

## How this Plan was Produced

To be purposeful a strategic plan must be endorsed, supported and understood by those it is intended to guide. Based on this premise the College undertook to ensure that all stakeholder groups in the institution had the opportunity to contribute to the development of our corporate priorities.

This strategic planning process was spearheaded by a working committee composed of one manager, one faculty, one CUPE member and the College President. This group received its direction from an advisory team composed of members from all constituent groups within the College.

The working committee established a work plan and a communication plan that would see the project through to completion. This involved establishing a regular meeting schedule for both teams, regular e-mail updates and announcements and the development of a website on the progress of the strategic plan accessible at [www.cotr.bc.ca](http://www.cotr.bc.ca)

*Data collection was the primary function of the working committee.*

### The four primary methods of data collection for this project were

- 1. Review of existing information and developing an environmental scan:** The team conducted a detailed environmental scan of the region to assess the political, economic, societal, technological, and competitive environment within which the College is working. A complete copy of the Environmental Scan can be found on the website.
- 2. Conducting community consultations throughout the East Kootenay:** The team organized a series of community meetings (32 in total) with industry and business partners, school officials, Aboriginal people, community organizations and agencies, students, alumni, local governments, our employees, and local citizens. The purpose of these meetings was to assess the needs of communities, the labour market conditions, the environment, and the role of the College throughout the region. A copy of the feedback report is available on the strategic planning website.
- 3. Survey development:** To enhance the quality of programming being offered to the communities of the East Kootenay, the working team developed two survey instruments that were used to assess the communities' satisfaction with the College and assess the needs of our constituents. The first survey was distributed to community partners, the second to secondary school students. A summary of findings from these two surveys has also been included on the website.
- 4. Conducting vision sessions with College employees and Board members:** Following the collection of this data (environmental scan, community feedback, and surveys) the team coordinated vision sessions with our employees and Board of Governors to review the major influences impacting the College and set priorities for the future. ■

## How this Plan will be Used

Our strategic priorities will be used to assist in decision making, assist in focusing our efforts and monitoring institutional effectiveness. These priorities will act as a guide in the development of other important College-wide plans such as the marketing plan, technology plan, the capital plan, and the community relations plan. Individual areas/departments will use these strategic priorities to develop internal action plans that link to our vision. ■



## Conclusion

\*By the year 2005, the province's population is expected to reach almost 4.5 million people. The number of 15 - 24 year-olds in BC will increase by 9.5% during this period. This growth, coupled with higher post-secondary participation rates, will increase the demand for spaces at post-secondary institutions.

\*Over the next five years, the number of retirement age workers, 55-plus, will continue to grow faster than the job entry population, 12 - 24 year olds. Projecting out 10 years, retiree's will potentially outnumber new labour market entrants. This trend will challenge COTR and all post-secondary institutions to develop strategies that provide training to ensure that the skill demands of the province and the East Kootenay region are met.

Technology will continue to have a major impact on both learners and educators. Technological innovation, especially the Internet, has dramatically increased educational opportunities for people and increased flexibility for institutions. This technology has the potential to increase access to educational opportunities for the citizens of the East Kootenay. College of the Rockies will have to work closely with communities to assess their technology capacity and to ensure the College is developing relevant on-line distance learning programs.

Ultimately it is the goal of the College to ensure all East Kootenay citizens have access to affordable post-secondary education and training that assists them in participating fully in the economy and in society. ■



*...to ensure all EK citizens have access to post-secondary education...*



\*Source: BC Stats - Government of BC



# College of the Rockies Strategic Directions

## Our Environment:

The College of the Rockies (COTR) is a dynamic post-secondary institution, operating within the Province of British Columbia. The College, through our 220 employees, offers a full range of training and educational services to the people of the East Kootenay.

COTR is located in the spectacular Canadian Rocky Mountains and offers a profile of quality programs to fit our magnificent setting amongst some of the most spectacular scenery in the world.

