Welcome to the September 2016 edition of the UNEVOC newsletter for North America!

Entrepreneurship is a global competitive advantage, and Canadian colleges are central to the development of the entrepreneurial culture and eco-system in Canada.

Canada benefits from a network of 135 publicly funded colleges, institutes, cégeps and polytechnics, which have a long-standing track record of successful collaboration with the private sector, the public sector, and local communities. Together, they produce a highly skilled workforce for today’s economy.

Colleges and institutes across the country are striving to instill entrepreneurial values, principles and initiatives in their institutions. They must continuously work to develop these entrepreneurial values.

A few facts about entrepreneurship in Canada:

- Canada’s early-stage entrepreneurship rates are well above those of other G7 countries.
- Colleges and institutes are developing processes, practices, pathways and leadership to encourage staff, faculty and students to think and act as entrepreneurs.
- Entrepreneurship centres and incubators located on college & institute campuses provide specialized expertise that allows faculty and students to tap into a wealth of entrepreneurship experience and knowledge.

We hope that this brief newsletter will give you an insight on how creative and committed Canada is when it comes to entrepreneurship. SMEs are the driving force of the economy, and Canadian colleges put a heavy focus on bringing more diversified talent to this sector, providing equal opportunities for all.

Happy reading!
Social entrepreneurship is a hot topic on many campuses and Bow Valley College (BVC) is generating social entrepreneurs who are making the world a better place while making a living. Through the VentureQuest Business Idea Competition, learners at BVC have the opportunity to experience all the steps involved in creating a social enterprise, all the while being guided by BVC's fulltime, on-campus Entrepreneur-in-Residence. Since 2014, VentureQuest winners have been awarded more than $90,000 in cash and in-kind services.

In 2015, grand prize VentureQuest winner Malika Hamel had the skills, support, and a great business plan needed to start her venture, Malika’s Mushrooms. She continues to be busy cultivating Pearl Oyster mushrooms for sale at markets, selling kits for customers to grow their own Pearl Oyster mushrooms, and is now cultivating and selling mushroom seeds in the Calgary area.

She continues to work at addressing the full-cycle of sustainability in her business, looking at recycling services, composting and mulching products and services, and possibly worm-farming.

Old College may very well be Canada’s most entrepreneurial college! Entrepreneurship is contained within it Board mandated outcome under “Centre of Specialization”. Olds College has chosen to embrace entrepreneurship as a cultural mindset that translated into action.

Entrepreneurship is integrated across campus with three main pillars: training, business support, and learning enterprises.

Spirit of Entrepreneurship is a world-first, comprehensive entrepreneurship course delivered on an iPad app that employs gamification techniques and a business simulation to encourage students and apply entrepreneurship skills. Students learn to start and run their own lemonade stand empire in a social and mobile environment. This course offers students the opportunity to learn and apply entrepreneurship concepts by participating in a fun, dynamic and digital learning environment.

The Quebec Entrepreneurship School was created in 2013 by Garneau College, located in Quebec City. The School’s mission is to develop, through the acquisition and application of knowledge, the technical and behavioral competencies of people aspiring to become entrepreneurs. The training and development program was established in collaboration with partners from the local, regional and national entrepreneurial ecosystem. The School uses an andragogical approach inspired from the major international trends in entrepreneurship development.

The student comes out from isolation when enrolling to the School. He is supported by experts, by entrepreneurs, he receives coaching to develop his business model, an individual coaching to develop his entrepreneurial competencies. Working with other students, he gets to test his business model.
Inspiring future entrepreneurs at Centennial College

The Centre of Entrepreneurship (COE) at Centennial College teaches, coaches and inspires aspiring entrepreneurs. Since its founding more than two decades ago in 1987, COE has received uninterrupted funding from government sources. Over more than a quarter century of uninterrupted existence, COE has helped over 3,600 previously unemployed individuals turn into entrepreneurs and launch their businesses with a 97% start-up success rate. COE’s clients have rated the quality of its programs highly, as measured through program satisfaction ratings (currently standing at 96%). The COE has grown to become the largest delivery organization for the Ontario Self Employment Benefits (OSEB) Program in the Greater Toronto Area.

