



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

April 2026

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

Boozhoo, Aanii, Bonjour, Hello,

I am pleased to share my April report to the Board, which highlights a number of key initiatives, achievements, and updates that have taken place across our campuses over the past several months. Together, these developments reflect the continued work underway across the University to support student success, strengthen partnerships, and advance our institutional priorities.

As we approach the final day of the Winter 2026 term, I would also like to acknowledge our students who are currently completing their final assignments and examinations. This is an important period in the academic calendar, and I wish all students the very best as they complete their courses and conclude the term.

Looking ahead, we will soon welcome the start of the Spring 2026 semester.

Shirley: An Indian Residential School Story

Algonia University's Anishinaabe Initiatives team hosted the Sault Ste. Marie community for a profound celebration of storytelling, resilience, and alumni excellence on March 4. The event marked the official launch of *Shirley: An Indian Residential School Story*, a powerful new narrative penned by Algonia University alumnus Joanne Robertson in collaboration with Dr. Shirley Horn.

Dr. Horn, a Cree Elder and Residential School Survivor, holds several prestigious roles and honours, including being an Honorary Doctorate holder and Algonia University's first-ever Chancellor, recent recipient of the Order of Ontario, and co-founder of the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association (CSAA).

The launch took place on the very grounds where this history unfolded, providing a unique opportunity for the campus community to witness the reclamation of narrative. Through this work, Dr. Horn provided an important and heart-filled perspective on the Indian Residential School experience, a truth that only those who walked these halls can truly share.

On behalf of Algonia U, we extend our deepest congratulations to Dr. Shirley Horn on another remarkable achievement. Her dedication to preserving and sharing these essential truths continues to be a cornerstone of healing and education for our entire community.

Black History Month

In February, Algonia U marked Black History Month with a series of initiatives across its Sault Ste. Marie and Brampton campuses that brought students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community





members together for learning, dialogue, and celebration. Organized by the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and the Anti-Black Racism Working Group, in collaboration with the Algoma University Students' Union (AUSU), the Black Student Association, the Institute of Peoples, Territories and Pedagogies for Peace (IPTP), and Student Life, this year's programming reflected the national theme "30 Years of Black History Month: Honouring Black Brilliance Across Generations - From Nation Builders to Tomorrow's Visionaries".

Signature campus-wide events featured cultural performances, Afro-Caribbean refreshments, and vendor tables highlighting cultural and artistic works, including pieces from Afro-Colombian communities. The celebrations also welcomed visiting musician Victor Hugo Rodriguez from Guapi, Colombia, who joined students on stage to share artistic perspectives and contribute to discussions on Black diasporic and territorial experiences, resistance, and creative expression.

These events created opportunities for the University community to engage with and celebrate the diverse histories, cultures, and contributions of Black communities.

Student Awards Week

This year, Algoma University introduced Student Awards Week on March 9, a new week-long celebration dedicated to recognizing student achievement across academic excellence, leadership, and community involvement. Expanding beyond a single awards ceremony, the initiative created additional opportunities to celebrate student accomplishments and highlight the lasting impact of donor generosity.

During the 2025-26 academic year, nearly 3,960 students received awards. I extend a sincere thanks to the many donors whose continued support makes these recognitions possible and congratulate all award recipients on their achievements.

Alum Wins Gold at Winter Olympics

On behalf of the entire Algoma University community, congratulations to Brad Jacobs and the entire team on their outstanding gold medal performance at the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games. His achievement is a remarkable moment for Canadian curling and a source of immense pride for Algoma University and the Sault Ste. Marie community.

As an alumnus of Algoma University and a previous winner of a gold medal in curling at the 2014 Winter Olympics, Brad exemplifies the values of determination, leadership, and excellence that define the Thunderbird spirit. We are incredibly proud to celebrate this moment with him and to recognize all that he continues to achieve.

