



**Northern  
COLLEGE**

# **BUSINESS PLAN**

2020-2021





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The background of the page is a photograph of a green kayak on a calm lake. The kayak is in the foreground, partially visible, with its green hull and black straps. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding environment. In the background, there is a dense forest of green trees along the shoreline.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2020-2021 Business Plan for Northern College is aspirational in nature: it provides us with inspiring elements challenging us to do more than is expected to raise the level of post-secondary education and corporate training for learners in the province of Ontario with each passing year. Our Business Plan also presents us with opportunity to see our College and the communities we impact continue to transform in ways we only dreamt of just a few years ago.

Along with four (4) strategic directions to guide Northern College's overall activity, we have nine (9) broad objectives under which our various initiatives are aligned. This allows us to move as one institution, and, elevates what we do to another level of achievement, guided by a promise to deliver the best college education in Ontario to our learners. It occurs at a time when the global call for and need to acquire talent has become particularly acute and increasingly competitive.

Northern College's 2020-2021 Business Plan is guided by the framework and strategic directions within our Strategic Plan, in accordance with the College's Strategic Mandate Agreement. The organization's key areas of strength and differentiation are articulated in these documents, as well as in our Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles, and Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Plan.

New this year are the College's additional plans providing further strategic guidance, including Academic, Recruitment, Marketing and Communications strategic plans.



## INTRODUCTION

In the region of Northeastern Ontario where Northern College campuses are primarily located, population demographics show an elementary and secondary school enrolment decline over the past number of years and continuing into the future, having a lasting impact on college and university enrolments. This trend is acute for Northern College, with its historically smaller population base and continued outmigration, particularly amongst the youth demographic. While the challenges this creates may seem daunting, Northern has positioned itself to offer unique and compelling program choices that attract learners from both near and far, positioning it as a key player in the region's attraction and growth strategies.

Following the unveiling of its Integrated Emergency Services Complex (IESC) in the Fall of 2018, Northern College launched a new era of tangible, technology-focused experiential learning that has seen a notable rise in enrolment for the College's suite of emergency services programming. Emergency services are now delivered in a state-of-the-art cross-collaborative new building

at the College's Timmins campus, with an operational fire station and emergency medical services ambulance base working on-site. Students have access to the latest in simulator training designed to instill essential, cross-disciplinary cooperation alongside emergency service professionals, as well as a new approach to on-site collaborative post-secondary education unique to the province, if not the country.

The Veterinary Science program offerings at Northern include compelling programs such as Wildlife Rehabilitation and Companion Animal Rehabilitation – the only programs of this kind available in the country; they meet a critical need to help develop clinical expertise for treating wildlife and companion animals. Institutional distinctiveness such as these is further outlined in Northern College's Strategic Mandate Agreement with the Province of Ontario and demonstrates the lasting impact of Northern College on a sustainable workforce.

Northern College's four (4) strategic directions of Accessibility, Signature Programs, the Northern Experience and Indigenous Perspectives provide the lens for this year's Business Plan. The plan is ambitious and builds on the strength of our Vision and Mission to drive down the strategic path we have previously defined, to better post-secondary training in the North for all learners. In so doing, we strengthen the communities we serve which need highly skilled workers. Our students are confident in applying what they have learned in our classrooms, shops and labs, to their new work environments. Placements are a key part of our College programs, providing experiential learning while integrating concepts learned in the classroom with exceptional learning experiences.

Northern College has experienced a dramatic increase in international student enrolment following the implementation of short- and long-term strategies designed to grow its appeal to global learners. The accompanying growth in revenues has

helped to enhance the facility upgrades needed for aging buildings, some of which have been in existence since the College first opened its doors when the province created the Ontario College system, over five decades ago.

