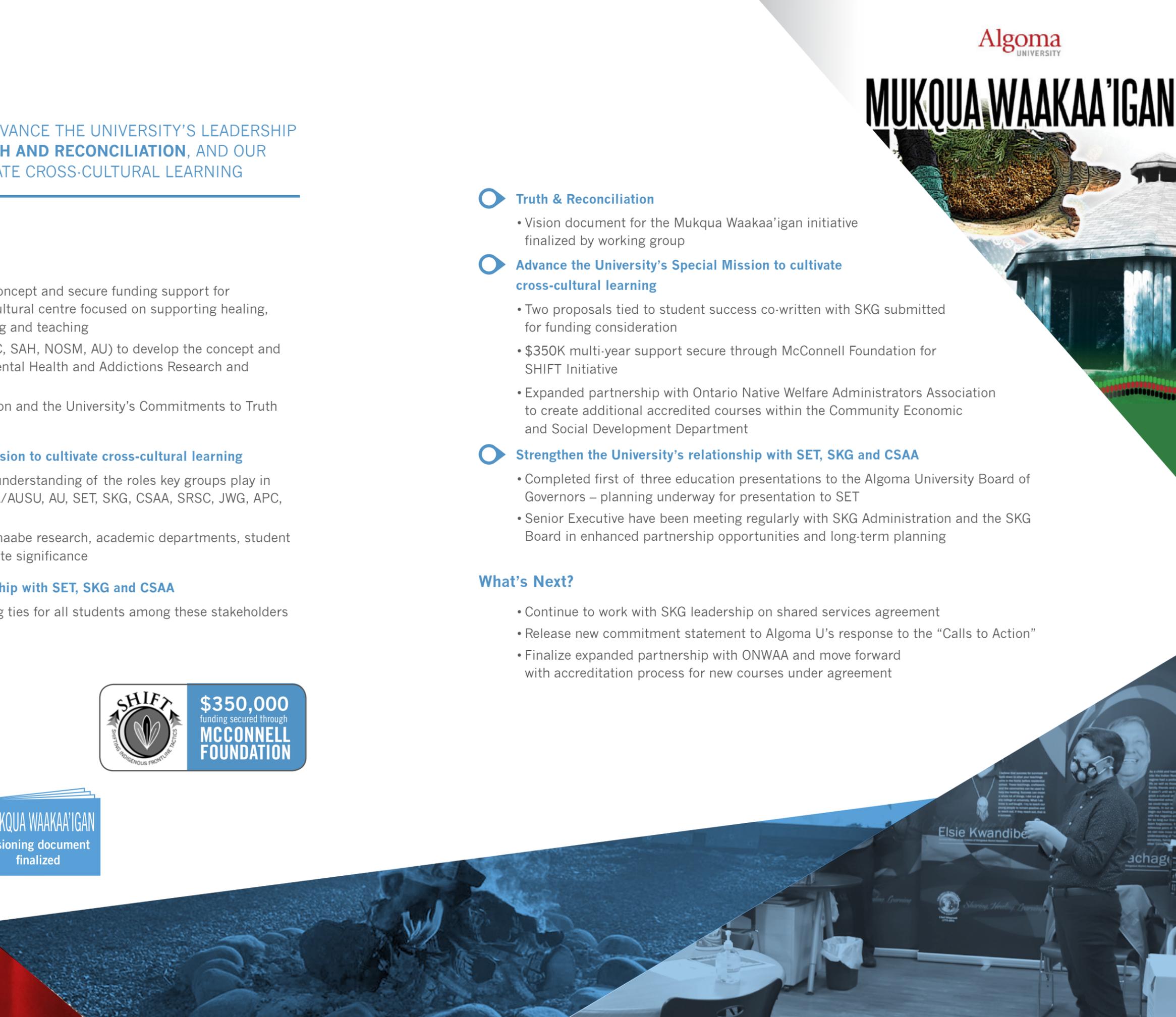
- Two proposals tied to student success co-written with SKG submitted for funding consideration
- \$350K multi-year support secure through McConnell Foundation for SHIFT Initiative
- Expanded partnership with Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association to create additional accredited courses within the Community Economic and Social Development Department

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

- Completed first of three education presentations to the Algoma University Board of Governors – planning underway for presentation to SET
- Senior Executive have been meeting regularly with SKG Administration and the SKG Board in enhanced partnership opportunities and long-term planning

## What's Next?

- Continue to work with SKG leadership on shared services agreement
- Release new commitment statement to Algoma U's response to the "Calls to Action"
- Finalize expanded partnership with ONWAA and move forward with accreditation process for new courses under agreement



PRIORITY  
#4

## 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 grants
  - » Increase EL learning opportunities for students

### What We've Accomplished...

**1<sup>st</sup>** Algoma U  
**RESEARCH  
AWARENESS  
WEEK**

**ecampus  
Ontario** **\$330,000  
DIGITAL  
CAPACITY**  
funding secured

- Successful hosting of inaugural Algoma University Research Week
- Planning finalized for Research Officer
- Established rationale for increased internal research funding effective 2021-22
- Developed draft research agenda for Ontario Mental Health and Training Institute
- Developed draft training agenda for Mukqua Waakaa'igan
- Dr. Nicola Shaw awarded a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Knowledge Synthesis – Skills and Work in the Digital Economy grant
- \$330K secured through eCampus Ontario to increase digital capacity

### What's Next?

- Build and expand research supports – expertise and funding
- Identify and develop research elements of key initiatives for the Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation
- Implement targeted initiatives within the Experiential Learning Strategic Plan
  - » Focused attention on expansion of virtual co-op work placements and internship opportunities
  - » Launch of Outcome Campus Connect, a new platform linking students to EL and job opportunities

### Research Week



Dr. Nikki Shaw



Dr. Myles McLellan



Dr. Brandon Schamp



Dr. Nirosha Murugan



Dr. Julian Hermida



PRIORITY  
**#5**

**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...**

**COMPLETED**  
  
**GAP ANALYSIS**  
of all corporate policies

  
Phase **ONE** complete  
**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

  
**5 YEAR**  
**MAINTENANCE PLAN FURTHER DEVELOPS**

- Further development of the five-year maintenance plan including itemized capital plan based on AU owned infrastructure
- Completion of the ERM workshops and continue to work on the Corporate Risk Management Framework
- Completed gap analysis of all corporate policies
- Phase One of leadership development
- LEAN training in understanding the Voice of the Customer
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee hosts extensive Black History Month activities
- 28 staff and faculty participants in pilot Cultural Safety Learning Program
- Minister Romano announces \$4.8 million in Provincial funding to Algoma University to address the financial impacts of COVID-19

**What's Next?**

- Outline a preliminary budget for each initiative within the 5-Year technology plan and develop a schedule based on strategic priorities
- Refinement of the risk mitigation plans
- Kick-off on the alignment of annual planning to achieve the strategic priorities (budget, human resources, leadership development, capital, risk management, academic and research plans) across the University
- Defining the senior executive succession process and the creation of career development opportunities for administrative employees
- LEAN training in Suppliers, Inputs, Process, Outputs and Customer (SIPOC) which will help a team identify all relevant elements of a process improvement project before the work begins





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