

News Release

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NorQuest students and graduates contribute millions to local economy

EDMONTON – NorQuest College accounts for approximately \$458 million of labour and non-labour income in the Edmonton area, representing about 0.6 per cent of the total regional economy, according to a recent study released by the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes.

“The productivity effects of past NorQuest students contributes 90 per cent of the College’s total economic spin-offs, due to higher incomes that come with improved skills,” says Dr. Wayne Shillington, President & CEO, NorQuest College. For example, the report found that a two-year diploma equates to about \$8,000 a year in increased earnings. NorQuest offers diploma and certificate programs in health, human services and business.

“The average annual earnings of a student with a one-year certificate is 36 per cent more than someone without a high school diploma or GED, and 13 per cent more than someone with a high school diploma,” he adds. Students will see their annual income increase by \$93 per year for every credit completed at NorQuest College.

More than 8,200 adults attended the College in 2005-06 to achieve their career aspirations through completion of career programs, preparatory programs, workforce skills training, and English as a Second Language education.

“It’s good value for the communities in which the colleges and technical institutes are located and it’s good value for the Alberta taxpayers,” says the Honourable Doug Horner, Minister of Advanced Education and Technology. “An educated workforce is a more productive workforce, and a highly productive workforce is the key to maintaining a strong economy.”

“Return on investment in learning far outweighs the cost when it comes to socioeconomic benefits for Alberta taxpayers,” says Tim Schultz, Executive Director of the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes. In addition to the benefits from the individual student perspective, social savings to the province include improved health, fewer work-related accidents, fewer addictions, reduced crime, and reduced claims for social assistance and unemployment benefits.

“The study found that the return on investment from a NorQuest education is significant for both students and taxpayers,” says Shillington. “Students see a 14 per cent annual rate of return on their investment in education and will recover all costs in just nine years. Taxpayers, through provincial funding of the college, receive a 13 per cent return on their financial support.

“The results of this study demonstrate that NorQuest College is a sound investment for both students and taxpayers, and a contributor to the economic growth of the Edmonton region.”

In this study, CCBenefits, a leading provider of socioeconomic impact and strategic planning tools to support community colleges and technical institutes, applied a comprehensive economic

model designed to quantify the economic benefits of colleges and technical institutions and translate these into common sense benefit/cost and investment terms. This economic impact model has been subjected to peer review and field tested to generate more than 700 studies for community and technical colleges in the U.S. and Canada. The study was jointly funded by AACTI and the provincial government.

NorQuest College offers full-time, part-time, and regional programs across Alberta. In addition to health, human services, business and industry career programs, NorQuest offers expertise in adult literacy, academic upgrading, English as a Second Language (ESL) and learner supports for students with disabilities.

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For more information contact:

Martin Schuldhaus
Manager, Communications and Public Relations
NorQuest College
Office: (780) 644-5924 Mobile: (780) 722-9919
martin.schuldhaus@norquest.ca

Tim Schultz
Executive Director
Alberta Association of Colleges & Technical Institutes
780-378-1277
tschultz@nait.ca