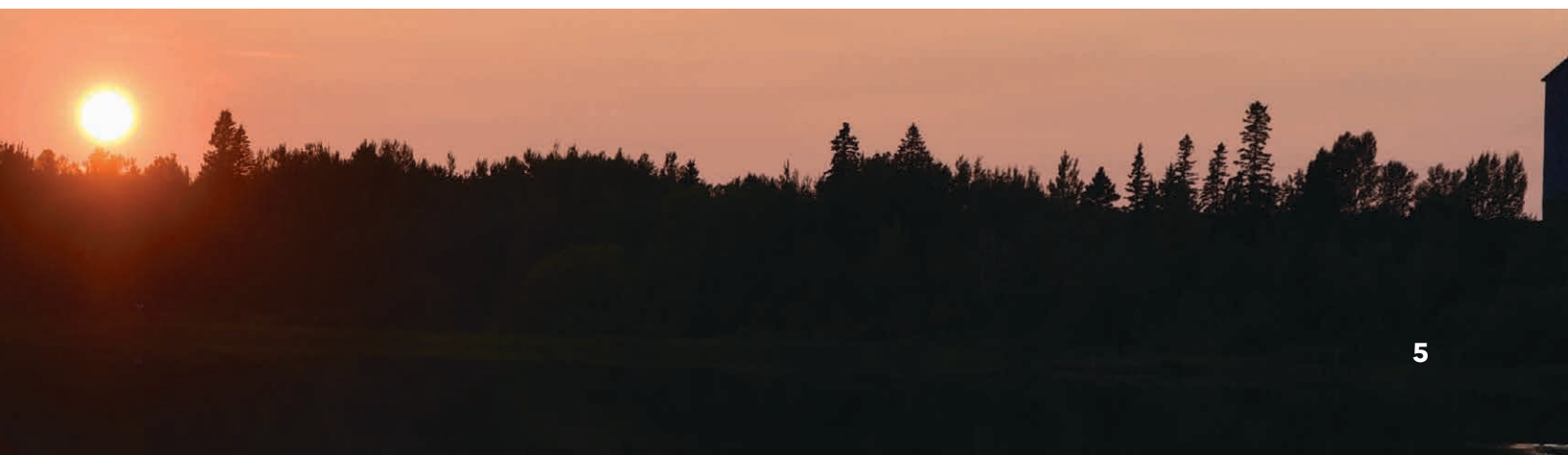
Impacts on the organization felt during the spring of 2020 with a COVID-19 outbreak regionally and an ensuing pandemic were unexpected with widespread disruption of operations at the College. Due to the institution's advanced use of digital learning resources, Northern quickly responded with strong leadership coupled with the high engagement of faculty and dedication of staff, and was able to pivot from primarily in-person curriculum delivery methods to remote learning in an unprecedented amount of time that saw most students graduate with an uninterrupted academic year.

Harnessing its small and agile nature, the College also maximized opportunities afforded during COVID-19 to increase the diversity in its learning approaches and grow its communications efforts with responsive approaches and ongoing contingency planning. Nevertheless, domestic and international enrolment is expected to decline considerably due to the changing global impacts, both short- and long-term, of COVID-19.

Northern College continues to focus on improving inclusion and supporting Indigenous programs, services and activities at our campuses, which contribute to it becoming the 'College of Choice for Indigenous Peoples.' Compelling programming in the Moosonee region is seeing learners empowered and engaged, with trades being explored after the successful pre-health program delivery in collaboration with First Nation communities and Indigenous learners.

As we move forward with the 2020-2021 Business Plan, we do so in a financially accountable manner, presenting a balanced budget based on a growth model following protocols of the provincial government, as well as those of our Board. We are responsible for the funds entrusted to us by our learners and the Ministry, as well as the public which funds part of our operations.

The College continues to embody the core tenets we have always held that motivate us to be at our best, no matter the challenges we face in what has become an unprecedented year. We serve our communities with a commitment to a unique and rewarding Northern Experience with the highest-quality post-secondary education and training. This allows learners to overcome barriers they may face by supporting and empowering them in a diverse number of ways using innovative and creative approaches. Doing so, we can improve the skills needed for our workforce, and offer pathways to success through academic upgrading, advising and financial supports. Our Employment Options locations and staff also deliver career services to employers and learners alike, and we are not ceasing in our quest to be the most recognized innovative deliverer of learning in Northern Ontario, now and well into the future.











## BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES

Northern College's 2020-2021 Business Plan serves as a roadmap to elevate the College's daily operations over the next fiscal period – from April 2020 until March 2021. This plan illustrates how the College continues moving forward in the upcoming year. In this way, it serves to reinforce our commitment to meeting the goals and objectives outlined within the College's Strategic Plan.

Measurable operational outcomes of initiatives in this plan are linked to our strategic goals and objectives to keep us on a path to realizing our vision of success for our northern communities through dynamic learning and mutually beneficial partnerships.

The current document outlines the major initiatives aligned with each of our strategic directions that move our Strategic Plan forward.

### VISION

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Success for all through learning and partnerships.

### MISSION

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Excelling in quality, accessible education through innovative programs, services and partnerships for the benefit for northern communities.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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- Learning for success
- Career opportunities through innovative education and transferable skills
- Practical, hands-on experiences
- Value for your investment
- Support for lifelong learning
- A healthy, adaptive and progressive organizational culture

### OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR 2016-2020

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The success of the students and communities we serve remains at the heart of everything that Northern College does and is the reason that the organization exists. With this in mind, all actions outlined in our Business Plan roll up into the following goals that have been identified as the four major strategic directions to help frame the College's objectives and initiatives as we implement our vision.

## The four (4) strategic directions of Northern College are as follows:

### ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

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We are committed to maximizing educational access, engagement and choice for our communities. We help our learners succeed by integrating innovative delivery methods with technology and a comprehensive suite of student support services.

### SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

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We are building a reputation as a world-class provider of selected programs that leverage the strengths, partnerships and assets of each of our four (4) campuses (Haileybury, Kirkland Lake, Moosonee, Timmins), while continuing to respond to the specific education and training needs of Northern Ontario communities.

### THE NORTHERN EXPERIENCE

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Our goal is to help learners achieve their full potential by providing unique academic, social and real-world experiences. We are committed to providing an environment that embraces continuous improvement, innovation and ongoing quality management.

### INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

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We appreciate and respect the Indigenous worldview and its contribution to contemporary thinking. We facilitate opportunities in which different perspectives are presented, valued and understood, so our learners are prepared for an increasingly diverse workplace.









## ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

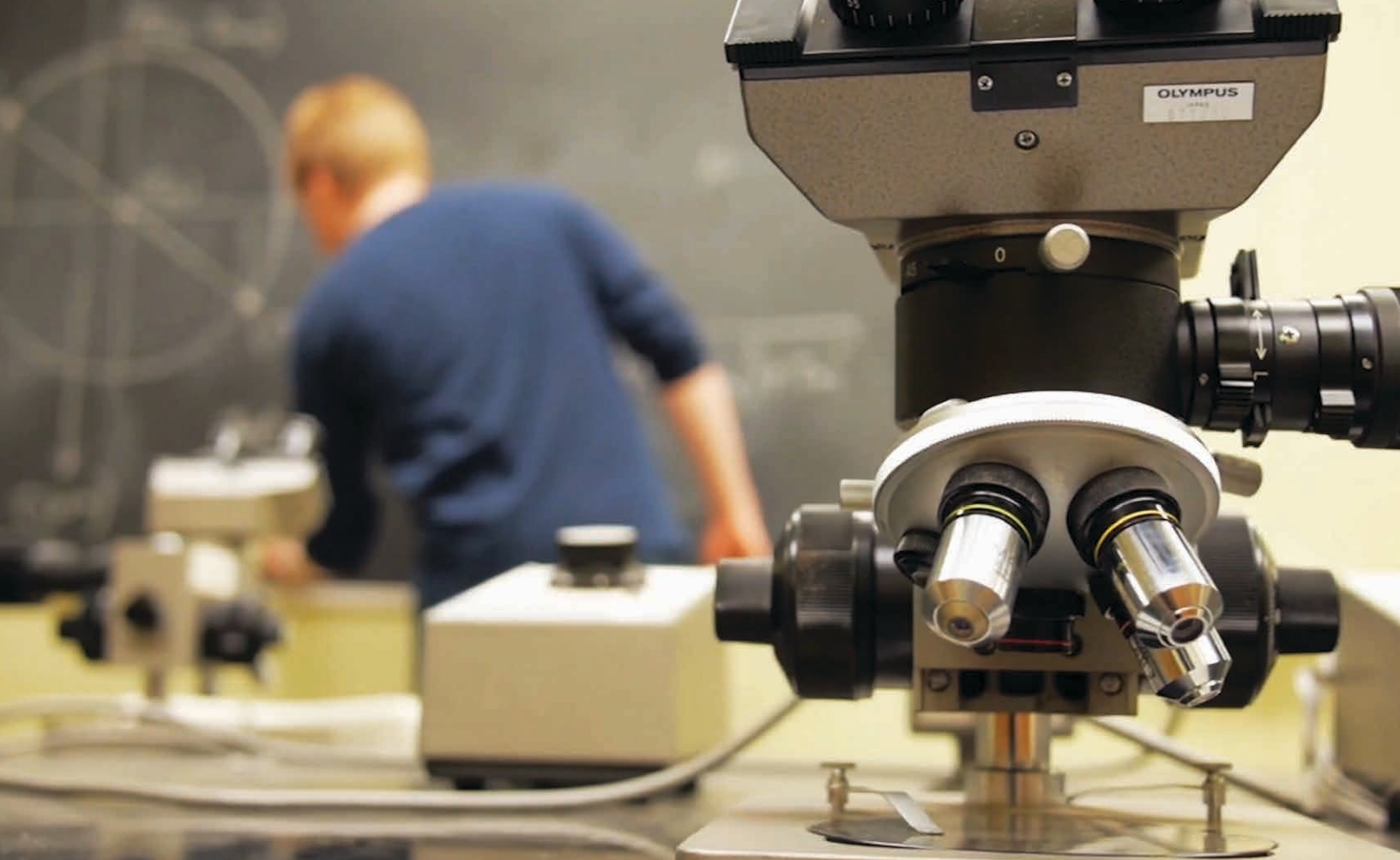
In the pursuit of new and in-demand programming, the Northern College School of Trades and Technology continues to expand apprenticeship programs to include an Auto Body Collision and Damage Repairer program. This apprenticeship opportunity fills a much-needed gap in the community for auto body repair work. Building off the success of longstanding programs such as Heavy Equipment Mechanic and Motive Power Technician programs, Northern College is working to secure Training Delivery Agent (TDA) status for this program and begin planning and renovation processes to accommodate the unique needs of this apprenticeship offering.

At Northern College, our employees are our most valuable resource, and faculty are the direct link with our learners. As our organization grows and we bring on new full-time faculty along with part-time faculty, the need to mentor is an opportunity to invest in these rich resources for the long-term benefit of our learners. Mentoring will be focused upon enhancing individual's strengths as educators while recognizing the subject matter expertise they bring to the College.

With the recent provincial decision to allow Ontario Colleges to offer stand-alone nursing degrees, as a College, we must examine and explore pathways for our Nursing Faculty to further their education in the form of Doctorate or PhD degrees in Nursing. Faculty with these credentials are vital to a College's ability to deliver the research, teaching, and leadership in scholarship required as per the accreditation process by the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN). This process or pathway may include potential partnerships with other smaller, northern colleges that are also in need of increasing access to terminal degree prepared Nursing faculty.

After more than a decade of success, the College's Northern Training Division is rebranding and revamping its suite of Common Core programs with a specific focus on Underground Hard Rock Miner and Surface Diamond Driller Assistant Common Core offerings. This rebrand allows these successful programs to continue to adapt to a changing educational landscape while positioning them to meet the growing needs of the mining and exploration industries. Infusing the input and expertise of new and longstanding industry partners, the rebrand will capitalize on a longstanding legacy of quality programming and work-ready graduates.





As Northern College works to better serve all learners, a renewed focus on the experiences of those who have already chosen to study with us includes enhanced student services. The provision of self-reflective spaces for students improves quality of life while learning. This initiative involves expansion of mental health and support services, including enhanced cognitive behaviour therapy available to students as Northern College continues to build on its reputation as a student-focused academic institution.

