

## **Algonquin College receives \$35 million in federal funding for Environmental Demonstration Centre for Construction Trades and Building Sciences**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ottawa, April 9, 2009** – Cheers echoed through a construction trades classroom at Algonquin College's Ottawa campus today as Transport Minister John Baird announced \$35 million in funding from the Government of Canada for the construction of the college's new Environmental Demonstration Centre for Construction Trades and Building Sciences.

"This funding is a tangible way for the federal government to address the current and future need for skilled tradespeople, in Ottawa, in Ontario, and across the country," said Algonquin College President Robert Gillett.

The funding is the latest government funding announced for the \$104-million project, which will begin construction this fall and begin to house students in the fall of 2011. A campaign is underway which will see the community provide additional funding to further enhance the project.

"Today's announcement is a welcome example of how governments and the private sector can work together to build a stronger future," said Gillett. "This funding would not have been made possible without the previous funding by the Province of Ontario, the strong partnership between Algonquin and the City of Ottawa, and the passionate support of the construction industry and its workers in Eastern Ontario."

"When the economy needs a shot in the arm it all starts here at Algonquin College," said Minister Baird. "By investing in skilled trades, we are putting more tradespeople to work to help stimulate our local economy and we are investing in the future of the trades, by helping to make Ottawa a centre of excellence for trades professionals."

The 142,000-square-foot building will bring all of the college's trades education programs under one roof. The LEED-Gold certified building will also be a showpiece and teaching laboratory for best practices in sustainable construction. The project will also integrate all of the college's construction and building-related programs in one facility for the first time.

"There's no question that current economic conditions are changing employment patterns," said President Gillett. "However, when Ontario and the country emerge from this recession, we know there will be a shortage of skilled tradespeople." Gillett pointed out that the construction of the site itself will employ 800 workers.

"We know that more than half of Ontario's skilled trades workers will likely retire in the next 15 years," said President Gillett. "It is imperative for projects like this to be supported, and we're grateful to the federal government and our other partners for helping to train the next generation of tradespeople."

Construction of this project is the largest of three major projects currently underway at Algonquin College. The college's Pembroke campus will be relocated to a downtown site in a \$36-million project slated for opening in 2012, and a new building to replace the existing Perth main building also planned for completion in 2011.

- 30 -

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