

COMMUNITY REPORT

2017



WE
ARE

ESSENTIAL
TO ALBERTA

nait.ca/community2017



AMBITIOUS GOAL, AMBITIOUS PROMISES

Each year, thousands of students come to NAIT to acquire the skills they need for rewarding careers. Demand for our hands-on, technology-based education has never been stronger – applications in most programs have more than doubled over the last five years. NAIT provides the essential skilled workforce our province needs to move our economy forward.

In responding to the needs of our province, learners and industry, NAIT has grown. We needed to add physical space, and to strengthen financial support for students and applied research. That's why we launched a \$100-million capital campaign.

The campaign builds on deep and meaningful relationships with industry, businesses, alumni and friends of NAIT. We began this journey – led by Fountain Tire CEO Brent Hesje, our board chair at the time – to support the Centre for Applied Technology, create student awards and advance applied research to meet Alberta industry's current and emerging needs.

I'm happy to report that this ambitious goal is now within sight, despite recent economic challenges. I have been amazed by the support and truly humbled by the number of people who recognize the importance of polytechnic education to our city, province and country.

The campaign will wrap up in 2018. But the theme and spirit will remain. These last three years have positioned us to deliver on our promises to Alberta, students, industry and our staff like never before. With your help, we're able to continue to be a leading polytechnic, committed to meeting the workforce demands of the 21st century.

My thanks to everyone who has contributed to this goal and to those who will do so before the campaign's end. Your support is greatly appreciated by NAIT and our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Glenn Feltham
President and CEO

ON THE COVER

Water and Wastewater Technician alum Jesse Skwaruk doesn't take water for granted. When not working as a water technologist in Edmonton, he devotes his time to clean water causes around the world. Learn more at techlifetoday.ca/jesse-skwaruk.



ON OUR WAY TOWARD \$100 MILLION

Essential: The NAIT Campaign is rapidly approaching its goal. Here are some of the milestones.

NOVEMBER 27, 2014

Essential: The NAIT Campaign launches [1]

NOVEMBER 18, 2015

Construction begins on Spruce Grove Campus to grow the Crane and Hoisting program

FEBRUARY 12, 2016

NAIT Students' Association donates \$5 million – the largest gift in NAIT's history [2]

APRIL 22, 2016

Heavy Equipment Technology Building opens [3]

OCTOBER 27, 2016

Centre for Applied Technology grand opening

MAY 12, 2017

Ashif Mawji and family donate \$1 million – NAIT's largest gift from a single alumnus – to establish the Mawji Centre for New Venture and Student Entrepreneurship (read more on p. 9) [4]

JUNE 22, 2017

Melton Crane and Hoisting Building opens at Spruce Grove Campus (read more on p. 11)

Visit nait.ca/community for an extended timeline of campaign milestones.



[3]



[1]



[4]



[2]

THE ESSENTIAL

EFFECT OF \$100 MILLION

Visit nait.ca/community this spring for details about our campaign wrap-up event.

The campaign continues and there's still time for you to be part of it. When we wrap up in spring 2018, join us to celebrate your contribution to our most ambitious and successful fundraiser ever. Until then, here's a look at the impact \$100 million has had on growth at NAIT.

nait.ca/support-essential



STUDENT SUCCESS


NEARLY
\$200,000

raised for the NAIT Fund, which supported increased access to mental health counselling (read more, p. 13)

83% increase in scholarships and bursaries (over 2009)

58
new

student endowments for scholarships and bursaries

 33% increase over 2009

APPLIED RESEARCH

4 applied research centres supported

- Centre for Oil Sands Sustainability
- Centre for Sensors and System Integration
- Centre for Innovative Media
- Boreal Research Institute

44 projects initiated

to solve current and emerging industry challenges



Read about NAIT's raw milk cheese-making project on p. 11.

