College lands $500 M international contract

College of the North Atlantic has been selected to be the Lead College for a contract to develop a college of technology (now a campus of College of the North Atlantic) in the State of Qatar, Middle East.

The contract is valued at more than $500 million Canadian, the largest international contract ever awarded to a post-secondary institution in this country.

College of the North Atlantic won the contract after a delegation from Qatar visited several Canadian colleges to determine which one was best suited for the project.

“The Board of Governors for College of the North Atlantic is delighted to support the internationalization of our institution,” says Moya Cahill, board chair. “The president and senior staff for the new Qatar college will be recruited from within the ranks of College of the North Atlantic. This speaks volumes to the quality of our institution and our people.”

The lead partner in the initiative is the Canadian Bureau for International Education, a national, non-governmental organization of which College of the North Atlantic is a member. Provincial Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education Minister Sandra Kelly, says she is delighted to see College of the North Atlantic taking the lead role in this project.

“The awarding of this contract, the largest ever to a Canadian post-secondary educational institution, establishes College of the North Atlantic as being among the best in the country,” says Minister Kelly. “The contract recognizes the college’s quality curriculum, its excellent staff and its international reputation as a progressive institution.”
College has booth at St. John’s oil show

Earlier this summer, College of the North Atlantic hosted a booth at the Offshore Newfoundland Petroleum Show.

The show, held from June 20-22 in the newly opened Mile One Stadium in St. John’s, was organized in conjunction with the 17th annual International Petroleum Conference, hosted by the Newfoundland Ocean Industries Association.

With almost 1,000 members of the local, national, and international oil and gas industry in attendance at the conference, the show proved to be an excellent opportunity for the college to promote its petroleum-related training programs to visitors. Mary-Lou Johnson and Pamela Cheeseman, both of the Seal Cove campus, organized and designed the college’s display, and acted as hosts throughout the event.

Many other college employees from District 5 volunteered their time and energy to make this such a successful event. Special thanks are extended to Rowena Bennett, Sandra Hobbs, Patrick Picco, Roslyn Hong, Rajendra Jani, Derek Newman, Roseanne Hammond, Heidi Janes, David Smith, Joanne O’Leary and Bob Gulliver.

Happy Valley-Goose Bay students shine at National Skills Competition

It was a proud moment for six students from college campuses across the province as they received medals at the 7th Annual Skills Canada Competition in Edmonton, Alberta, in June, 2001.

Of these six medals, three were won by graduates from College of the North Atlantic. Shirley White and Travis Green from the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus won silver in Information Technology (Software) and Sheet Metal, respectively. This is only the second year the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus has participated in these skills competitions with winners at the National level both times. The college had another winner with Keith MacDonald from the Prince Phillip Drive campus capturing a bronze medal in Automotive Service.

Skills Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador - held provincial competitions for high school and post-secondary students earlier this year. Winners of these competitions formed Team 2001 representing the province at the Nationals in the areas of trades and technology. It is a great way for graduates to showcase their talents while showing the quality of training at College of the North Atlantic.
Mining centre opens in Labrador West

The Provincial Mining Technology Centre at College of the North Atlantic’s Labrador West campus officially opened June 28, 2001.

On hand for the event were Pamela Walsh, President, College of the North Atlantic, Sterling Peyton, Manager of Field Operations for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Heather Bruce-Vietch, Manager of Human Resources at the Iron Ore Company of Canada, Nellie Button, Manager of the Labrador City Human Resource Centre of Canada and Dr. Ronald Sparkes, Deputy Minister, Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs. Also in attendance were college board chair Moya Cahill and several board members.

Originally designed to offer workplace training and upgrading for those employed in the mining industry, the Provincial Mining Technology Centre recently expanded to house the new three-year Mining and Mineral Processing program (Employee of the Future).

The centre includes a welding shop, a multipurpose/rigging shop, an electronics lab, a mechanical lab and a computer lab. Enrollment at the centre will fluctuate depending on the training being offered. There are currently 115 students using the facility - eight Maintenance Operator Apprentices, seven in the Mining Engineering Technician program and 100 in the Mining and Mineral Processing program.

