



ADVOCACY WIN: CSA applauds the Ontario government for their investment in expanding broadband and cellular service in rural, remote, and underserved communities

June 4th, 2020

TORONTO, ON - The Ontario government is investing \$150 million into reliable broadband and cellular service to ensure that rural, remote, and underserved communities can access sufficient internet for increased economic, employment, and educational opportunities.

Having access to reliable internet has become a basic necessity in the 21st century with our society being increasingly reliant on technology and global connectedness. This has become particularly important during the age of COVID-19 with social distancing measures in place, as schools at all levels have closed and shifted to online class-delivery that requires high-speed internet. Yet many remote communities in Ontario, particularly in northern Ontario, still do not have sufficient internet service, meaning that students in these communities are not able to access their online class materials and complete their post-secondary programs successfully. This not only stunts academic goals and abilities but also economic stimulation with students not being able to participate in their sector upon graduation and being weighed down by further financial debt associated with prolonged studies.

CSA strongly advocates for accessibility and affordability of education. As we currently represent over 9,000 students in northern Ontario at Cambrian College, Confederation College, and Northern College this announcement is quite seismic for our membership. Just this past May, CSA had the opportunity to participate in a Ministerial Advisory Council on the economic recovery of COVID-19, during which we emphasized the need for the expansion of broadband internet service in rural and remote communities to ensure that all post-secondary students in Ontario can participate fully in their education regardless of their location.

CSA is delighted to announce that the provincial government has acknowledged this need for accessible internet by investing \$150 million into expanding broadband and cellular service in remote, rural, and underserved communities. This will undoubtedly have positive effects on the accessibility and affordability of education as well as the economic prosperity of these communities in Ontario, and as such, we encourage that the government ensure these services are affordable for each community. CSA is hopeful that this investment will shape the future of accessibility to education through online learning and guarantee all post-



secondary students in Ontario access to a quality education, as one of the positive long-lasting impacts of COVID-19.

-30-

About College Student Alliance:

College Student Alliance (CSA) advocates on behalf of Ontario college students in partnership with student leaders. Through our member student associations, CSA represents the collective voice of Ontario's college students.

Contact:

Taylor Irvine, Research & Policy Analyst
College Student Alliance
E: research@collegestudentalliance.ca
T: 416-340-1212 | C: 289-686-1997