OUR 3,827 DONORS

35% 1,344 Alumni & staff

33% 1,258 Industry partners & foundations

32% 1,225 Friends of NAIT

66%
New Donors

CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

55,740 square metres of new learning space

(598,600 square feet)

- Centre for Applied Technology
- Heavy Equipment Technology Building
- Spruce Grove Campus



OUR PROMISE TO ALBERTA

NAIT exists to serve this province. We promise to meet the current and emerging needs for hands-on, polytechnic education and to focus our research on solutions for industry challenges. By being relevant and responsive, NAIT helps keep Alberta globally competitive.

THE CAVE CRUSADER

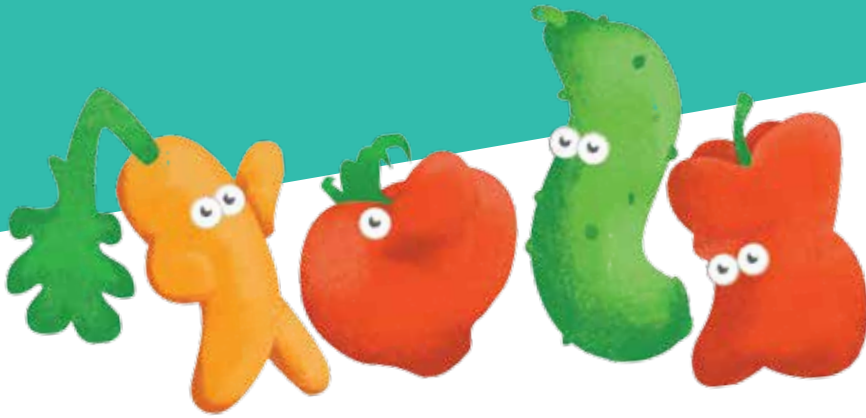
Bats are among the unsung heroes of Alberta wildlife. They're voracious predators of pests that threaten agriculture and forestry, industries that make up \$4.3 billion of the provincial GDP and employ nearly 190,000 people. Unfortunately, they're susceptible to white nose syndrome, a potentially fatal fungus that has killed bats across North America and may be poised to enter the province. Biological Sciences Technology instructor Dave Critchley has made it his mission to help keep our bats healthy. Much of his free time is spent studying the habitats where they're vulnerable to infection and where he gathers information that could aid in developing a treatment for the syndrome once it strikes. Often, he shares his findings with students, enlightening them about the need to protect a species on the brink. "As soon as we take that ecosystem out of balance," says Critchley, "something is going to collapse."

Read more about Dave Critchley's work at techlifetoday.ca/bats



SKILLS ON PARADE

Children from Edmonton-area schools and the Make-a-Wish Foundation had a unique view of this year's K-Days parade, thanks to NAIT's Engineering Design and Drafting Technology program. Instructor Wes Puchyr, a frequent volunteer at Northlands, the not-for-profit responsible for the parade, recruited students to design a castle-themed float. "With a project like this, the students get the drafting experience, can see and feel their work, and get to engage with their community," says Puchyr. The five-metre-long (16-foot) float was also designed to be easily converted to a chuck wagon for the Canadian Finals Rodeo Magic event this fall, in which special-needs children become rodeo stars for a day.



UGLY BUT TASTY

This spring, NAIT's food services department was pleased to receive its first shipment of "ugly" vegetables. Among them: fresh tomatoes and cucumbers deemed too unsightly for grocery store shelves despite tasting great. Department manager Gloria Booth doesn't want to see those go to waste. "I think it's our responsibility," she says. "When we talk [about] sustainability, this is the future." NAIT will report on the project this fall to Alberta Flavour – a Northlands initiative that includes Alberta Health Services and Shaw Conference Centre – which may consider adopting the practice.

NAIT IS GOLDEN

The Centre for Applied Technology has struck gold. NAIT's newest and largest building (51,600 square metres or 555,000 square feet) is also its most energy-efficient, minimizing its carbon footprint on the provincial landscape. This year, it achieved gold status under the international Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system. "It's an outcome of making the right decisions," says John Engleder, associate vice-president of facilities management and development.