“The completion of this centre greatly enhances the province’s capability to train individuals for careers in the mining industry,” says President Walsh. “It also enhances the college’s Centre of Excellence for Mining at our Labrador West campus.”

Funding for the Provincial Mining Technology Centre was provided by the college, $412,975; the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, $469,324; Canada-Newfoundland Labour Market Development Agreement, $631,204; and in-kind contributions from the Iron Ore Company of Canada totalling $337,240.

Florence O’Neill Scholarship Winners

The Florence O’Neill Scholarship is awarded to the Adult Basic Education student who completes the level-three requirements for graduation and who is awarded the highest marks in a special provincial scholarship examination administered by the college.

There are five such awards every year valued at $1,000 each. This award is donated by the Department of Education.

The winners for 2001 included: Nicole Penney, Grand Falls-Windsor campus, 68%; Rosalind Winsor, Springdale campus, 62.5%; Barbara Barnes, Burin campus, 62.5%; Krista Leanne Fowler, Seal Cove campus, 62.25%; and Jodi Blackmore, Bonavista campus, 60%.
Lucky winners

Ten employees at headquarters and the Bay St. George campus woke up $1 million richer on May 24. The group was the lucky winner of that Wednesday night’s $10 million jackpot in the Lotto 6/49 draw. The last set of numbers on their $5 Insta Pik ticket matched the winning combination of 5, 9, 15, 21, 42 and 43. Sharing in the prize were, front from left, Jeff Bishop, Cathy Rose, Laura Lee Sampson, Sheila Gallant. Back, Cathy McCoy, Susan Reid, Joanne Merrigan, George Lee, Roxanne Pinsent, and Keith Pike. The group has been buying lottery tickets together since 1997.

College to host 2002 ACCC conference

In May, thousands of people from community colleges all across Canada (and some from the U.S. and beyond) are expected to descend on St. John’s to attend the 2002 Association of Canadian Community Colleges annual conference.

College of the North Atlantic, in partnership with the Marine Institute, will play host to the 2002 event and organizers expect to have all details for the conference finalized in short order.

In May of this year, the chairs of the various committees planning the upcoming conference attended the ACCC conference in Windsor, Ontario.

While the Windsor conference had lots of interesting sessions, including one from our President Pamela Walsh and one on distributed learning by John King and Lucy Miller, the committee chairs were too busy “shadowing” their Windsor counterparts to take part in much of the conference. And when not learning the ropes from their mainland counterparts, the chairs took turns staffing the college’s booth in the conference marketplace alongside the many other exhibitors taking part.

The college’s booth was, by far, the most visited at the conference with hundreds of people stopping by to fill out survey forms, enter our contests or get a great big kiss – Purity Kiss that is.

If the comments we received from conference goers prove accurate, we can expect 2002 to be one of the biggest and best ACCC conferences to date.
St. Timothy’s Anglican Church in Rigolet, Labrador was the site of the graduation ceremonies for the Office Administration program on June 14, 2001. Proud family members and friends turned out to recognize the accomplishments of their daughters, sons, mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers on this important occasion.

Students were presented with their certificates by Winnie Montague, Associate District Administrator of the college’s campus in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Also, there were two awards presented at the ceremony, one for Best Attendance (sponsored by the Student Council) and the other for Academic Achievement (sponsored by the Labrador Inuit Association). The Best Attendance Award was presented to Jemima Pottle and the Academic Achievement Award went to Carlene Palliser. Both are attending the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus this year.

Office Administration was offered in partnership with the Labrador Inuit Association (LIA) from October 20, 2000-June 29, 2001 with some contribution to student sponsorship by the Labor Market Development Agreement. The program was received most favorably by the community as it provided increased access to training opportunities, as well as enhanced employment prospects for local residents. Previously sponsored programs by the LIA in Labrador’s north coast communities include Carpentry, Early Childhood Education, Hospitality Training, Office Administration and Mobile Crane Operator, to name a few.

