



**For Immediate Release
Thursday, October 11, 2007**

Students Says Time to Move Forward on Accessibility, Affordability and Mobility of Postsecondary Education

TORONTO, ON - Ontario's college and college/university students would like to congratulate all the candidates and elected Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) for having the dedication to run for public office and serve all Ontarians, says the College Student Alliance (CSA).

"With the Liberals proving their commitment to postsecondary education over the past four years students across the province are pleased with their re-election and are now looking forward to another four years with further advancement in the area of postsecondary education," says Tyler Wiles, President of the College Student Alliance. "As Premier McGuinty has stated repeatedly throughout the campaign, 'there is much more to be done' and I'm telling the Premier Elect that the CSA will be there to move the agenda and issues forward."

Ontario's postsecondary education institutions have seen a major shift from under funding and cuts to investments and commitments from Dalton McGuinty's Liberals over the past four years and now is the time to act quickly on further investment in the coming years to tackle the many challenges facing Ontario. In 2005, the McGuinty government announced a five year investment and commitment of \$6.2 billion to Ontario's colleges, universities and skills training. The 'Reaching Higher' plan must be expanded to beyond 2009-10 and enhanced to ensure greater accessibility, affordability and mobility for all Ontarians.

"Students are calling on Dalton McGuinty - Premier Elect - to bring college per student funding up to the national average and move Ontario's college and college/university students from the lowest funded in the country," says Wiles. "Students are demanding fairness when it comes to funding and telling the re-elected Liberals to invest at minimum an additional \$400 million into our colleges."

College graduates are truly the economic engine of Ontario and with the province facing a skilled worker shortage of 360,000, as reported by the Conference Board of Canada, colleges and college graduates are poised to meet that challenge head on.

"The College Student Alliance and Ontario's college and college/university students are ready to work with all newly elected MPPs from all parties to strengthen our postsecondary education system and ultimately our economy," says Tyler Charlebois, Director of Advocacy.

Over the last year, the CSA and its member campuses across the province have been spreading the word and encouraging the youth of our province – the leaders of tomorrow - to grab hold of their civic responsibility and vote on 10.10.07. Through posters, educational PSAs, live demonstrations and an informative Web site, www.speakuporshutup.ca, the CSA has been leading the charge and bringing the youth vote back.

The College Student Alliance (CSA) is an advocacy and services organization which has been proudly serving Ontario's college and college/university students since 1975. The CSA currently represents 16 colleges and 23 student councils with over 109,000 full-time student members throughout the province.

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