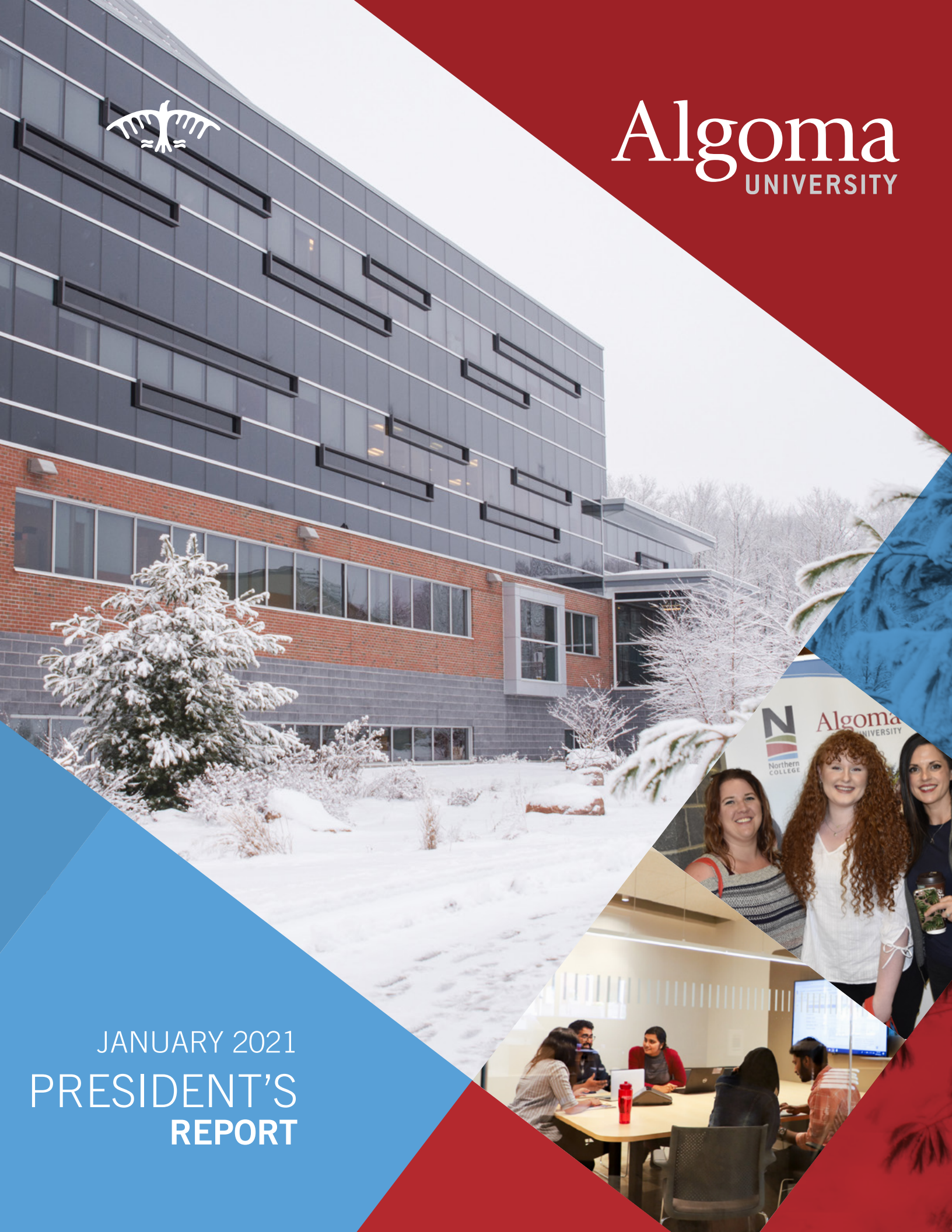




Algonquin

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JANUARY 2021
PRESIDENT'S
REPORT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity, not a threat." (Steve Jobs)

Revitalization efforts underway at Algoma University have generated tremendous results, drawing increased attention across the communities we serve and the post-secondary sector at large. Student enrolment continues to increase, academic and research programming continues to expand, our Special Mission has raised AU's national profile and our economic and social impact continues to grow within the regions we serve - most notably in [Sault Ste. Marie](#) and [Brampton](#). Even the challenges brought on by the unanticipated global pandemic in 2020 have not thwarted our resolve. While resilience is part of our institutional DNA, the spirit of innovation is at the heart of our efforts.