The pilot of an Income Tax Preparation Clinic, hosted by the CRA and overseen by faculty on the Timmins campus provides students the convenience and cost-savings of having their taxes completed onsite, while providing another experiential learning

opportunity for business students. To further protect students and employees in an increasingly uncertain world, the launch of a new communication software “Alertus” will facilitate emergency notifications college-wide. Further to these various supportive initiatives, an exercise being undertaken in exploring a number of beautification projects at its campuses, including development of a concept plan for a revamped main entrance at the Timmins campus, welcomes and inspires all learners and visitors to campus.

Through continual development, expansion and focus on in-demand skill-set programming, Northern College continues its efforts to carve out unique skills-based niches to better attract potential students from around the globe.

Guiding the College is our passion in being on the forefront of addressing evolving expectations for access to post-secondary education, corporate and apprenticeship training in support of student diversity, success and mobility. To achieve that goal, the College embraces new technologies and approaches while remaining open to the input of industry and partners to be ever-responsive in a modern and rapidly-changing market.

## SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

We continue to build on our reputation as a world-class provider of selected programs, leveraging the strengths of each offering and campus, while responding to the educational and training needs of northern communities. As Northern College continues to invest in marquee programming which define the institution's educational strengths, and characterize each of its four campuses; work is well underway to ensure longstanding cornerstones continually evolve responding to an ever-changing industrial sector and credentialing climate.

While responding to the ever-changing demands of a highly competitive environment, Northern College is upgrading campuses to better suit the needs of high-demand programs and courses. This includes exploring redevelopment of the oldest wing of the Timmins campus, the B-Wing. The initial phase consists of engaging a consulting team to review current and future programming needs as well as spatial challenges in order to shape recommendations for future development. This proposed project vastly improves the facility's functional use and aesthetic appearance, increasing the College's desirability to prospective students.

Work is also underway to assess and update facilities at the Haileybury campus to accommodate the high demand of its suite of exemplary Veterinary Sciences programs. The phase consists of engaging a consulting team to review the Veterinary Sciences programs' current and future programming needs, as well as developing new space to accommodate an expanded Student Learning Centre. This phase seeks to incorporate additional classrooms, administration and faculty spaces in a new modern facility expansion, further enhancing the campus's desirability and aesthetics. With its highly-rated programs in this area, the new space would provide a major upgrade to the Haileybury location that contributes to the ongoing success of this field of study. The expansion project on the Haileybury campus includes shared community Library space with Temiskaming Shores Public Library. At our Kirkland Lake campus, the Library will be co-located with Learning Innovation and Technology (LIT) and faculty support services, resulting in increased synergies among those departments.