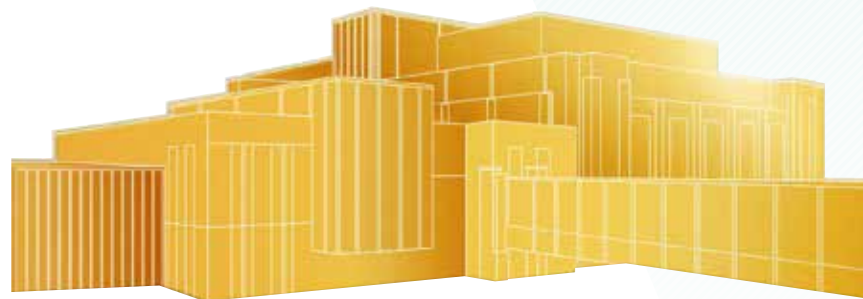
Among those decisions: diverting from landfill or recycling 98 per cent of construction waste, installing only energy-efficient LED lighting, grounds featuring drought-tolerant plants, and more.

Visit techlifetoday.ca/cat-leed-gold for more details.

FUNDING REAL SOLUTIONS

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) has once again recognized NAIT's expertise in applied research, which develops solutions for real industry challenges. This time, NSERC will dedicate \$4.8 million in grants for projects in

- **The NAIT Centre for Innovative Media**, which will boost productivity in Alberta's \$573-million digital media industry
- **Remediation research** by NAIT and the University of Saskatchewan that explores new ways to remediate soil at former gas stations
- **NAIT's Centre for Sensors and System Integration**, where staff help industry partners develop high-tech prototypes in a variety of industries, including resource extraction, agriculture and medicine



OUR PROMISE TO STUDENTS

Through education that encompasses mental, emotional and physical well-being, NAIT prepares students for meaningful careers in their chosen fields. Our graduates have the skills to be successful and make an immediate impact.



SHAPING FUTURE THINKERS

An education that produces grads ready to make a positive impact on the world requires a welcoming, open environment. That's why NAIT fosters diversity and inclusivity through services such as a chaplaincy program, the Encana Aboriginal Centre, the International Centre, services for students with disabilities and Safe Spaces, a program that supports NAIT's LGBTQ community. In 2017, that program invited alumna and transgender rights activist Marni Panas back to campus to lead Pride Walk, a highlight of the annual Pride Week that brings together staff and students. "It's our colleges that often shape society and our future thinkers," says Panas. She believes students expect the world outside a post-secondary institute to be equally inclusive. "If it's not, you start to demand that it is. And that's exactly how we shift society."

Read about Marni Panas's fight for inclusion at techlifetoday.ca/marni-panas

SHINING A LIGHT ON GUATEMALA

Students from the Alternative Energy Technology program were enlightened last May about the impact electricity can have on the quality of life in remote, rural regions of developing nations. In partnership with Light Up the World, a Calgary-based non-profit, NAIT installed solar-powered electrical systems in homes and a school in the highlands of Guatemala, allowing children to study at night and people to run businesses out of their homes. "Seeing how much impact a single solar panel and four lightbulbs had on a person is something I'll always remember," says student Ronak Patel.

Read more about the project at
techlifetoday.ca/guatemala



SEXY VEGGIES

Broccoli hotdogs anyone? Nanaimo bars made with peas and mint? How about radish ravioli? These are just a few of the dishes Amanda Cohen brought to NAIT as the 2017 Hokanson Chef in Residence (a program made possible by Edmonton philanthropists John and Susan Hokanson). The Canadian-born, New York-based chef challenged her students to elevate veggies above their common side-dish status. "Vegetables aren't cool – it's very hard to make a carrot sexy," says Cohen. Her week on campus wasn't so much a course in avoiding meat as it was one in being creative, bold and – most importantly – never boring.

Learn more about chef Amanda Cohen
at techlifetoday.ca/amanda-cohen

MAWJI FAMILY SPURS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Growing up in Kenya, alum and Edmonton startup entrepreneur Ashif Mawji learned two important things: the need to work toward your goals and the value of sharing what you have. This summer, he did the latter in the form of a \$1-million gift to NAIT – the largest ever from a single alumnus – to create the Mawji Centre for New Venture and Student Entrepreneurship within the JR Shaw School of Business. "This is an opportunity to celebrate entrepreneurship and give students in Alberta a leg up – to provide them with mentorship and help them be successful," says Mawji. It's a way to help them work toward and achieve their own goals. Opening this year, the centre will serve enterprising students from across the polytechnic.