It has been said that "innovation is where imagination meets ambition." Our ambition to grow to 3000 students by 2023 will be shaped by new and innovative programming and research initiatives, expanded and modernized facilities and new and strengthened partnerships.

Our focus over the next several months will center on some key projects. Our efforts to innovate and modernize are supported by generous funding contributions from student, provincial, national and local levels of government, including;

- **\$1.7 M SpeakEasy Renewal - Algoma University Students' Union**
Redesign and refresh of the SpeakEasy, led and funded by AUSU, on the SSM campus is integral to the overall strategy of improving student spaces as per the Campus Master Plan.
- **\$1.5 M Facility Renewal - Ministry of Colleges and Universities**
Enables Algoma to move forward with a range of much-needed facility upgrades that support the first phase of implementation of the [2020 Campus Master Plan - Shingwauk Site, Sault Ste. Marie](#). Ultimately, the work made possible through the generous increase in support will improve accessibility, enhance the overall academic and non-academic student experience, and decrease the carbon footprint of our campus.
- **\$3 M eLearning Virtual Campus - Northern Ontario Heritage Funding Corporation**
This [funding](#) supports the continued implementation of our eLearning strategy and virtual campus development which will help ensure Algoma is able to provide high-quality, student-centred university programming opportunities to a growing number of students living in remote, rural, and Indigenous communities.
- **\$ 1.9 M School of Computer Science & Technology Funding (SCST) - FedNor**
Funding supports SCST efforts to increase programming and research opportunities for students and faculty. The upgraded SCST lab will include two innovation and collaboration zones designed to ensure creativity, project innovation, product development and idea incubation.

- **\$7.3 M Brampton Campus Expansion - City of Brampton**
Multi-year funding will transform the size and scope of Algoma's campus in this growing community. Expansion supports the School of Computer Science and Technology, School of Business and Economics as well as the development of the Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation.
- **\$150 K for CityStudio Sault Ste. Marie - City of SSM, Economic Development Fund**
The CityStudio concept, pioneered in Vancouver, is a proven and innovative model of experiential education and civic engagement that has been embraced by a number of cities across Canada.

The momentum generated during 2020 has positioned Algoma well for 2021 and beyond and innovation is at the heart of our success. The five identified institutional priorities highlighted within the January 2021 President's Report will continue to guide our journey.

Believe in our future – believe in each other – believe in yourself.



Asima Vezina, President and Vice-Chancellor

"Thunderbirds protecting Thunderbirds – Thunderbirds protecting Community."

The January 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**, and 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.

A range of highlights are noted within the body of the report.

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 (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...



Recruitment

- 2020-21 domestic enrolment growth at all three campus locations: SSM 3.5%, Brampton 60%, Timmins 15%
- Record number of international tuition deposits for Winter 2021 academic term - over 1,100 deposits received
- Successfully launched new graduate certificate in Project Management
- Finalization of Winter 2021 strategy to support domestic enrolment and public awareness in Brampton/Peel

Retention

- Streamlined registration processes implemented
- Focussed outreach to continuing students to support their success

Vibrant Programming

- Funding received from Employment and Social Development Canada/Universities Canada for a student mobility innovation project entitled: *Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Virtual Exchange Project: Internationalizing the campus and increasing global connectivity*. Eight international partner universities engaged
- Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approved a new Sociology Minor in Health, Wellness and Addictions
- Innovative partnership with Myant for experiential learning opportunities in textile computing

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

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 (Brampton)

What We've Accomplished...

eLearning STRATEGY
\$3M in NOHFC funding
SECURED

SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
\$1.9M in FedNor funding for
RENOVATIONS & EXPANSION

20 NEW
eLearning courses

\$1.7M RENOVATION
SpeakEasy & cafeteria
UNDERWAY

Student Experience

- \$1.7M renovation of SpeakEasy and cafeteria seating area underway. Funded by AUSU, this initiative will greatly transform this area into a dynamic social space to enhance student experience on the SSM campus
- All in-person events to support student experience efforts successfully converted to virtual formats. As just one example, over 60 students participated in an engaging virtual Diwali Celebration where students shared what this celebration meant to them while showcasing traditional customs and dance
- The Algoma Mentorship Program re-launched this Fall with 20 pairs of senior students helping new students with their university experience. The re-launched program has been well received with plans to expand in Winter 2021