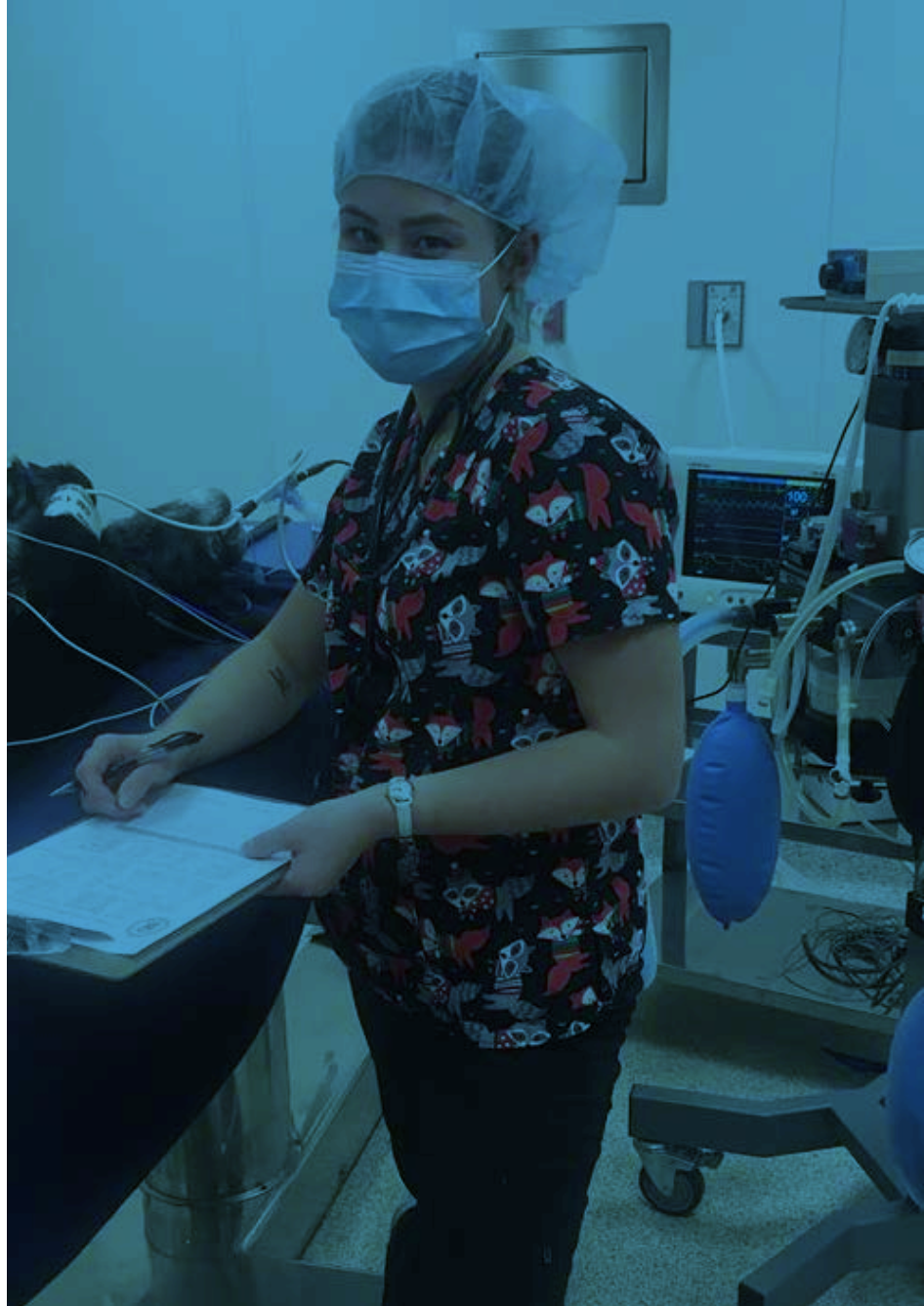
To meet the growing needs of the College's potential students, an action plan capitalizing on the increasing demand for educational micro-credentialing is part of the College's continued efforts to develop enhanced educational tools. Northern College will lead the way in developing flexible offerings for students. A more flexible learning approach utilizing micro-credentialing processes provides continuous growth, improvement and adaptation to economic development needs and industry demand. This is no small undertaking and will require not only an audit of the College's existing programming for viability, but in-depth exploration of how micro-credentialing fits within the existing framework for degree recognition.

With a focus on international recruitment, the College is establishing targets and timelines for the strategic directions of the 2020-2021 International Strategic Operational Plan. These targets increase annual international enrolment numbers, promote feature programs to international markets, and expand overall program offerings available for international enrolment. With these approaches, Haileybury and Kirkland Lake campuses are better positioned to attract international students from global markets.



Through investing in the facilities required to expand and modernize its Signature Programs, Northern College ensures future and current learners have access to the top quality education they need to remain competitive right here in Northern Ontario. This is being done while continuing to expand and enrich curriculum applying the most modern teaching techniques, exploring the implementation of micro-credentialing, and infusing course curriculum with just-in-time subject matter informed from community and industry partners on Program Advisory Committees (PAC's) along with continuous feedback from current and graduated students.

In these and others ways, the 2020-2021 Business Plan demonstrates Northern College's commitment to continual growth and improvement for not only the benefit of students, staff and faculty, but for the communities where its campuses and service locations are located. The developments and expansions underway provide a path of continued growth and future sustainability for the College, where local investment substantially contributes to the economic development and healthy growth of Ontario's northeast through stronger and more modern campus learning complexes and teaching facilities.