I would also like to extend congratulations to alumni E.J. Harnden (Bachelor of Business Administration - Marketing, 2006) and Ryan Harnden (Bachelor of Arts Geography, 2015) following their victory at the 2026 Montana's Brier last month. Competing as members of Team Manitoba, the Harnden brothers secured the national title with a 6-3 win over Alberta in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.





The Harndens have established distinguished athletic careers, most notably as Olympic Gold Medallists from the 2014 Sochi Winter Games. Their continued success on the national stage brings significant pride to the Sault Ste. Marie community and Algoma University.

MoU Signing with OLG

Last month, Algoma University and the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG), whose corporate headquarters are based in Sault Ste. Marie, established a partnership focused on advancing student learning and development. The framework supports key opportunities for Algoma U students through work-integrated learning, cooperative education, and career development opportunities, while also addressing OLG's talent development and workforce needs.

Aligned with Algoma University's Special Mission and OLG's commitment to advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, the partnership emphasizes culturally relevant experiential learning grounded in respect, reciprocity, and Indigenous Ways of Knowing. In addition to work-integrated learning, the partnership will also support regional economic development, while respecting Indigenous data governance principles and community priorities.

April 2026 Hybrid Forum

We are preparing for our hybrid Forum on April 28, 2026, which will provide staff and faculty with a clear overview of the latest developments across the post-secondary sector. The Senior Executive team will share updates on fiscal year-end, the 2026-27 budget, as well as other university-related and sector-related items.

The Forum will be held in person at the Sault Ste. Marie campus, with employees in Brampton and Timmins able to join virtually via Zoom. I encourage all members to participate in this session. As always, the Forum will include time for questions and discussion, and along with the rest of the Senior Team, look forward to hearing your perspectives.

Recent University Achievements

Algoma University's Hunger Freeze: As part of the 63rd Annual Bon Soo Winter Carnival, Algoma University's Hunger Freeze brought together more than 265 participants, with 62 Algoma U students, staff, and faculty joining in a powerful act of solidarity to raise awareness and funds in the fight against food insecurity. The initiative surpassed its fundraising goal, raising well over \$2,000 and over 5,000 food items in support of the Algoma University Students' Union (AUSU) Food Pantry, which provides critical support to students experiencing food insecurity on campus.





Thunderbirds Wrestler Wins Silver: The Algoma University Thunderbirds varsity wrestling teams delivered a strong performance at the 2026 USPORTS Wrestling Championship, highlighted by a silver medal finish from first-year student athlete Brandon Carrillo. The national championship, hosted by Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, took place over two days on February 27 and 28, and featured top collegiate wrestlers from across Canada. Algoma University qualified 10 student-athletes for the championship, marking the highest number of qualifiers in the program's history.

Nuance Exhibition - Visual Arts Students: Emerging artists from Algoma University's Visual Arts program took centre stage as Nuance, a temporary student exhibition, launched at the Sault Ste. Marie Museum between March 12 - April 2. The exhibition showcased original work by Visual Arts students and marked the culmination of the program's annual Group Exhibition and Professional Practices course.

Featuring pieces from students across multiple levels of study, Nuance invited the community to explore how young artists interpret uncertainty, memory, and shifting perspectives in today's complex world. With everything from digital art to oil painting, attendees could explore the delicate, wide-ranging nuances expressed across a variety of media and styles.

North American Model United Nations: Algoma University marked a milestone in February as its largest-ever delegation of 16 students participated in the North American Model United Nations (NAMUN) conference at the University of Toronto. Established in 1985, NAMUN is Canada's oldest annual university-level Model United Nations conference.

Accompanied by their faculty advisor, Dr. Monika Thakur, from the Department of Law and Politics, the students immersed themselves in high-level simulations addressing some of today's most pressing global challenges, including international trade, sustainable development, climate change, and maritime piracy.

Among the highlights, Meilannie Frost, an Algoma University Political Science student, received an award for her strategic and collaborative participation at the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

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