JUST LIKE THE REAL THING

A career in health care can be extremely rewarding – and sometimes shocking. NAIT's Simulation Centre, located in the Centre for Applied Technology, strikes the balance, giving students the skills to improve Alberta's quality of life while also showing that the job can, at times, be difficult. Sim Centre staff re-create sights, smells and substances that students will encounter on the job. Things got even more lifelike this summer thanks to a partnership with CAE Healthcare. An industry leader in simulation technology, the company supplied NAIT with 19 high-tech manikins designed to bleed from severed limbs, react to medications, give birth and more. "The leading-edge simulation technology available to our students and staff is second to none in Canada, and will ensure our graduates are equipped with the skills to succeed," says Rick Trimp, dean of the School of Health and Life Sciences.

Get a closer look at one of the CAE Healthcare manikins at techlifetoday.ca/manikin



OUR PROMISE TO INDUSTRY

WHERE INDUSTRY COMES TO SUCCEED

The Productivity and Innovation Centre, NAIT's newest building, is rapidly taking shape on Main Campus. This 17,650-square-metre (190,000-square-foot) facility is designed to respond to industry needs for solutions to current and emerging challenges, helping companies become more competitive and sustainable. When it opens in 2018, the centre will be equipped with labs and spaces to provide services related to productivity enhancement, acceleration support including prototyping and product validation, and applied research. The project was made possible through funding from the Government of Canada, which committed \$34.98 million to the project through its Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund. NAIT will invest more than \$45 million more. "This project will be transformational for Edmonton, for Alberta, for Canada - and for NAIT," says Dr. Glenn Feltham, president and CEO. "It will be our new front door for industry and the place industry comes to succeed."

NAIT produces an exceptional skilled workforce. It responds directly to the needs of industry, which helps shape our programs and guides our applied research to provide solutions for today's challenges.

See progress on the building at
techlifetoday.ca/pic-construction



GOT (RAW) MILK?

Economic diversification can be a grassroots effort, spurred on by entrepreneurs eager to blaze a trail in a new direction. This spring, NAIT and Alberta Milk offered a new “whey” forward with a cheese-making program using raw milk, potentially boosting the industry by bringing local would-be producers closer to local suppliers. Raw milk comes straight from farms, and is not homogenized or pasteurized. According to NAIT cheese-making instructor Alan Roote, it can be used to produce a greater variety of cheeses, often with richer flavour. Alberta Milk, funder of the new program, sees a growing need for fine, Alberta-made product, as the province is a significant cheese consumer. “Albertans value local products,” says Alberta Milk’s Denise Brattinga. “It doesn’t get any more local than this.”



REACHING FOR THE SKY

NAIT’s newest campus, a year-old facility for crane and hoisting training located in the city of Spruce Grove, celebrated its official opening this summer. Between September 2016 and June 2017, more than 200 students received instruction on three boom trucks, three mobile cranes and three simulators that offer hands-on learning in virtual crane cockpits. To top off the party, the facility was named the Melton Crane and Hoisting Building in recognition of a \$1-million donation made by Melcor Developments (chaired by Tim Melton) to support NAIT construction and building technology programs.

VIRTU-OIL DRILLING

Drilling an oil or gas well is a balancing act between force and finesse, and requires boring through several thousand metres of earth. “That’s a fairly complex science,” says Bruce Reinders, chair of the Petroleum Engineering Technology program. As a hands-on discipline, it’s tough to teach – or was. Last fall, NAIT purchased four drilling simulators from Endeavor Technologies. Like a high-quality video game, the custom-made, award-winning simulators immerse students in an experience so true to life that even the hand controls match those in industry. The result is a clear understanding of the equipment, worker tasks, safety, theory, science and technology. “We’re giving them real, relevant experience,” says Reinders. “That’s pretty valuable to employers.” It’s also valuable to Endeavor, he adds. The Edmonton-based company worked with NAIT to develop the simulator specifically for post-secondary applications, broadening the market for their unique product while deepening the educational experience.



