



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Students Challenge Party Leaders: Make Postsecondary Education a Priority!**

**TORONTO, ON** - As the Ontario election officially gets underway, Ontario's college and college/university students will be looking to the leaders to show some 'real' leadership and drive the postsecondary agenda home to all Ontarians, says the College Student Alliance (CSA).

"We have seen and heard all of the leaders talk about the importance of a strong economy, skilled workers and competing globally, but are they ready and willing to translate those words into action?" says Tyler Wiles, President of the College Student Alliance. "Students are tired of hearing what the problems and issues are; we're looking for results, action, and investments."

Students are looking for leadership from all parties on increasing college per student funding, expanding student financial assistance to those who do not have the financial means to attend postsecondary and on creating a system of transferability and mobility between colleges and universities. Currently, Ontario's over 150,000 full-time students are being funded on a per student basis lower than any other college or college/university student in Canada. When revenues from operating grants and regulated tuition fees are combined, per student funding in 2004-05 stood at \$6,685, the lowest of all provinces. Funding in Ontario was 45 per cent lower than that in Manitoba - the province with the highest level of per student funding - and 18 per cent lower than in Prince Edward Island - the second lowest funded province.

"It is unacceptable that the richest province in Canada under funds and undervalues its college and college/university students so much that per student funding for college students lags behind not only Ontario university students but in fact is below the per student funding levels of secondary school students as well," adds Wiles.

With over 70 per cent of future jobs requiring some form of postsecondary education, all parties must put forward a plan of action that will move postsecondary education into the 21st century and ensure that the recent investments made into our colleges and universities continues - in fact accelerate.

"It's time the politicians give the youth of Ontario something to vote for," says Tyler Charlebois, Director of Advocacy. "Our campuses are focusing on mobilizing the student vote and we are challenging each candidate in all 107 ridings to give them something to vote for."

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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