

U.K. campaign challenges biases against vocational learning

Participants at next month's Colleges Ontario Conference will get a first-hand account of an innovative campaign in the U.K. that confronts parents' prejudices against applied and practical learning.

Vanessa Miner, Director of Marketing and Communications at Edge – a London-based organization that promotes vocational and hands-on education – will deliver a keynote address about Edge's Another Way Forward campaign, which challenges the conventional views of parents that university is a better choice for their children.

"The unfortunate truth is that this prejudice has resulted in thousands of young people being directed down the wrong route every year – and therefore turned off learning," according to a campaign summary, posted on Edge's website. "In directing people down the wrong path, many parents are influenced by ingrained prejudices against vocational qualifications - with 35 per cent believing that vocational learning is just for people who don't do well at school. Our new campaign seeks to tackle this prejudice head-on."

The campaign combines TV, print and on-line advertising that challenges parents to

stop thinking of academic qualifications as the only route to success.

In the TV ad, a father and son are in a car, the younger behind the wheel, nervously executing a series of dangerous maneuvers, including one into oncoming traffic, as commanded by the father. The ad ends by asking: "Are you pushing your kids in the wrong direction? An academic route isn't always the best option."

The campaign is supported by a website with links to a wide variety of career and education information.



“One in five young people every year think they are being led down the wrong educational path”



Are you pushing your kids in the wrong direction?
www.edge.co.uk

*U.K.-based advocacy group, Edge, launched Another Way Forward, a campaign that challenges traditional views about postsecondary education.
Image: Edge*

Centennial to launch new advertising program

The explosion of new media in recent years has given advertisers a complex range of choice when it comes to spending their marketing dollars.

Now, Centennial College has developed a program to create specialists that will help companies develop media buying strategies to give them the most bang for their advertising buck.

The college's new Advertising Media Management program, to be introduced this fall, is the first of its kind in strategic media planning and buying.

"The advertising industry is demanding that

graduates be trained in research and analysis," says program coordinator Colette Brochu. "There's so much money spent on advertising, clients want to be assured their placements are effective."

Brochu says planning media buys is an increasingly specialized skill that requires knowl-

"Media are constantly evolving. There are new outlets that didn't even exist five years ago."

**- Colette Brochu
Centennial College**

edge of target customers, consumer behaviour and measuring tools.

"Media are constantly evolving. There are

new outlets – such as transit television and cell phone content – that didn't even exist five years ago," says Brochu.

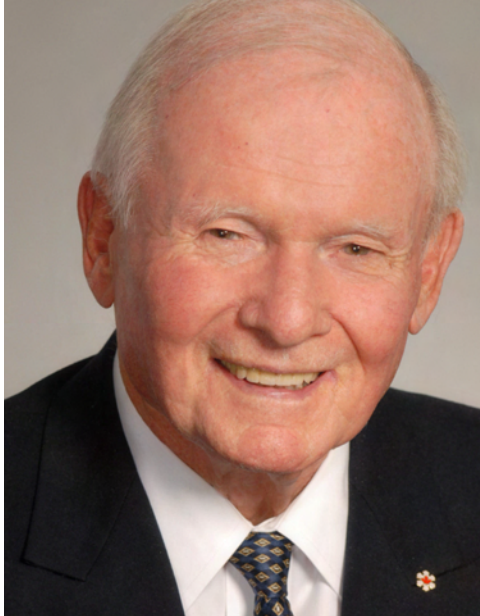
Centennial's graduate certificate program is intended for college and university grads who may have worked in the field or who have an interest in advertising.

The program includes a 15-week field placement arranged with the assistance of the college. Students get to work at an agency or research company doing real tasks for real clients.

Applications for the program are now being accepted. Centennial also offers a one-year specialty in Advertising Account Management and a three-year postsecondary program in Advertising.

National strategy vital for advanced education

BY WILLIAM G. DAVIS



A Companion of the Order of Canada, William G. Davis served as premier of Ontario from 1971 to 1985. Prior to that he served as Ontario's minister of education and minister of university affairs.

In 1967 the government of Ontario launched what was at the time a bold new era in education.

Inspired by the growing demands of our manufacturing-based economy, we spent millions of dollars on establishing two new universities and an organized system of 22 community colleges in an effort to address the need for skilled workers.

As the minister of education at the time, I recognized the vital role that postsecondary education (PSE) played in the social and economic prosperity of Ontarians. Four decades later, the need for a high-quality, well-organized PSE system is more important than ever, not just for Ontario but for the country as a whole.

