



Interim President and Vice-Chancellor's Report to the Board of Governors

March 2025

Message from Interim President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Donna Rogers

Boozhoo, Bonjour, Hello

Spring is a season of renewal, growth, and transformation. As the days grow longer and nature awakens, it serves as a reminder that change is not only inevitable but also full of possibility.

I would like to thank Rob Battisti for assuming the role of Chair of Algoma's Board of Governors (the Board) following the announcement of Kelli-Ann Lemieux's leave of absence. Rob is a skilled and steady leader who brings a wealth of experience and a strong commitment to Algoma University. I am confident that his leadership will help guide us through this period of change and opportunity.

As Board members know, Dr. István Imre was appointed Vice-President Academic and Research (VPAR) earlier this month, and Martin Bayer will officially join the Algoma University community as our new Vice-President, Nyaagaaniid, Anishinaabe Initiatives, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, starting tomorrow.

Recently, Algoma University has been navigating the financial challenges affecting all post-secondary institutions. Federal cuts to international student permits, along with chronic provincial underfunding of colleges and universities, have only added to the uncertainty.

Algoma University's operating budget is close to being finalized for the Board's approval. I would like to share with the Board that all budgeting decisions are being guided by the need to protect Algoma University's sustainability while focusing on academic excellence, strengthening core programs, preserving talent, and prioritizing employee well-being.

2025–26 Budget Outlook and Planning

Like many universities across Canada, Algoma U is facing challenges that require careful decision-making. Between the federal government's cuts to international student enrolment and the province's sustained underfunding, universities and colleges are in a tough spot. We must be agile, responsive, and adaptable, and that's the approach Algoma University is taking.

As I shared in my 2025 Outlook Report with the Algoma University community, the University's finances are projected to remain stable for the remainder of the 2024-25 fiscal year, with a projected budget surplus. Although the University is not currently projecting a deficit, we anticipate a reduction in revenue for the 2025-26 fiscal year, caused by an anticipated 50%



reduction in full-time international student enrolment for 2025–26, as well as the PACE program PACE Project Management program.

New Streamlined Department Budgets

As part of our efforts to protect Algoma University's long-term future, we are implementing a series of budget adjustments across all departments. These measures focus on optimizing resources, improving efficiencies, and aligning spending with institutional priorities. Through these efforts, the internal Finance team is forecasting \$15 million in cost savings, ensuring a more sustainable financial foundation for the University moving forward.

Temporary Voluntary Exit Incentive Program

As announced last week, to support the University's cost-saving efforts, the Human Resources Executive Committee of the Board of Governors has approved a temporary Voluntary Exit Incentive Program (VEIP). This employee-initiated program will allow eligible employees to voluntarily resign or retire from the University during the 2025 calendar year.

Eligible employees who choose to participate in the VEIP will receive a lump-sum retiring allowance, calculated and prorated based on their years of service, up to a maximum of one year's base salary (excluding benefits). The allowance will be prorated according to the employee's length of service. It is important to emphasize that the VEIP is entirely voluntary, and the decision to apply rests solely with the employee.

New Master's Programs

Algoma University is expanding its graduate studies portfolio by introducing three innovative master's programs in Brampton and Sault Ste. Marie. Launching in Fall 2025, the Master of Global Business and Economy (MGBE), Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA), and Master of Science in Computer Science (MScCS) will provide students with advanced, industry-aligned expertise in global business, data analytics, and computing.

These unique program offerings will help meet the rising demand for skilled professionals in finance, policy analysis, consulting, international business, data analytics, market research, software development, IT, and computing research—supporting industry readiness and regional economic growth across the province.

Launch of the new Student Information System (SIS)

On March 10, 2025, the Student Information System Project Team officially launched the new Student Information System (SIS), marking a significant milestone in modernizing student services. This new system streamlines key processes, including course registration, academic



planning, and student records management. The transition represents a significant step forward in enhancing the student experience and improving operational efficiency.

Research and Innovation

Since January, the Office of Research and Innovation (ORI) has been focusing on their mandate to enhance grant success, support Indigenous research, advance data management and commercialization, foster partnerships, and address research space needs.

I am pleased to report that the ORI has hit the ground running and has relaunched several internal funding competitions, including the Northern Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)–Workforce Development Program, Algoma University Promising Research Grant (AUPRG), SSHRC Institutional Grant (SIG), Algoma University Student Conference Fund (AUSCF), and has supported the administration of the Canada Graduate Student Scholarships Master’s (CGS-M) program, as well as the submission of over ten external funding proposals.

ORI has also conducted a comprehensive review of internal practices and processes to identify opportunities for improvement, with a focus on strategic priorities and institutional/regulatory compliance. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Crystal Williams, Manager of the Research Office, and Dr. Brett Goodwin, Associate Vice-President Research and Graduate Studies, who are leading the development of the ORI.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to all Algoma University Board members for their dedication to our great institution.

Chi-miigwech, merci, and thank you for all you do for Algoma University.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. Rogers, Ph.D.
Interim President and Vice-Chancellor
Algoma University