Graduates stated they appreciated the opportunity to “take training in their hometown.” Some are now going into jobs while six others will move into the second year of the Office Administration program at the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus this year.

Welcome back, Barry

Dr. Barry Hicks, biology instructor at the Carbonear campus, returned to the college in May after completing a three-year Rothermere fellowship in Scotland and earning his PhD in Forest Entomology.

While Hicks says it’s great to be back home, he and his family will miss the life they had in Edinburgh and the many friends they made during their stay.
**Irene O’Brien - a woman on the go!**

Perhaps generations of workers have had the same complaint, but it seems these days people have less “spare time” after work.

Irene O’Brien’s situation can’t be that different than the rest of us. She works full time as a medical radiography instructor at the Topsail Road campus. She and her husband of 20 years have two teenage sons, a cat and a dog. She is currently doing graduate work through distance education, serves on the national certification committee of the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists and is the education chair for the provincial association. O’Brien also serves as the Currents correspondent for the Topsail Road campus.

For most people that would be more than enough responsibility, but O’Brien is not most people.

On top of her work and home related responsibilities, O’Brien is also an active volunteer in her community as an integral part of The Concert Crowd, a 30-year-old amateur theatrical company based in Outer Cove near St. John’s.

O’Brien acts with the company in their yearly productions in an effort to raise money for various charitable organizations. But memorizing the lines is made a little easier for O’Brien as she is also the person who writes them.

Ever humble of her writing talent, O’Brien said in a recent Telegram article that she was willing to take the blame, but not the credit for the writing of the plays. The end product, she says, is very much a group effort. Each part is transformed by the actor who is playing it.

“Once we get a storyline, it just sort of evolves. It comes across somehow,” she said in the Telegram article.

“The group, they are the ones who take that idea and make it real.”

Seeing her writing come to life on the stage must be a rewarding experience for O’Brien, but her words are not limited to the stage or the college newsletters. You can often find articles written by O’Brien published in the Telegram.

In the past few years O’Brien has written about such things as the addition of the family dog Aero, the pride of being a Newfoundlander, and the upside of the sad situation of young people heading to the mainland to find work – all things to which people in this province can easily relate.

Her plays have been that way too.

A couple of her more recent efforts include Voyage, a light-hearted look at emigration in Newfoundland, and A Day at the Races, a story about the Outer Cove crew who, at the 1901 St. John’s Regatta, rowed their way to 9:13 record finish and into the provincial archives. The record stood until 1981.

A former graduate of the medical radiography program at the college, O’Brien worked in the industry for 20 years before taking a position at the institution where she first began her studies. We’re lucky to have her.
College launches CES website

http://ces.northatlantic.nf.ca

College of the North Atlantic launched its Career Employment Services web-based system from its Ridge Road campus in St. John’s on June 5. The Career Employment Services system will connect students and graduates of the college with employers all over the world.

“Our new web-based employment system is an excellent example of how the college is using technology to better enable our students and graduates to connect with potential employers,” says Pamela Walsh, College President.

“As employers strive to meet their human resource needs, we are particularly pleased to provide them with direct access to our graduates through this system.”

For students and college alumni, the web-based system provides access to job postings, information on employment programs and helpful hints on student success skills. Students can also place their resumes and a transcript of their marks on the system to be viewed by employers.

Employers using the system may post employment opportunities for college students and graduates, search students’ resume profiles and avail of several other information services. Types of jobs that can be posted include summer employment, full-time and part-time employment, co-op work-term opportunities, on-the-job training and contract positions.

Brian Tobin, Manager of Student Development/Special Projects for the college, says he was delighted to see the new Career Employment Services system being launched.

“We’ve been working on the design of this system for the past two years,” he says.

“IT’s great that we can use the Internet to provide employers around the world with an opportunity to connect with our students and graduates.”

During the testing process for the system, even though it was not yet officially launched, more than 60 employers from locations such as Korea, China, the United States and several Canadian provinces logged on to inquire about the availability of College of the North Atlantic students and graduates.