Investments to Enhance Academic & Research Excellence

- 20 new courses added to eLearning inventory during Fall 2020, supporting programs in Business, Economics, Biology and Computer Science
- \$3M in funding secured through NOHFC to support implementation of eLearning strategy and virtual campus development
- Secured \$1.9M in FedNor funding to support renovations and expansion for School of Computer Science and Technology
- Newly established Dr. Robert Ewing Geography Lab & Aki Stewardship Centre opened during a virtual [dedication ceremony](#) to support programming provided by the Dept. of Geography, Geology and Land Management

What's Next?

- Finalization of Student Success Strategy
- Continued implementation of CMP initiatives approved for Sault Ste. Marie
- Move forward with new academic programs to be offered at the Brampton and Timmins campuses in 2021 and beyond
- Establish academic program elements for the Centre for Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation
- Advance academic program development for Five-year eLearning Strategy
- Establish academic program elements for the Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute and Mukqua Waakaa'igan initiatives
- Development of "Off-Campus Housing Supports" to help offset reduced residence capacity and need for resources on all three campuses



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...



Truth & Reconciliation

- Two sessions of Shifting Indigenous Frontline Tactics (SHIFT) with Sault Ste. Marie Police Services completed Nov/Dec 2020; 94 personnel trained to date, two additional sessions planned for 2021
- Working Group established to finalize development of plans for [Mukqua Waakaa'igan](#)
- Feast for Mukqua Waakaa'igan pole, celebration of Winter Solstice and the protocol for taking the Tamarack pole out of the ground, and bringing it into Algoma University until the spring season arrives
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work tied to the Special Mission with a cross-section of staff, students and faculty sharing in the responsibility of our commitment in this area
- Recommitment Statement to the TRC's Calls to Action has been drafted

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

- SRSC awarded City of Sault Ste. Marie Medal of Merit
- The President, in consultation with SKG, has approved a second hire in Anishinaabe Studies, to be posted in the new year
- Secured agreement to facilitate new SHIFT training for Mattawa Women's Resource Centre
- University beginning process of implementing and training in restorative practices/ approaches across the university; RFQ being developed by HR

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

- SKG/AU Board and Senior Leadership in visioning and strategic planning exercise (Feb-Apr)
- Joint Working Group (AU, SET and SKG) focussed on strengthening the relationship between all partners

What's Next?

- Finalize shared services agreement between AU and SKG
- Release new commitment statement to Algoma U's response to the TRC's "Calls to Action" (June 2021)
- Finalize Request for Proposal (RFP) and execute Feasibility Study for development of Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute
- Mukqua Waakaa'igan project working group finalize concept goals, program development and other objectives

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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...



- Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig and Laidlaw Foundation grant to support land-based learning: Dr. Andrew Judge (Anishinaabe Studies)
- AU faculty have joined two thematic research networks of the University of the Arctic consortium: Northern Food Security, Renewable Energy
- 50% increase (over 2019-20) in faculty applications for external research grants
- Transition of many EL experiences to a virtual work-from-home format
- Six students completed new for-credit virtual internships in the School of Business and Economics
- New internship course introduced in two Graduate Certificate programs in the School of Business and Economics increases EL opportunities for Certificate students
- Sault Ste. Marie City Council approved \$150K to support the development of a CityStudio. The CityStudio concept, pioneered in Vancouver, is a proven model of experiential education and civic engagement

What's Next?

- Build and expand research supports - expertise and funding
- Identify and develop research elements of key initiatives including the:
 - » Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute (Jan 2021)
 - » Mukqua Waakaa'igan (March 2021)
 - » 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 (Jan 2021)



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...

