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Harper: Time for 'Real' Leadership

TORONTO, ON - Now that Canadians have voted and Prime Minister Stephen Harper has won his second straight minority government, the College Student Alliance (CSA) and its members feel it is time to get down to business.

"It's imperative that we, as Canadians, take the next steps necessary to improve access to postsecondary education (PSE), especially colleges and the skilled trades," says Jenn Howarth, President of the College Student Alliance. "We are in need of various investments to create a stronger support system for students in their journeys prior, present and post PSE."

If Canada is to remain prosperous and face the economic and labour challenges in front of us, we must increase our investment and support for all levels of education. The education of our citizenry is the key to overcoming these hard times ahead. The Conference Board of Canada has projected that Ontario will be short some 360,000 workers by 2025.

"Students graduating from college and skilled trades programs are a direct benefit to the economy," adds Ms. Howarth.

A study conducted on behalf of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) found that investing in college education makes good economic sense for governments, and by extension taxpayers, thanks to a rate of return of 15.9 percent on every taxpayer dollar spent. Canada also benefits from improved health and reduced welfare, unemployment, and crime, saving the public some \$215.1 million per year.

"It is time that the federal government recognizes the contribution and shows some 'real' leadership that will benefit all Canadians," adds Tyler Charlebois, Director of Advocacy. "The College Student Alliance is committed to working with the Harper government and all elected Members of Parliament to ensure that no Canadian is left behind due to the lack of opportunity or education."

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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