

**Canadian Gaming Association Joins Sault Ste. Marie Education Partners for Unprecedented Examination of the Training Needs of the Canadian Gaming Industry**

*Algoma University, Sault College, Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre to oversee national needs assessment beginning in June*

TORONTO/ SAULT STE. MARIE, ON, May 9, 2016 – The Canadian Gaming Association (CGA) and the Sault Ste. Marie Education Partners (SSMEP) have teamed up to undertake a needs assessment of the Canadian gaming industry, with the goal of creating a national approach to gaming-centric education.

With total industry revenues of more than \$16 billion (2010), the Canadian gaming industry has evolved significantly over the past two decades and now offers customers a more diverse and enriched entertainment experience. However, 20 years of growth and change have also exposed the need to provide gaming industry professionals with greater educational and training opportunities.

Gaming in Canada is highly labour intensive. The industry has created thousands of jobs in nearly every province, supporting more than 128,000 full-time jobs, and provides a valuable source of non-tax revenue for governments across the country.

In order to identify the specific training and education requirements that gaming operators, regulators and suppliers have for their employees, the CGA and SSMEP, which consists of Algoma University, Sault College, and the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC), are undertaking a multi-phased national needs assessment that includes both a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews in jurisdictions across the country.

“With a mandate to create a better understanding of the Canadian gaming industry through education, CGA will take a leadership role in offering relevant and exclusive training for those working in gaming,” said Bill Rutsey, CEO of the Canadian Gaming Association. “The first step is the needs assessment, which is unprecedented in our industry, and we are very fortunate to draw on the expertise of the SSMEP. CGA’s ultimate goal is to ensure that programs meeting a set of nationally-recognized standards are delivered in co-operation with education institutions across the country.”

“The SSMEP partners are excited to take part in this important national study that will help position Sault Ste. Marie as a national leader in lottery and gaming education and training,” said Tom Vair, Executive Director, Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre. “Together, CGA and SSMEP will develop a progressive model for acquiring, creating and disseminating educational content across the country, and the partners will be instrumental in producing ground-breaking insight into the specialized training needs of this important industry.”

The Canadian Gaming Summit in June in Ottawa and Gatineau will offer further opportunities for the needs assessment process, including an update of progress and findings to date.

CGA and SSMEP are working towards a deadline of October to share results and discuss next steps with the Canadian gaming industry. The final deliverable will be a Canadian gaming curriculum, developed using existing material from industry leaders as well as Canadian and global education partners.

### **About the Canadian Gaming Association**

The fundamental goal of the Canadian Gaming Association is to create balance in the public dialogue about gaming in Canada.

Our members are among the largest most established gaming operators, suppliers and gaming equipment manufacturers in Canada.

Our mandate is to create a better understanding of the gaming industry through education and advocacy.

Visit our website at [www.canadiangaming.ca](http://www.canadiangaming.ca) and find more about the CGA.

### **For further information please contact:**

Paul Burns, Canadian Gaming Association, 1 (416) 579-3922

[pburns@canadiangaming.ca](mailto:pburns@canadiangaming.ca)



CANADIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION

### **About the Sault Ste. Marie Education Partners**

The Sault Ste. Marie Education Partners comprises the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre, Algoma University, and Sault College.

### **About Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre**

The Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC) is a non-profit organization established in 1999 to function as a catalyst for economic development and diversification in the information technology and science knowledge-based sectors. SSMIC's mission is to drive business growth, facilitate research and commercialize innovation in globally significant areas of science and technology through partnerships, expert advice, community development, business incubation, youth outreach and sector development activities. Key SSMIC business divisions include the Community Geomatics Centre, Rural Agri-Innovation Network, YouLaunch, Business Support Services and Smart Energy. [www.ssmic.com](http://www.ssmic.com)

In 2015, SSMIC initiated a lottery and gaming project as a unique and significant economic driver to enable the community to take a proactive approach to retaining and growing jobs within this globally significant sector. A Lottery & Gaming Pursuit team will be working to both secure current employment with OLG and its future private sector service providers, as well as grow the lottery and gaming relevant businesses in Sault Ste. Marie and create new partnerships and jobs. Ultimately the project will result in a refueled and more vibrant knowledge based economy.

**For further information, please contact:**

Angela Corcoran, Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre

Manager Marketing & Communications, 1 (705) 946-7927

[acorcoran@ssmic.com](mailto:acorcoran@ssmic.com)



**About Algoma University**

Algoma University was established in 1965 and is located in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Algoma University is a small, undergraduate, teaching-focused university that places an emphasis on serving the needs of Northern Ontario. Algoma University offers a wide range of degrees spanning the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines. As a partner with Shingwauk Kinooaage Gaming, Algoma University has a special mission to cultivate cross-cultural learning between Aboriginal populations and other communities.

Algoma University also offers satellite programming in Brampton and Timmins. For more information, please visit [www.algomau.ca](http://www.algomau.ca).

“We are very pleased to be part of this extremely important initiative, not only for Algoma University but for our partners in education, Sault College, and our partners in innovation, the SSMIC,” said Dr. Craig Chamberlin, President and Vice Chancellor of Algoma University. “The lottery and gaming industry is a major component of Canada’s economy and we look forward to contributing to the educational needs of this sector. Sault Ste. Marie, with its strong infrastructure and expertise in the lottery and

gaming industry, is a natural location for the development of the industry’s education and training needs.”



### **About Sault College**

The vision of Sault College is to provide a transformative life experience through empowering those who study with us to think and learn in progressive, innovative ways, including those we have not yet imagined. Ranked the #1 English Language College in the province with a score of 85.4% in overall student satisfaction by students themselves, Sault College grants 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. Educating over 2300 full-time and 4000 part-time students each year, Sault College has a significant economic impact on the community, with spin-offs in excess of \$158 million. Over \$1.8 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.

“Undertaking the industry needs assessment is an important step towards developing a business plan and strategy for education and training relating to lottery and gaming” noted Colin Kirkwood, Vice President Academic and Research at Sault College. “We are looking forward to working together with our local partners and with the CGA in this important venture.”