## THE NORTHERN EXPERIENCE

Northern College helps learners achieve their full potential by providing unique academic, social, and real-world experiences as part of the Northern Experience. As the College continues to expand programming options for students, the organization continues developing and implementing fundamental shifts to its portfolios and platforms to better respond to the College's needs in all aspects of operations.

Capitalizing on the Northern Experience, collaborative work cross-functionally, particularly with Marketing, Communications and External Relations, Recruitment, Admissions, Academic Program areas, Student Life, and the Northern Training Division tailors marketing and promotional offerings to position the College as a deliverer of a unique learning experience in communities located in Ontario's Northeast.

Doing so highlights the College as an enticing destination for potential students to find an education, secure a job and set down roots deep into this area of the province, thereby helping to retain a greater number of learners. Such an approach serves the dual purpose of promoting both the College's offerings while growing the region with community attracting strategies that blend learning with an invigorating Northern Experience.





With regard to External Relations and the College's profile and partnerships in community, the organization is intentional about formalizing its stakeholders to further benefit the success of both students and workplaces. These strengthened existing and new-found connections see more closely connected placement and funding partners, as well as donor and sponsorship opportunities that strengthen Northern College as a committed community stakeholder and central hub for the professional and academic betterment of the region we call home.

As part of the ongoing effort to provide students with the highest quality experiential learning opportunities, the School of Business and Community Services is building strong connections and support from local stakeholders including the Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board (CDSSAB), local and district school boards, the YMCA and North Eastern Ontario Child and Family Services (NEOFACS) in supporting the operation of an Early Childhood Education lab on the Timmins campus to serve the needs of local children and families.

The programs offered within this lab reflect the application of the most progressive child and family developmental theories and assist in the growth and development of parents and families in a safe and respectful environment under the supervision of College faculty and community partners, while Northern students are given the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired through

their studies. In this way, students in the Community Services field are given unique opportunities to put their skills to the test in a safe and supportive environment while families learn the newest forms of parenting for developing tomorrow's leaders.

Repurposing of the former lower F-wing of the Timmins campus into an impressive Innovation Hub allows students to learn with state-of-the-art equipment and new facilities while working alongside industry partners in applied research projects to better prepare them for their future careers. The iHub provides Northern College students and community stakeholders the opportunity to bring their innovative ideas to life through the combined efforts of the department of Applied Research, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, along with Plant and Property, and Learning Innovation and Technology departments.

The College embraces the newest trends in applied research and development by investing in this Innovation Hub. Together these internal College departments have worked diligently to create new space, soon to be renamed the I-wing. The impressive space encompasses over 23,000 square feet of shops, labs, classrooms, and collaborative research pods, as well as an entrepreneurial incubator. This facility is to be used primarily for research and development, technology development and adaptation, industry partnerships, and student experiential learning. The project has been in the works since 2018 and construction of the Innovation Hub is set to be complete by June 2020.

To continue enhancing the quality and breadth of the Northern Experience, an interdepartmental initiative is underway to weave the value proposition of being a Northern College student more deeply into the day-to-day operations of each facet of the College. All College operations – spanning academic programs, innovation projects, facility improvements and marketing initiatives work closely together to further ensure a seamless exceptional learning experience that can only be found in the North.

Unique experiences, coupled with consistent customer service delivery, demonstrate the organization's commitment to providing an environment that truly embodies the values and principles underpinning the entire College approach to post-secondary, apprenticeship, and corporate training.

## INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES



Northern College continues to engage in meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous peoples, communities and organizations, and support the development and success of Indigenous learners by undertaking several compelling initiatives that position the College as an educator of choice for Indigenous learners.

Work and planning are now underway to provide learners at the Timmins campus with access to a Sacred Garden. The garden is a place for quiet reflection, learning and gathering and is created in partnership with local Indigenous groups to expand upon the College's Indigenous-specific support areas. Doing so provides learners a tangible connection to community and culture.

Northern College is committed to assisting Indigenous learners while they navigate their learning journeys. Building upon the creation of a

distinct Indigenous leadership position within the College, we are expanding cultural support services to students with an Indigenous support hub on all campuses. By centralizing Indigenous advising and support services, the College is better able to serve the needs of Indigenous learners to further ensure both their academic and social success as they complete their post-secondary education and apprenticeship training.