Student Success & Advancement Teams

Algoma Public Health
CHAMPIONS

Mental Health and Wellness

CATEGORY

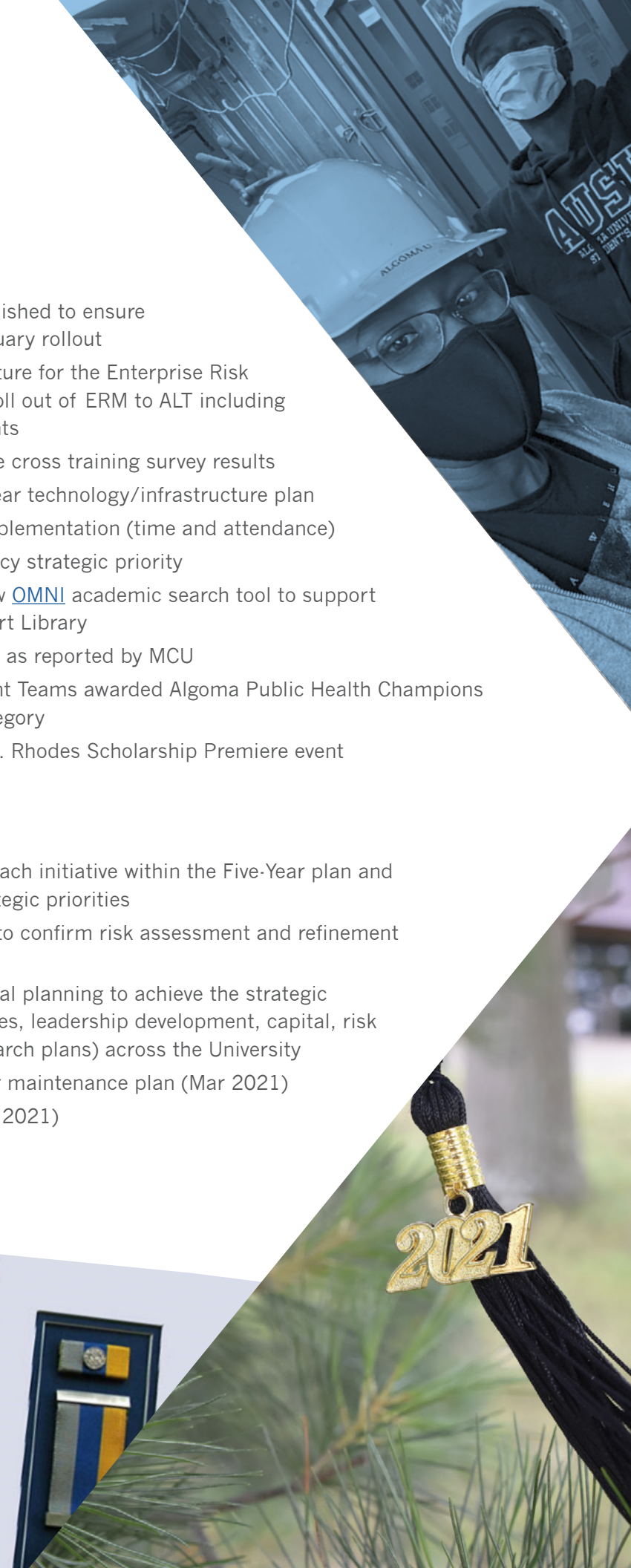


GRADUATE
EMPLOYMENT RATE **96%**

- Annual planning framework established to ensure all milestones are tracked for January rollout
- Developed draft governance structure for the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework, roll out of ERM to ALT including survey to validate past assessments
- Review and validation of employee cross training survey results
- Gap analysis to support for five-year technology/infrastructure plan
- Training on Phase Two of ADP implementation (time and attendance)
- Kickoff on the operational efficiency strategic priority
- Successful implementation of new **OMNI** academic search tool to support modernization of Arthur A. Wishart Library
- Grad employment rate of 95.65% as reported by MCU
- Student Success and Advancement Teams awarded Algoma Public Health Champions – Mental Health and Wellness category
- \$50K raised during virtual John R. Rhodes Scholarship Premiere event

What's Next?

- Outline a preliminary budget for each initiative within the Five-Year plan and develop a schedule based on strategic priorities
- ERM workshops with risk owners to confirm risk assessment and refinement of 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
- Development of a capital five-year maintenance plan (Mar 2021)
- Review of corporate policies (Mar 2021)





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