According to recent studies, by 2015 nearly 70 per cent of the projected 1.7 million new jobs created in Canada will require some sort of postsecondary education, whether that means a university degree, a college diploma or a certificate from an apprenticeship program.

The growing demand for PSE credentials is a result of the expanding global marketplace that in the future will see us competing with the likes of China and India for the types of ideas and innovations that an educated, skilled and adaptable population generates. At the same time we will be experiencing a marked decline in the growth of our labour force.

We are in an era of unprecedented mobility for students, professionals and even institutions. The borderless knowledge society brings to the fore issues such as the transferability of credits, recognition of prior learning, research and development, and innovation that cannot be adequately addressed province by province. Such issues demand a broader national perspective, and an inclusive national plan.

We know that provincial borders often serve as barriers to labour mobility. For example, fewer than 13 per cent of trades accreditations

are recognized across the country. Even within provinces, students who want to add college programs to university degrees, for example, are often unable to receive credit for this prior learning. Without any prior intent, we are unintentionally throwing up roadblocks that hurt the country as a whole.

The federal and provincial governments both play unique and important roles in PSE, but not in a co-ordinated way, despite the fact that between them they spend some \$36 billion a year on the sector. The time has come for all players – governments, postsecondary institutions, the private sector and unions – to work together to forge a national framework to ensure that all the pieces of Canada's postsecondary puzzle fit together to form a cohesive whole.

Many of our global competitors have already embraced this way of thinking. Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Switzerland, Germany and the United States have adopted or are developing national goals and criteria to assess the quality of their PSE sectors. These countries have acknowledged that a coherent, cohesive approach to PSE is required to secure a successful future for their citizens. It is high time we did the same.

The creation of a national information base and a national set of goals for PSE in Canada would not undermine current jurisdictional arrangements – jurisdiction should not be a barrier to planning. Achieving common goals would benefit individual provinces as well as the country as a whole.

With its second annual report on PSE in Canada, titled *Strategies for Success*, the Canadian Council on Learning last week offered up a blueprint for the creation of a national PSE strategy.

The first step toward such a strategy requires governments, postsecondary institutions, students, parents, business, labour and other stakeholders to work together to set national goals, and develop systems to measure progress.

Following the example of the EU, whose 27 member countries have adopted a common strategy for PSE, Canada needs to build on the promising signs of collaboration that exist within the provinces.

When we created Ontario's community college system 40 years ago, we did so with the understanding that the economy, and indeed society itself, was entering a new era. Today we are unmistakably in the grip of another socio-economic shift, this time toward a global knowledge-based economy, and the time has come for us to act.

Only by working together can we develop a postsecondary education sector that is properly positioned to impel our nation forward, both economically and socially.

School of Design among world's best

The George Brown School of Design is one of the world's best design schools, according to an expert panel assembled by BusinessWeek magazine.

George Brown College and the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto were the only Canadian institutions among the 60 schools chosen by the panel. The panel chose schools that combine design with business or other disciplines.

Presidents discuss partnerships

College and university presidents in south-western Ontario held a meeting last month to discuss how they might work more closely together. According to John Tibbits, president of Conestoga College which hosted the meeting, the ideas presented focus on creating new opportunities for students that combine both a college and university experience. The presidents will pull the ideas together in a position paper to be shared with government. "We're not talking about one pathway. We're talking about multiple pathways," he said.

Giving students head start

Triple Play Dual Credit is a School-to-College-to-Work government supported pilot project between St. Lawrence College and area school boards, which gives senior high school students an opportunity to earn a college credit and gain work experience in the secondary school cooperative education program, while still completing their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

"It is essential that more people attain postsecondary education and training as 70 per cent of all new jobs require a college or university credential, said Chris Whitaker, President and CEO of St. Lawrence College.

Support for retraining?

Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty says his 2008 budget may include support for labour retraining and labour mobility, particularly to help the manufacturing and forestry sectors. Flaherty said he is looking at measures to help workers get new skills and to help industries to modernize. However, he said he won't be providing direct bailouts to companies. "I'm not a Band-Aid solution kind of finance minister, quite frankly," he said.

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655 Bay Street, Suite 400
Toronto, ON, M5G 2K4

Please forward comments to:
Rob Savage, Editor
Tel: (416) 596-0744, ext. 239
E-mail: savage@collegesontario.org