

Time to Invest in Alberta's Most Strategic Renewable Resource

Post-Secondary Education is a priority that matters

The Mount Royal Faculty Association -- which represents 800 fulltime and contract faculty members at Mount Royal University -- eagerly anticipates the forthcoming provincial budget. The MRFA is hopeful and optimistic that the new government's first budget will recognize the vital role of higher education in Alberta by placing post-secondary education funding among the budget's chief priorities.

Over the past weeks and months the Government of Alberta's new leadership has indicated it understands that post-secondary education is a priority that matters. The best way to safeguard that priority is to provide stable operational grants to meet the requirements of students, staff, and faculty at Alberta's many institutions of higher learning.

Premier Rachel Notley recently characterized post-secondary education as Alberta's most strategic renewable resource, and one that leads to innovations in education and the economy.

“Alberta has world-class universities and colleges – which can be fountainheads of innovation and new ideas, if we could partner them closely with job creators and innovators in the broader economy.”

*Premier Rachel Notley,
Calgary Chamber of Commerce speech, Oct. 9, 2015.*

Diversification of the economy was a significant focus of Thursday's cabinet shuffle, and Alberta's post-secondary institutions have a major role to play in creating and sustaining this diversification by graduating pioneers and industry leaders who are well prepared to lead Alberta.

When Minister Lori Sigurdson visited Mount Royal's campus earlier this year, she too spoke about the need for investing in PSE when addressing students at New Student Orientation.

“Stabilizing government's investment in post-secondary education means educators can focus on delivering some of Canada's best education and training. Higher education is vital to our future prosperity and ensuring that it remains affordable and accessible for families is one way our government is investing in Albertans.”

*Lori Sigurdson, Minister of Advanced Education
Mount Royal University, Sept. 8, 2015.*

To ensure that Alberta's universities are in fact world-class institutions of innovation and learning where leadership for a new diversified economy is grown, stable, long-term funding is vital.

Sustainable and stable government funding of PSE will provide greater access to students of all ages who are seeking skills and training, as well as the knowledge necessary to work in careers that align with the Alberta Government's plans to diversify the provincial economy.

“Although the period from 2009 to 2014 was generally a prosperous one for Albertans, it also saw the continual erosion of funding for post-secondary education, punctuated by deep cuts. With difficult times ahead, it is now more important than ever to recognize post-secondary education as a priority that matters in our province, and to recommit to keeping it strong. Investment to ensure PSE is accessible, affordable, and of high-quality is a strategic investment that will benefit Albertans today and in the future.”

***Marc Schroeder, President,
Mount Royal Faculty Association***

The MRFA leadership is available for comment before or following the budget, or to provide context on any matters pertaining to the state of PSE in the province.

Please see the MRFA's model PSE platform available [here](#).

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