In aspiring to become the College of Choice for Indigenous learners, Northern College is allocating additional resources to create impactful learning experiences and advance integrated curriculum development that greater reflect Indigenous values and teachings as well as incorporate Indigenous knowledge and worldviews. Plans for this strategic direction include identifying how to increase employee diversity with respect to Indigenous representation within staff and faculty groups, improving inclusion throughout the organization.

This ongoing process towards greater inclusion and diversity includes several projects designated for exploration and completion within the 2020-2021 academic year, including efforts to make trades labs more accessible to students attending a variety of courses at the Moosonee campus. In providing trades accessibility to James Bay coastal communities, Northern College aims to further expand



its efforts to provide the latest in technology and training to remote communities with unique identities and socio-economic realities.

In an effort to further cement our commitment to Indigenous learners, Northern College is working to create detailed graduate profiles of successful students. These profiles are to depict what our students know and understand beyond their vocational learning, and, where relevant, speak to their cultural identity. This advances the organization in becoming Ontario's Indigenous College of Choice.

Furthering our mission to provide the highest quality education to all students in Northeastern Ontario, Northern College understands that remote delivery and student-centred educational approaches work best for in-community learning.

Supporting the development of learning communities within Northern's catchment area, especially remote Indigenous communities along the James and Hudson's Bay coasts, is a respect for and integration of Indigenous knowledge and learning strategies along with other innovative approaches. In this way, Northern College can empower and encourage Indigenous learners to further their formal education while retaining their culture and strengthening their families, futures, and communities, and most importantly, themselves.





## CONCLUSION

Northern College's 2020-2021 Business Plan integrates the elements of multiple strategies that guide and inform us as we lead the way in post-secondary education as well as corporate and community training in the North. These include, but are not limited to, Northern College's Strategic Plan, Strategic Mandate Agreement and Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Plan. We are teaching the values, customs, laws and practices of meaningful employment and active citizenship in a great nation as we work closely with students and employers to create impactful experiences that meet the needs of the Canadian regional workforce.

All of our Business Plan initiatives have defined, measurable outcomes. These initiatives are regularly reviewed through established management processes during the current fiscal year to assist us in realizing our vision and achieving our strategic objectives. Knowing what success looks like – how it is defined, is as important an exercise as achieving our goals. Measurable outcomes that have meaning to our learners are what propels us to be more than what we have been before, and we are inspired to go the distance and reach our goals motivated by the responsibility of educating and training future and current workers contributing to our regional economy.

Northern College remains rooted in its ability to strengthen communities by creating a dynamic learning environment for the benefit of all students who chose Northeastern Ontario to learn. We are growing the North by training the workforce needed to sustain and lead it, and we know that our students and graduates are contributing to our region in ways that have impact.

We believe in our students – those who have passed through our halls, classrooms, shops and labs, or joined us online to learn, and we believe in the positive impact we are having as they go on to better our world.







Our approach is aligned and integrated with the organization's fabric of operations while adhering to binding policy directives set out by the Ministry governing us to move forward in a responsible and effective manner, knowing that the privilege of training and educating our learners rests with us.

This Business Plan, as with all things we do, is executed in a fiscally responsible manner that maximizes use of the College's resources. Key investments are being made in critical infrastructure renewal to keep our College buildings safe, refreshed and inspiring. As a learning organization, the training and development of our staff to support the

implementation of the initiatives outlined here as well as projects that contribute to or sustain new sources of revenue are undertaken to provide invigorating experiences for all that seek to work and learn with us.

We embrace the challenges and rewards of doing so, and are privileged to operate in Northeastern Ontario where we can help strengthen communities and grow our province and nation. Globally, our responsibility has expanded to welcome international learners to our region and with that growth comes the knowledge that adaptability, presence of mind and innovation are not only key to the long-term success of Northern College, but to the health, growth and quality of life of the region we call home.

We are proud to be North, and proud to be Northern. It is our hope that, in reviewing the initiatives outlined within this document, you understand why that is, and we welcome you to join us in growing, strengthening, and supporting our College.

# Proud to be North. Proud to be Northern.

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