ELEVATING THE TRADES

Brian Pardell isn’t a tradesperson but he understands the rewards of careers in the trades. Before joining NAIT, where he’s associate vice-president of continuing education and workforce development, Pardell served in 2009 as vice-president operations for the WorldSkills Competition, held that year in Calgary. This “Olympics of the trades” is staged biennially in a different country, bringing together roughly 1,000 skilled youth to test their talents in more than 50 events and put their professions – as mechanics, carpenters, welders and more – in the limelight. “It really does shine a light on the importance of skilled trades, that the careers are viable and in demand around the world,” says Pardell. Today, his connection to and admiration of the trades continues. Pardell volunteers with WorldSkills as a facilitator of networking opportunities among organizations, governments and schools in hosting countries, helping to build relationships and foster best practices that elevate trades in the eyes of career-minded youth – and that help ensure a skilled workforce for industry around the world.

OUR PROMISE TO STAFF

NAIT's culture is reflected in our values of respect, collaboration, celebration, support and accountability. That's why the polytechnic is one of Alberta's - and Canada's - best places to work.

LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS

Clayton Davis didn't plan to stay long when he took his job at NAIT. "No more than two years was my plan," says the executive director of human resources. "I've been here for 12." The main reasons: challenging and rewarding work, a lively environment and the opportunity for change (Davis has had five different jobs at the polytechnic, he points out). Though Davis's career hovers near the average length for a NAIT employee, many current staffers have him beat - by decades. Nearly 280 have surpassed 20 years of service. Of those, more than 70 have are beyond the 30-year mark, and half a dozen have remained with the polytechnic for more than 40. None, however, rival Donna Jackson. This summer, the program assistant celebrated her 50th year as a NAIT employee.



THE BENEFITS OF BIKES

"I cycle at least four times a week and it's the best part of my day," says Colin Ruthven, Steel Construction and Hoisting department head. In addition to reducing his carbon footprint, Ruthven enjoys the mental and physical benefits of biking to work. "I'm in the best shape of my life." NAIT has made an effort to support staff members like him who ride to work by offering secure storage, a repair station, showers and change rooms. A quarter of the polytechnic's 2,800 staff members cycle to work at least once a week.



CELEBRATING CANADA 150

NAIT loves a party. Staff regularly come together in celebration (one of the polytechnic's five core values, along with respect, collaboration, support and accountability) during employee recognition events, professional development activities, and more campus-wide get togethers. This year offered a once-in-a-lifetime chance to show pride of place, and gather in the Centre for Applied Technology to wish the country a happy 150th birthday.



AWARD-WINNING EMPLOYER

For the sixth consecutive year, NAIT was named one of Alberta's Top Employers by Mediacorp Canada. In 2017, judges were impressed by on-campus amenities including a meditation and religious observance room and a strong focus on personal wellness. Current staff members also feel positively about NAIT: more than 80 per cent recommend the polytechnic as a place to work.

A LEADER IN MENTAL HEALTH

Post-secondary education can be one of life's most stressful activities. Coursework and exams are just a start. On top of that are career planning, managing relationships, debt and day-to-day challenges. In the last academic year alone, the number of NAIT students seeking counselling for anxiety and stress increased more than 20 per cent, and 30 per cent for those dealing with depression. To support instructors in their efforts to help students (and sometimes each other), much of the NAIT Fund – donated in large part by the polytechnic's own employees – has gone toward improving student access to counselling. Today, students benefit from a greater number of professionals and longer office hours to help turn what can be a difficult time of life into an experience that leads to a lifetime of success. Funding mental health initiatives remains a priority of the NAIT Fund.

Meet Flynn, the therapy dog who regularly visits NAIT campuses to lift the spirits of staff and students: techlifetoday.ca/flynn. Follow him @flynntherapydog on Twitter.



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