

# Interim President and Vice-Chancellor's Report to the BOG

*December 2025*

## Message from Interim President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Sheila Embleton

Boozhoo, Aanii, Bonjour, Hello,

As we approach the end of the Fall 2025 semester, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been both a challenging and meaningful term for our university community. Across all campuses, we've continued to advance Algoma University's Special Mission through collective effort, innovation, and resilience.

This report highlights key developments, including Algoma's performance in the 2026 Maclean's University Rankings, the Gi'ga-ozhichigemin Gathering, the National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association (NALMA) Graduation Gala, and other initiatives that demonstrate our ongoing commitment to student success and academic excellence.

However, I would like to start by turning my attention to the federal government's recent budget announcement. Budget 2025 portends another significant headwind that all post-secondary institutions will have to contend with. Specifically, while the sector was already tracking well below the previously projected 305,000 permits for 2026, the federal government has now confirmed that new study permit allocations will be limited to 155,000. This is not an abrupt drop from current trends, but it does formalize a much lower ceiling and reinforces that conditions are unlikely to improve in the near term. The announcement adds to the complex and unpredictable environment universities have been navigating since early 2024 and signals the direction the federal government intends to take on both immigration and student visa numbers.

I want to assure you that we are carefully reviewing these latest changes to understand their potential impact on our enrolment. We are also actively strategizing to ensure we adapt effectively, with a focus on maintaining stability, supporting our students, advancing our long-term priorities, and seeking other markets for growth.

As we look ahead to the Winter 2026 term, our focus remains on supporting students, strengthening our programs, and continuing to deliver an exceptional learning experience, even amid ongoing change and difficult financial circumstances.

I want to extend my warmest wishes to you and your families, and I wish you a restful and joyful holiday season. Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to Algoma University.

## 2026 Maclean's University Rankings & Methodology

Algoma University is once again featured among the top 20 of Canada's Best Primarily Undergraduate Universities in the 2026 Maclean's University Rankings. This recognition

highlights our commitment to fostering a supportive community across all our campuses for current and future Thunderbirds. I am particularly delighted that Maclean's has recognized Algoma University as the best public university in Canada for scholarship opportunities. We will continue to invest strategically in areas that respond to evolving student needs. One example is our recent investment to expand Learning and Accessibility Services to meet growing student demand and enhance data systems to better inform future student supports.

Algoma's reputational ranking remains relatively modest, which is understandable for a young and growing institution that became independent only in 2008. As one of Canada's smallest universities, with a focused access mandate and a developing national profile, Algoma continues to build awareness across the country in comparison to larger, longer-established institutions.

Over time, as Algoma continues to expand its academic offerings, research activity, and community impact, I am confident that broader recognition of the University's strengths will grow. I invite everyone to also review [Maclean's rankings methodology](#) to have a better understanding of how Algoma U and other institutions were ranked.

### Gi'ga-ozhichigemin Gathering

The Office of the Nyaagaaniid and School of Social Work hosted the Gi'ga-ozhichigemin Gathering: "Together, We Will Do It!". The two-day event, held at our Sault Ste. Marie campus, brought together First Nations leaders, educators, and community partners to advance Indigenous-led approaches to child well-being, education, and social work training.

Funded through the Ontario Postsecondary Access and Inclusion Program (OPAIP), the event reflected the University's commitment to reconciliation, decolonization, and anti-oppressive practice through relationship-building and community-driven curriculum development, featuring discussions on Indigenous-led education, child well-being, blended learning, and culturally grounded approaches to social work.

### National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association (NALMA) Graduation Gala

The Department of Geography, Geology and Land Stewardship proudly celebrated graduates of its Level 1 Professional Lands Management Certification Program (PLMCP), who were formally honoured at the National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association (NALMA) Graduation Gala on October 22, 2025, in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Offered through Algoma University in partnership with NALMA, the PLMCP provides land management professionals with a strong foundation in stewardship, Indigenous and cross-cultural contexts, and applied experience through land-based learning and knowledge keeper presentations.

## Recent University Achievements

**Algoma University Model United Nations Conference:** Algoma University successfully hosted its inaugural Model United Nations (MUN), a two-day conference designed for local high school delegates and led entirely by Algoma students on the Sault Ste. Marie campus.

The MUN was organized by Algoma University students in the Law and Politics Student Society (LPSS), in collaboration with the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students' Association (SASA). Delegates from the White Pines Collegiate and Vocational and Korah Collegiate and Vocational schools took on the roles of global representatives, engaging in debates and solution-focused discussions on real-world Indigenous issues.

During the conference, delegates examined topics including health care, education, social services for Indigenous communities, and the impacts of climate change. Through active debate and diplomacy, they developed actionable resolutions to address these pressing issues.

**Master of Psychotherapy Information Session:** Last month, the School of Psychology hosted an Information Session in Sault Ste. Marie that introduced its newly approved Master of Psychotherapy (MAP) program, the first of its kind in Northern Ontario. The successful event welcomed both internal and external community members who were interested in learning more about the new graduate program's structure, admission requirements, and opportunities for clinical practice and community-based internships.

Grounded in community collaboration and designed to meet the region's growing mental health needs, the Master of Psychotherapy program will prepare graduates to provide high-quality, compassionate clinical care while strengthening the resilience and well-being of northern communities.

**Musicians in Residence:** Algoma University's Musicians-in-Residence ensemble, the piano duo, "Duo Turgeon", successfully showcased the University's Music program through a series of distinguished international performances throughout the year, including their Japanese debut in Tokyo and Osaka.

Invited by Steinway Japan, Edward and Anne Louise Turgeon performed to sold-out audiences, marking a significant milestone in their celebrated career and highlighting Algoma U's growing presence on the global arts stage.

Following their performances in Japan, the Duo Turgeon continued their 2025 international tour with a featured performance at the prestigious Chicago Duo Piano Festival, where they also led a masterclass for young pianists enrolled in the Music Institute of Chicago's Duo Piano program.

Chi-Miigwech, merci, and thank you for all you do for Algoma University. Again, please have a restful holiday season!