Births

Congratulations are extended to the following college employees who have had recent additions to their families:
Marilyn Coles-Hayley, Chris Mercer, Annette Morey, Donna Hobbs, Morley Shiner and Raymond Bugden.

Retirements

Best wishes go out to the following recent college retirees:
Gar Randell, Joan Thistle, Phonse Carroll, Pat Marche, Jacqueline Penton and Edgar Crewe.
Library Services News

By John L. Whelan
Provincial Coordinator

Stephen Green-Dowden, librarian at the Topsail Road campus, made a very informative presentation on “Equitable Access to Information for Persons with Print Disabilities” at the recent annual conference of the Newfoundland and Labrador Health Libraries Association. Stephen has also just been elected as Vice President-President Elect of the association.

Lynn Cuff, librarian at the Clarenville campus, has been a member of Academic Council since the formation of College of the North Atlantic. She has been the Council representative for Student Services and is currently representing College Libraries. Lynn was the first provincial coordinator for College Library Services and represented College Libraries on the Task Group on College Credentials. She is currently the Library Services representative on the School of Information Technology and serves as Student Services Coordinator for her district.

Lenora Furey, library technician at the Baie Verte campus, is beginning her second year as editor of the Newfoundland and Labrador Library Association Bulletin. Last year, Lenora produced two issues that contained useful articles and important information for NLLA members throughout the province.

Janet Fraser is the librarian at the Prince Philip Drive campus and manages Library Services within her district. She is also a poet. The first collection of her poetry, Long Girl Leaning Into the Wind (Killick Press, 2000), was a finalist for the 2001 Provincial Book Awards. Janet’s poems have been described by one reviewer as a “feast of sensory detail, dream images, and fantastical visions.”

The whole review, which originally appeared in the December 3, 2000 edition of The Telegram, is available through Electric Library Canada, a full-text database. The ELC includes magazines, newspapers, reference books, transcripts, maps, and photos and can be accessed directly through any college computer over the World Wide Web at http://www.elibrary.ca/education. Students and staff can also connect to ELC from their homes with a username and password. College library staff will be happy to provide you with the necessary login information for remote access and to give you assistance with searching ELC and other library databases.

All Library staff expect to be very busy over the coming months. The college has recently acquired a new computer system to integrate library services on a province-wide basis and staff are currently involved in the implementation phase of this project. More information on this Integrated Library System (ILS) will be provided in the next issue.
‘Non-traditional’ jobs within reach for Labrador women

What type of job would you expect to see a woman doing on the Hibernia oil platform? Did ‘cook’ or ‘launderer’ instantly come to mind?

If it did, you’re not alone. That’s why the Women in Resource Development Committee (WRDC), in partnership with the college, are working hard to break down barriers when it comes to women entering male-dominated fields in trades and technology.

“WRDC began in 1997 because of a study about the experience of women working at the Hybernia site in Bull Arm,” explained Lorraine Michael, executive director for WRDC.

“That report indicated women had been treated unequally to men in both access to training and access to jobs. As well, on-site there were some women having experiences that weren’t always positive - various forms of gender harassment, including sexual harassment.”

In 1999, WRDC received word that the Labour Market Development Agreement decided to fund the Orientation to Trades and Technology (OTT) programs, which are delivered on CNA campuses province-wide.

The OTT program introduces women to non-traditional roles in the petroleum, mining, and forestry industries, as well as fishery, agriculture and water (hydro-electricity) sectors. The women also get a chance to try their hand at carpentry, welding, and heavy equipment operation and repair.

Since October of 1999, 10 OTT programs have taken place, the ninth being the recent graduation of 11 women at the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus.

“It’s really important, not just for the women who are in the program, but also for the dialogue that’s going on between WRDC and CNA,” said Ms. Michael, “because there are ongoing meetings and ongoing discussions about how the college itself can better break down barriers for women who want to move into areas that men have dominated.”

