



ALGOMA
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Joint News Release:

For immediate release

Teaming Up to Further Education

Sault College, Algoma University and Children's Aid Society Assists Crown Ward Students

(Sault Ste. Marie, ON January 31, 2013) Crown Ward students studying at the post-secondary level in Sault Ste. Marie will no longer have to worry about paying tuition, thanks to new grants from both Algoma University and Sault College. Both post-secondary institutions have agreed to supplement the Crown Ward Access Grant, introduced by the province in 2010, with a 50% matching tuition grant for eligible Crown wards, to encourage attendance and completion of post-secondary education.

A Crown ward refers to a child or youth who has been made a permanent ward of the province of Ontario. These children have usually faced significant barriers and challenges as they grew up without their biological families. There are approximately 9,500 Crown wards in Ontario. Studies show that a little over half of Crown wards in Ontario graduate from high school compared to their peers, with 44% of them graduating from secondary school versus 81% of their peers.

"From our gap analysis, we found that, similar to all post-secondary students, finances are a source of stress for Crown wards," said Amanda Hay, Education Consultant for the Crown Ward Education Championship Team (CWECT). "This is an important piece of the puzzle for these students, who face challenges far beyond what most students have to deal with."

Larissa Richmond, Supervisor of Children's Services for the Children's Aid Society of Algoma (CAS) recognizes the importance of post-secondary education and is very excited with this grant. "This will reduce post-secondary costs significantly thus encouraging more Crown wards to continue to pursue higher levels of education. We are hoping this will encourage our local Crown wards to remain in Sault Ste. Marie for their post-secondary pursuits."

Algoma University and Sault College, along with CAS, the Algoma District School Board, the Huron-Catholic District School Board, and Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min Family and Community Services have been meeting on the CWECT initiative since May 2011 to work to support the educational needs of Crown wards in the Algoma Region.

Algoma University President Dr. Richard Myers was only too happy to endorse the grant: "We pride ourselves on accessibility to education, so this grant makes perfect sense," he said. "These students have earned the right to study towards a diploma or a degree, often overcoming considerable obstacles to do so, and therefore it is appropriate to recognize their achievements in this way."

Algoma University student Brandon Mackinnon qualifies for the grant, and was very happy to hear about the assistance he would be getting. "My strategy to pay for my education right now is to max out OSAP," he said, "so any kind of money helps." MacKinnon has been a Crown ward since he was thirteen years old, and works at the University as a teaching assistant to help pay bills. "This grant will allow me to pay for some of the other expenses I have, so that I can graduate with less debt and possibly consider graduate studies as well."

Sault College President Dr. Ron Common noted, "I am very proud to say that Sault College is the first College in the province to offer this program to our students. Here, at Sault College we know that education changes lives and we are very happy to be able to remove this barrier to their education."

Sault College student, Charlotte Hood was enthusiastic about the program and the support she received from the college towards completion of her education. “Getting into College was a huge step for me,” notes Hood. “Having received help with my tuition really makes all of my hard work worth it. Sault College has had a huge impact on me, and now with this tuition initiative there is no shortage of support available to me. This will not only help me financially but it also gives me hope in knowing that people truly care.”

For more information visit the Algoma University website at www.algomau.ca/crownward or the Sault College website at www.saultcollege.ca/CrownWard.

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About Sault College

Sault College transforms the lives of students through providing innovative education and training, and granting Ontario College certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, graduate certificates, and degrees to its graduates. The College is the largest deliverer of apprenticeship training in all of Northern Ontario. Sault College has ranked 82.8% in Student Satisfaction, the highest score for a Northern College and second highest score overall in the province. Educating over 4,500 students each year, Sault College has a significant economic impact on the community, with spin-offs in excess of \$150 million. Over \$2 million dollars in scholarships, bursaries and awards are distributed annually to students at the College. Located on the border to the United States and situated in the middle of three of the largest great lakes on the planet, Sault College is one of 24 publicly-funded colleges in the province of Ontario. Visit our website at www.saultcollege.ca to learn more.

About Algoma University

Algoma University offers a wide variety of liberal arts and sciences degree options including programs in Psychology, Computer Science, Business Administration, Fine Arts, Community Economic & Social Development, and Biology in Sault Ste. Marie, Brampton, Timmins and St. Thomas. As a partner with Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig, Algoma U is committed to respecting Anishinaabe knowledge and culture. Algoma University has launched its Essential Elements Campaign to expand its campus and offer more scholarships and awards to students. To learn more, visit www.algomau.ca

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