



STRENGTHENING ONTARIO'S ECONOMY BY INVESTING IN SKILLS TRAINING

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INVESTING IN SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Ontario's skilled and highly educated workforce is a key economic advantage and enhances Ontario's position as a destination of choice for global investment. Many high-growth industries – such as information technology, construction, energy and health care – face a shortage of people with the right skills.

The challenge is to ensure that workers with the right skills are available when growing industries need them, while also giving unemployed workers the retraining they need to get well-paying jobs in expanding areas of the economy.

\$1.5 BILLION SKILLS TO JOBS ACTION PLAN

The 2008 Budget announces a three-year \$1.5 billion investment in the Skills to Jobs Action Plan. Combined with campus renewal capital investments included in the 2007 Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review, the McGuinty government is investing \$2 billion in the Skills to Jobs Action Plan.

The goal is to have the greatest number of people possible working in the jobs that will strengthen Ontario's competitive advantage. That means ensuring all Ontarians have the opportunities and tools they need to succeed. It means investing:

- \$560 million to support new skills for new careers
- \$465 million to expand postsecondary student aid and programs
- \$970 million to build places to learn.

SUPPORTING NEW SKILLS FOR NEW CAREERS

Skills training programs will give Ontario's workforce the knowledge, skills, innovation and flexibility to compete with the world's best by investing:

- \$355 million over three years for a new Second Career Strategy to help 20,000 unemployed workers who commit to a long-term training plan make the transition to new careers and well-paying jobs in growing areas of the economy
- \$75 million over the next three years, rising to \$50 million annually by 2011-12, to further expand the number of apprentices. The goal is to reach 32,500 annually, an increase of another 25 per cent, by 2011-12

- \$45 million over three years for the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund to buy state-of-the-art equipment essential for technical training
- \$25 million in 2007-08 for employer-based training in the manufacturing sector through the Yves Landry Foundation.

EXPANDING POSTSECONDARY STUDENT AID AND PROGRAMS

An estimated 70 per cent of new jobs in the next decade will require postsecondary education, up from about 60 per cent in the last 10 years. To expand postsecondary student aid and other programs, this Budget is investing:

- \$385 million over three years for a new Textbook and Technology Grant. It will help lower costs for every full-time college and university student annually, with grants of \$150 per student this fall, \$225 in the fall of 2009 and \$300 in subsequent years
- \$27 million over three years for a new, annual Distance Grant to assist with transportation costs for students from rural and remote areas attending college or university
- more than \$16 million to enhance the successful Pathways to Education program and increase the number of at-risk youth finishing high school or proceeding to postsecondary education or directly to the workforce
- more than \$7 million over three years for an International Ontario Strategy to attract talented postsecondary students from around the world, raising the level of research excellence in Ontario's universities and contributing to economic prosperity
- more than \$1 million over three years for Global Edge, a program that facilitates international work and learning opportunities for enterprising postsecondary students.

BUILDING PLACES TO LEARN

The McGuinty government is providing capital investments of \$970 million over three years to build places where students learn:

- \$200 million in 2007-08 for the maintenance and renewal of university facilities
- \$200 million over three years for new and expanded skills training centres and facilities under the Strategic Skills Training Capital Investments program
- \$60 million over three years for the College Equipment and Renewal Fund
- \$25 million in 2007-08 to establish a new Munk School of International Studies at the University of Toronto
- \$10 million in 2007-08 to the University of Waterloo at Stratford for a new digital media institute and convergence centre
- \$9 million in 2007-08 to the Ontario College of Art and Design for a research and innovation laboratory in interactive design and digital media
- \$464 million included in the 2007 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review for postsecondary campus renewal and strategic capital investments.

ACHIEVEMENTS

To keep Ontario competitive in the changing economy, the McGuinty government has already proceeded with the following investments:

- Under the Reaching Higher Plan, announced in 2005, a cumulative \$6.2 billion in the postsecondary education sector by 2009–10, increasing full-time enrolment to date by 93,000 since 2002–03

- Almost three times the number of grants compared to 2003-04 – now helping 120,000 students, including about 56,000 upfront tuition grants for low- and middle-income students
- \$40 million announced in 2007 for skills development, as part of the Employment Ontario program, and a Rapid Re-employment and Training Service to deliver immediate career counselling and retraining for people facing layoffs
- More than \$1 billion annually for the Employment Ontario program that provides a comprehensive jobs and training strategy including training, apprenticeship, employment counselling, job search supports and wage subsidies in nearly 900 locations across the province
- \$160 million in 2007–08 to help newcomers settle, improve their language skills and find jobs through training programs.

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Media Inquiries
Steve Erwin, Minister's Office, 416 325-3645
Scott Blodgett, Ministry of Finance, 416 325-0324
Public Inquiries
1-800-337-7222

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