Since October 1999, 138 women started OTT and 129 of them finished it. By September 2001, 2/3 of the OTT completers will be students at CONA (either in Trades/Technology or ABE). Five women have completed the transition from OTT to Trades/Technology training to employment in their area of study. One of them (Christine Gill), is now a safety engineer who attended the graduation.

Story by Bonnie McLean. Reprinted with permission from the Labradorian.
On July 5, 2001, 10 employees of College of the North Atlantic, Baie Verte campus, volunteered to take part in Ocean Net Clean-up Day. Eight of the workers were students hired for summer positions.

The students and their supervisors cleaned up debris from the brook and small stream around the campus. There were objects such as old tires, pop cans, and rusted metal removed from the waters.

This was the second year in which the summer employees took part in Ocean Net’s clean up and they were quite pleased to discover a baby duckling swimming in a section of the brook they had cleaned up the previous year.

The brook was in such deplorable condition last year it was believed that nothing living would survive in it. The young duckling was a very encouraging sight for workers. Everyone worked hard and enjoyed the day immensely.

At lunchtime the workers enjoyed barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs provided by Ocean Net.

**Baie Verte cleans up**

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**Grand Falls-Windsor Campus holds 2nd Campus Career Day**

By Kent Aitken

On March 28, 2001, the Grand Falls-Windsor campus held its Second Annual Campus Career Day. Ten guest speakers were invited to the campus to speak to the students on various topics including career options, employer expectations, and current trends in industry. All students in Business Management, Programmer Analyst, Office Administration, and IT Enhancement for Office Administration programs were involved, as well as many employers from the community.

Many of the guest speakers, former graduates of the Grand Falls-Windsor campus, are currently employed in the area. The speakers included: Gail Slaney, a graduate of the Programmer Analyst (Business) program, currently working with DP Solutions Inc. as a Quality Assurance Engineer; Barry George, a graduate from the same program, currently working with the Central West Health Corporation as a Computer Support Specialist; and Mr. Doug Furey, a graduate of Memorial University and a certified MCSE + I and MCT+ Professional, who is the Technology/Information Access Program Specialist with School District 5.

Speakers from the business faculty included Stephanie Frankland, a recent Business Management graduate who specialized in human resources. Stephanie was working as a Research Assistant with the HR Department on campus at the time of the event, but has since landed a job at headquarters in Stephenville as a Labour Relations Assistant (Congratulations Stephanie!). Catherine Lewis and Lisa Fry, graduates from the Accounting and Marketing options, respectively, also gave presentations. Catherine is currently the Office Manager/Accountant with Norte Dame Agencies/Castle Building Centre and Lisa is the Comptroller with Aspen Physiotherapy/Back in Action.

From the Office Administration program, guest speakers included Gail Morris, Office Manager at TRA Newfoundland; Cindy Bugden, Office Manager with Family Dental Clinic; and Mhairi Mercer, Administrative Assistant at the Grand Falls-Windsor campus.

The presentations were held in three different classrooms, designated for the corresponding program specialties. For the most part, the speakers shared with the students their unique individual experiences in their respective fields since graduating from the college. They stressed to the students the many qualities that employers look for in an employee, including the ability to be a team player, a willingness to give 110% everyday, and the initiative to perform beyond the regular call of duty. They highlighted the fact that learning doesn’t end upon graduation - it is life-long and students need to keep up with the ever-changing technologies. A particularly strong emphasis was also placed on the importance of soft skills - the ability to effectively communicate, both orally and written. Some speakers gave suggestions as to what they like to see on a résumé, as well as advice on how to conduct oneself properly in an interview.

Following the presentations, the three groups met in the cafeteria for a light lunch. This was intended to be an opportunity for the students to network with various employers, and students...
were encouraged to have their résumés and business cards on hand.

Overall, feedback on the event was extremely positive. Students were quite pleased with the content of the presentations and employers appreciated the opportunity to meet with our students.