Amongst its recent success stories, we can certainly name the fact that two graduates from Centennial College’s Centre of Entrepreneurship were among 5 finalists in the Connect Legal Most Promising Entrepreneur Award for immigrants to Canada.

Making social change happen at Georgian College

Georgian’s Centre for Social Entrepreneurship brings together faculty, students and non-profit organizations to respond to complex issues and effect positive social change. Through student-led projects, research, workshops and innovative curriculum, the centre is inspiring the next generation of changemakers to use social entrepreneurial skills and mindsets to transform their community.

The goal of the centre is to promote and build on the capacity of students’ social entrepreneurial skills and mindsets through changemaking activities and in-class experiential learning opportunities. These skills include team-building, problem-solving, leadership development and communication.

“Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society’s most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change.” – Ashoka.org
Lambton College helps build sustainable entrepreneurship in Zambia

Through compassion, dedication, and humanity, Enactus Lambton has managed to create a farming revolution in the Zambian towns of Hufwa, Gaali, Kasaka and 45 surrounding villages through their inspirational One Seed Project, a well-rounded enterprise that provides solutions to a multitude of social and infrastructure issues, combining alternative energy solutions, food security, healthcare, education, and financial literacy.

As part of this project, over 20 Lambton College Business students (including many international students from Africa and India) also launched The Cube Zambia, a business incubator which trains farmers in entrepreneurship and agriculture.

Meetings are conducted via Skype, email and Facebook. Since its inception, they have worked with over 20 entrepreneurs in Zambia, offering business assistance and micro loans – all of which were repaid before their due date.

Head of UNEVOC Network visits Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles

On June 1, Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles had the chance to host both Mr Shyamal Majumdar, Head of the UNESCO-UNEVOC network and Ms Line Beauchamp, representative of the Quebec Government to the permanent delegation of Canada to UNESCO.

During this visit to the college as a UNEVOC Centre, Mr Majumdar and Ms Beauchamp met with the leadership of the College as well as the with the heads of its three centres for technology transfer (Centre collégial de transfert technologique - CCTT), the centre of initiation to research and assistance to sustainable development (Centre d’initiation à la recherche et d’aide au développement durable - CIRADD), the wind energy TechnoCentre and Merinov. Group Collegia, in charge of continuing education, presented its many projects carried out globally, including most recently in the Caribbean region.

It should be noted that the Cégep stands out for its approach to sustainable development: its CCTT in innovative social practices, the CIRADD, as proof thereof. The Cégep has also developed expertise in distance learning.

For this purpose, technology has been put forward when Mr Majumdar and Ms Beauchamp were able to experience “mobile learning”, a method for making training accessible world-wide.

Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles wishes to continue its development and consolidate its position as an important international player in technical education and vocational training by seizing the opportunities that will be made available to him as a UNEVOC Centre.
Dr Shyamal Majumdar, Head of Office for UNESCO-UNEVOC was a presenter in two of the Conference’s sessions, and met with numerous international delegations and Canadian partners. At the pre-conference international forum on May 29, he shared insights from UNEVOC’s current work on Greening TVET as part of a panel session looking at the role of TVET in responding to climate change and sustainable development priorities in developing countries. On May 31st, he was the key presenter at a Conference presentation session that unpacked the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the representatives of Canadian colleges and institutes in attendance, and explored the role of TVET in reaching these goals.

Dr Majumdar also took the time to meet with some international delegations, including senior officials from Mexico (Dr. Salvador Jara Guerrero, Deputy Secretary of Higher Education and Ing. Hector Arreola, General Coordinator of Technological Universities and Polytechnics – CGUTyP), Peru, Brazil and two representatives from CEDEFOP, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. During these talks, he discussed the possibility of opening two new UNEVOC centres in Brazil and in Mexico.

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