

# Algoma UNIVERSITY



NOVEMBER 2024 REPORT  
TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



With the end of the Fall semester approaching and a New Year on the horizon, I want to thank Algoma students, faculty, and staff for their hard work and dedication. Wishing all the best to our students as they prepare for their final exams and papers during these last weeks.

**“There are no shortcuts to any place worth going.” BEVERLY STILLIS**

Algoma continues to be guided by the implementation of our *2023–26 Strategic Plan* and our new vision: *leading meaningful change for generations to come*. While the immediate future will require Algoma to adapt to significant changes being imposed by the federal and provincial governments, I am confident we will navigate these changes while remaining focused on our Special Mission, the long-term strategy and vision of the University.

Starting in 2025, we understand the federal government will reduce study permits further by 10%, while 12% of all study permits will be reserved for Master’s and PhD students. This change requires Algoma and all other higher education institutions to take time to pause and analyze the financial implications.

Algoma University’s financial health remains stable because of a deliberate decision in 2019 to grow international enrolment and introduce more degree and high-demand programs, increase the faculty base to attract larger numbers of domestic and Indigenous students, and increased research and innovation funding opportunities. Having said this, today, the future outlook of universities in Ontario has become harder to foresee, particularly within the restraint of frozen domestic tuition and domestic corridors (from 2018 until the present).

Like other universities, Algoma is waiting for more clarity from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), as well as the province for our Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) allocations that will allow us to understand the full financial impact IRCC’s changes will have on the University’s budget.



My report to the Board of Governors provides an overview of the mitigation and advocacy strategies the Executive Team and I have implemented to adapt to the changes in federal immigration policy, while also highlighting new partnerships, recent achievements and our approach to 2025 winter enrolment.

## **New Prudent Fiscal Outlook and Hiring Criteria**

Prior to the federal changes, Algoma University proactively initiated strategies to mitigate the financial risk of potential changes to Canada's immigration policy. This included stabilizing enrolment in the Fall of 2023, particularly in Senate-approved certificates and degree programs. We are currently aiming to maintain enrolments of 2,000 - 2,300 in Sault Ste. Marie and 4,500 - 5,000 in Brampton. We expect to sustain this enrolment for at least three years, positioning Algoma University as a mid-sized institution of 6,000 - 7,000 students.

In addition to stabilizing enrolment, Algoma is introducing more Master's programs, shifting the balance of certificates to a heavier emphasis on degree programming. We are preparing to introduce 2-3 e-learning undergraduate Computer Science degrees in high-demand areas and a variety of micro-credential certificates to the Professional and Continuing Education program.

As careful stewards of Algoma's finances, the Executive Team has recommended that the continued freeze on tuition and domestic enrolment combined with the drastic reduction in international study permits requires Algoma University to adopt a new prudent fiscal outlook to protect our financial stability.

To this end, the Executive Team is implementing new hiring criteria that will be applied to vacancies and new positions, including the new positions approved in the 2024-2025 budget. The criteria will help ensure that new positions and vacancies that directly impact student success, significant workload, and Decolonization continue to be prioritized.

## **Student Headcounts 2024-25**

As anticipated, Algoma is observing the expected trends with international student enrolment declining for the 2024-25 academic year, while domestic enrolment is experiencing modest growth. This aligns with our projections for stabilizing enrolment across our campuses.

Algoma University is bolstering its recruitment efforts through various on-campus and outreach programs. These include comprehensive campus visit programs such as personalized campus tours, Grade 12 Days, and Specialist High Skills Major visits to offer prospective students firsthand experience of university life. The university is also hosting guidance counsellor events, expanding its college outreach, and directly engaging with students and educators to build strong connections and increase enrolment. These initiatives ensure that prospective students can explore all that Algoma has to offer in a more personal and interactive setting.



## Strategic Advocacy

Over the past month, with the support of the Vice President of Growth, International & External Relations (VPGIER) and the External Relations Team, I have actively engaged with Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) from all three campus communities to ensure they are fully aware of the potential financial impacts of upcoming decisions related to 2025 Provincial Attestation Letter allocations and domestic corridor funding. The meetings were successful. All MPPs are supportive of Algoma's position that Algoma should have increased corridor funding for Brampton's inclusion. They have agreed to advocate on Algoma's behalf with their provincial colleagues.

We also engaged with the Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, Ontario Minister of Finance, during the same period. We met with senior staff from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Premier's Office to raise further awareness of Algoma University's important role within Ontario's higher education sector and its reliance on the PAL allocation for Brampton's future and the North's prosperity. We also discussed the challenges Algoma is facing in light of the federal government's significant reduction in international student study permits and PGWP eligibility.

I held similar meetings while I was in Ottawa attending the annual Universities Canada Fall Executive Heads meeting. I had the opportunity to meet with several Members of Parliament (MPs) who will be critical to our long-term advocacy efforts as we head closer to an anticipated federal election.

## New Partnerships

Algoma is establishing partnership agreements with the GTA colleges, including Centennial, George Brown, Humber, Seneca, and Sheridan. Other colleges that are interested in working with Algoma include Fanshawe and Georgian College at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

We have also had interest from two Indigenous Institutes, including Anishinaabek Educational Institute and Six Nations Polytechnic, to explore pathways from their diploma programs to our degree programs. We currently have a long-standing relationship with Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig and the Oshki-Wenjack Education Institute.



## Recent Highlights

In October, I attended a community planning session hosted by Algoma University's Department of Psychology members to inform the development of a [Master's-level psychotherapy training program](#) focusing on mental health care delivery in Northern Ontario. Attendees provided valuable input that will shape the program's structure, curriculum, practicum opportunities, and professional development offerings.

Plans are underway between the Faculty of Computer Science and the National Centre for Immersive Technologies. This new and developing program and training area will provide Algoma graduates with the required skills for this emerging AR/VR/XR technology field.

The John Rhodes Scholarship Dinner Planning Committee hosted the largest fundraiser in the event's history and raised a record-breaking \$262,000 for this important scholarship. These scholarships help students such as this year's winner, Lisa Brisson, stay local, and we are grateful to the broader community for their continued support of our university and our students.

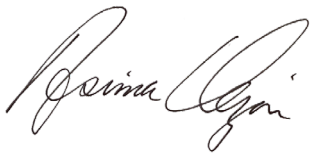
Algoma University is once again on the Maclean's University Rankings. While Algoma has only recently made the listing of Macleans, we are proud to hold top rankings in the country for scholarships and bursaries for 2025 and the top ranking in "operating budget," which measures the money available at each school for current expenses compared to the size of our student body. We will continue to prioritize areas where we want to improve our scores.

Finally, Algoma's '[My Mission](#)' digital marketing campaign won five golds at the 12th Annual Education Digital Marketing Awards competition in the United States. Congratulations to the Marketing Team and everyone who worked on this impactful, award-winning campaign. An in-depth marketing campaign analysis will be provided to the Board during the January meeting.

As we approach the holiday season, I want to wish our entire Algoma U community and their families a wonderful and restful break. I am pleased to invite our entire Algoma University community to our upcoming annual Holiday Social events across all three campuses, starting in Sault Ste. Marie on December 5, Timmins on December 11, and Brampton on December 13.

I hope you can join us as we share the season's joy. Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and joyous holiday season.

Chi-miigwetch, merci, and thank you for all you do for Algoma U.



**Asima Vezina**  
President and Vice-chancellor



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