“It was an eye opener for the students to realize that they do not learn everything there is to know in school. In order to be successful they have to be outgoing, confident, a self-learner, and be able to work with little supervision,” said Barry George.

Many of our instructors would agree that they can stress these points every single day, but it really sinks in when reiterated by industry professionals.

Linda Pafford, Office Administration Instructor, definitely agrees.

“Overall, all speakers said they could not emphasize enough the importance of being a team player, being flexible, and most of all - being a professional. I believe this was a truly worthwhile event and should be continued annually,” she said.

Doug Furey really enjoyed the event as well. He thought it was a tremendous learning experience for the students and he particularly enjoyed having the opportunity to talk to them on an individual basis, as well as in a group setting.

“It was an excellent opportunity to speak to the students about the kind of work we do,” he recalled, “with respect to internships and work-term opportunities it is important for them to be aware of the type of work we do in our office.”

As with many new initiatives, there are always areas for improvement. In the future, as this initiative grows and expands, we may want to consider removing the space and time limitations imposed on it. Nonetheless, this event, generally, was a tremendous success and should be continued annually. As Kenneth Rideout, Business Management instructor at the campus, noted, “It has certainly expanded from last year. It is very important for us as a college to be liaising with the community, and this sort of initiative really increases our public awareness.”

Plans for next year are currently underway with a team comprising students, faculty and staff. The first meeting is scheduled early in September to ensure another successful Career Day during the Spring Semester, 2002.

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Students shine at skills competition

By Sharon Cochrane

It was a proud moment for six students from college campuses across the province as they received medals at the 7th Annual Skills Canada Competition in Edmonton, Alberta, in June, 2001.

Of these six medals, three were won by graduates from College of the North Atlantic. Shirley White and Travis Green from the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus won silver in Information Technology - Software and Sheet Metal, respectively. This is only the second year that the Happy Valley-Goose Bay campus has participated in these skills competitions with winners at the National level both times. The college had another winner with Keith MacDonald from Prince Phillip Drive campus capturing a bronze medal in Automotive Service.

Skills Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador - held provincial competitions for high school and post-secondary students earlier this year. Winners of these competitions formed Team 2001 representing the province at the Nationals in the areas of trades and technology. It is a great way for graduates to showcase their talents while showing the quality of training at College of the North Atlantic.
TeamStation™ project completed

In February the college contracted Pittman Technology Group Inc. to conduct an applied research project to investigate, test, apply and integrate TeamStation™ conferencing tools into appropriate teaching and learning activities in distributed learning and classroom based courses. The applied research project was championed by the Distributed Learning Centre and financially supported by the Open Learning and Information Network (OLIN).

Several methods were used to capture information during this project. These included: key informant interviews, observation, usage logs, project leader journal and participant surveys. An extensive literature/internet scan was also conducted.

There were several constraints encountered during this project. Many planned trials were not implemented due to a combination of factors including the short timeline and the actual project timing in terms of the semester.

Intel® TeamStation™ System is a visual collaboration workstation that combines video conferencing, Internet access and PC applications in one system. At the beginning of the project, College of the North Atlantic had Intel TeamStation™ units installed at eight campus locations. By early summer, all remaining campuses were equipped with this video conferencing technology.

The project involved several trial sessions for distributed learning courses, a classroom course, and a staff professional development session.

“Overall the pilot sessions went well, and faculty members were encouraged by the positive feedback from participants,” says Theresa Pittman, president of PTG Inc.

“It became apparent that tremendous potential exists for integrating and expanding the role of videoconferencing in both distance and classroom courses. The technical groundwork has been laid, but extensive building is now required in terms of instructional support.”

The following information on the project can be found on the DLS website at http://dls.northatlantic.nf.ca: Summary Report, TeamStation™ Quick Users Guide, TeamStation™ Workshop Lesson Plan for Faculty Training and TeamStation™ Resources.

The Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers held their national conference at the Fairmont Hotel in St. John’s from June 2-6, 2001. Career development professionals from College of the North Atlantic and other institutions from across Canada, students and the public took part in the event and were introduced to information, advice and services in the areas of career planning and student recruitment. Here the college’s Heidi Janes and Paul Forward decide what sessions they will attend.
Organizational learning is the process of gaining knowledge and developing skills which empower us to understand, and to act effectively within social institutions... A learning organization builds collaborative relationships in order to draw strength from the diverse knowledge, capabilities, and ways of doing things that people have and use. (Addleson)

College of the North Atlantic promotes organizational learning, as evidenced in the variety of initiatives that are ongoing across the system. Grounded in our guiding principles and supported by college policy and resources, employees engage in learning activities ranging from the formal to the informal, from self-directed to facilitated learning, and from self-initiated to college-driven projects. As College of the North Atlantic evolves, so will its capacity to enhance the organizational learning culture and processes that underlie personal, professional and organizational development.

Organizational learning supports the college’s quest to fulfill its mission and achieve its strategic imperatives. It is, however, only one of many pathways that lead to organizational effectiveness. The literature on organizational development firmly asserts that organizations best maximize their potential by becoming learning organizations - utilizing the collective knowledge, skills, expertise, and experience of its people to develop and map systems, processes and protocols to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, build morale, and establish a unique organizational culture and identity, in the process of achieving quality results.

The field of knowledge management has emerged to support the development of learning organizations. For example, knowledge management frameworks and tools can be used to identify and document best practices and processes in all functional areas of the college. Among other things, results of this process can be used for process mapping, functional skill development, orientation for new employees, succession planning, and building communities of learning.

Building a learning organization is very much a structured, planned and continuous process. The Clemmer Group has identified several factors that are crucial to the development of effective learning organizations:

- clear vision, mission, values or direction
- consensus on strategic priorities
- clear definitions of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities
- aligned organizational structure and management systems
- effective business processes and procedures
- effective communication systems and networks
- productive functional and cross-functional teams
- extensive consultation with internal and external customers
- high staff involvement
- clear and documented protocol for decision-making
- leadership skills

The Clemmer Group asserts that effective organizations are learning organizations, utilizing several pathways to high performance. These pathways include (but are not limited to) process management, measurement and feedback, education and communication, innovation and organizational learning, skill development, continuous improvement processes, and reward and recognition. Effective organizations use knowledge management strategies and continuous improvement processes and interventions to maximize its potential to become learning organizations.

How does an organization as large and as geographically diverse as College of the North Atlantic become a proactive learning organization? A better question might be: How can it not? In a
Tragedy such as the recent terrorist attacks on the U.S. touches us all. But as New York’s famous Twin Towers came crashing to the ground on Sept. 11, none of us could have known just how much our lives would be directly affected.

After U.S. President George Bush shut down all the airports in that country, international flights coming from Europe and Asia were diverted to airports in Canada. Nearly half of those flights ended up in Newfoundland and Labrador, stranding some 17,000 travelers in this province.

College of the North Atlantic played an important role in helping those stranded passengers.

In Gander, 39 of the massive aircraft, carrying an average of 200 people each, touched down doubling the town’s population. The campus there set up an area to accommodate 250 of the passengers.

“We had virtually all of our faculty and staff – and their spouses – involved. We also had about 20 students who came in and volunteered, many staying through the night at the high school next door which received its passengers at about 1 a.m.,” says Mac Moss, campus associate district administrator.

Food for the stranded travelers staying at the Gander campus was prepared by Western Catering and the college’s commercial cooking instructors, staff and students.

“We fed about 300 people at each meal, including the volunteers,” says Moss.

“We took them on nature walks in our local park, transported them to shower facilities at the base. (Reuters photo)

New York’s famous Twin Towers were destroyed on Sept. 11 after two commercial jets were hijacked and flown into the buildings, killing thousands and causing airports in both the U.S. and Canada to be closed down. (Reuters photo)

Organizational Learning con’t from 13

recent newsletter, NAPE reported that the average age of public servants in Newfoundland and Labrador is 45 years. Assuming that college employees are a representative sample of this population, it is evident that the future viability of this organization rests in part on its ability to, a) identify and address its improvement priorities on a continuous basis, in the process of, b) developing strategic knowledge and process management systems, drawing on the knowledge, skills and expertise of current staff to prepare new staff to assume their duties, at all levels of the organization.

The more practical and immediate challenge is allocation of time and resources. As indicated earlier, building a learning organization is a structured, planned and continuous process. It represents a fundamental change in the way people and processes function at College of the North Atlantic.

College of the North Atlantic has the collective knowledge and skills of 1,200+ employees to support the development of a learning organization. Employee interest in organizational development is high: to illustrate, 70 staff members representing administrators, faculty and support staff actively participated in focus group discussions on professional development that were held around the province. There exists, within the college, many informal communities of learning, and the obvious potential to develop many more. The college has developed professional development policies and programs, and has added a second professional development coordinator to its resource base.

According to Jim Clemmer, “change cannot be managed. Change can be ignored, resisted, responded to, capitalized upon, and created, but it cannot be managed... successful change flows from learning, growth and development.”

As a social and public institution, College of the North Atlantic has an obligation to maximize the effectiveness of its processes and the potential of its human resources as it pursues its mission and its strategic directions in an ever-changing environment. Continuous improvement through strategic knowledge and process management will create a learning organization that will enable the college’s people and processes to adapt to changing personal, professional and organizational needs.
Planes from all over the world were diverted to Canadian airports after those in the U.S. were closed. Gander received 39 flights with enough people on board to double the town’s population overnight.

Stranded con’t from 14

Wing Gander) and kept them entertained. Their reaction was phenomenal. They were very patient, and extremely appreciative of our efforts.”

While there were only eight flights diverted to Stephenville (there were 37 more enroute but the airport was closed due to heavy fog), the college campus there played a huge role in accommodating the passengers.

As soon as news of the diversions was received, the campus organized staff and student meetings. Everyone was made aware of the situation and a list of volunteers was established. Students volunteered to share their rooms with the stranded passengers.

“We didn’t know how many were coming, but we were gearing up to feed 300 people that evening,” says Cyril Organ, associate district administrator.

As was the case in Gander, the passengers spent a considerable amount of time at the L.A. Bown and DSB Fowlow (432) buildings, most watching coverage of the terrorist attacks on television.

“We ended up with about 50 at the Headquarters building and 250 at L.A. Bown sleeping on cots set up in the auditorium, classrooms and the corridors,” says Lorne King, the other ADA for Bay St. George campus.

“We fed them all, plus about another 100 more who were being housed at the armory building.”

King says the effort put forth by the college’s staff, faculty, students and the townspeople, was exceptional.

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"The classes were cancelled at Bown, but still many of the students would show up just to help out and try to make these people’s stay as comfortable as possible," he says.

Some staff members who came in to work that morning, expecting a normal shift, ended up staying for periods of more than 24-hours.

"I’m tired of being thanked for what we’ve done," laughed King.

“They (the passengers) told me of all the places in the world where they could have been stranded, this had to be the best.”

L.A. Bown serves as an auxiliary hospital in Stephenville in times of crisis – the reason there were so many cots – and to show their thanks, the passengers dug into their pockets and donated about $2,000 to the local hospital foundation.

“Also, we have to think about the training our students gained from this experience. We had journalism students covering the event, our cooking students preparing and serving food and our community studies students interacting with the passengers. You normally couldn’t provide that level of experience,” says King.

The college campus in Happy Valley-Goose Bay was ready to accommodate 1,000, however only six flights touched down at the Labrador site and the Canadian Forces base there looked after the 800 or so passengers there.

“Even though we didn’t receive any of the passengers, we were commended by Commander McCabe in a local interview for our cooperation and our willingness to respond,” says Bob Simms, district administrator in Labrador.

“College campuses are key community facilities in such emergencies – particularly those of us with residence and food service facilities. Also the availability of our many computers and phones for communications is extremely important during a crisis such as this so people can contact their families and loved ones.”