The East Kootenay region is home to a population base of approximately 78,000 citizens. The region's people are spread over a geography of 42,000 square kilometers that includes several snow capped mountain ranges white water rivers, lakes and an amazing landscape.

COTR's main campus is located in Cranbrook, with satellite campuses in Creston, Fernie, Sparwood, Kimberley, Golden and Invermere.

All campuses are located in communities that feature an abundance of outdoor and indoor recreation including, skiing, hiking, golfing, white water rafting, soaking in the many natural hot springs in the area, mountain climbing, swimming and much more. COTR offers students the unique opportunity to blend lifestyle and learning in one of the most beautiful locations on Earth, the Canadian Rocky Mountains. COTR is well known for providing some of the

best technology access for students. The College places high priority on quality of instruction, access, affordability and program expansion.

The East Kootenay has been adversely affected by the softwood lumber dispute, the shut down of one of the major mines in the area (Cominco) and a slow down in the region's economy. This has led to one of the highest E.I. rates in the province. Like other colleges in BC, COTR is adapting to the expectations of a new government, supporting a region in economic transition while facing budgetary restraints, operating within a highly competitive environment, and adjusting to the impact technology is having on the learning.

Between 1996 - 2001, enrolment at the College has increased by 15%. It is anticipated that this trend will continue into 2002 - 2007 as more people require access to post-secondary training. It is also anticipated that during this time, 2002 - 2007, funding from government will decrease.

*The priorities set out in this document centre on people, quality, affiliations, alliances, and resources.* These priorities support the educational direction prescribed to our institution by our government and are balanced by the need to serve our students and the many rural communities of the East Kootenay region. ■

## President's Message



Dr. Nicholas Rubidge

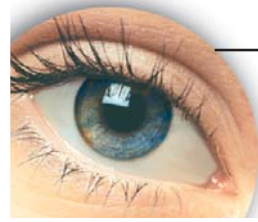
On behalf of the College of the Rockies Strategic Planning Committee, I am pleased to present this document outlining the direction for the College for 2002 - 2007. At COTR it is our aim to provide our students with an exciting and quality educational experience. I believe the priorities set out in this document will assist us in achieving this goal.

Our priorities are the result of a process that has involved extensive consultations over the course of almost one year. These consultations include input from a wide range of groups, organizations and agencies in the communities of the East Kootenay, past and present students, concerned citizens, the College Board of Governors and our employees.

In the 25 years that our College has been in existence we have continued to grow as a result of putting people first, providing quality programming, establishing partnerships that are in the best interest of the College and the region and effectively managing our human and financial resources. Our strategic direction again makes these four important themes the focus of our priorities. Our College exists to serve the needs of citizens who reside in the East Kootenay region. Our programs and services have been designed with our communities in mind. College of the Rockies is an exciting and vibrant institution dedicated to the advancement of student learning and success through excellence and quality instruction. The goals in this plan have been built on this premise.

*To all those who have played a role in working with our College to build this plan and shape our future, thank you.*

**Dr. Nicholas Rubidge**  
President and CEO  
College of the Rockies



## Vision

“College of the Rockies will provide access to quality education for all adult learners in the East Kootenay, while effectively managing our resources.”

## Strategic Priorities

### Quality, People, Affiliations Alliances and Resources

- 1) The College of the Rockies will ensure that our students experience the highest quality training and education possible. This will include offering excellent support services and offering education and training that is relevant to the students, employers, and society.
- 2) The College of the Rockies will recruit, retain, and develop talented, qualified and motivated staff and faculty.
- 3) The College of the Rockies will respect unique populations such as aboriginals, international students and people in employment transition and will provide programs and services that address their uniqueness.
- 4) The College of the Rockies will build and enhance relations with organizations in our communities, the region and the province.
- 5) The College of the Rockies will coordinate with other educational institutions in ways that support our vision.
- 6) The College of the Rockies will foster pride in our College among students, employees, and community members.
- 7) The College of the Rockies will foster ministry support, pursue new revenue sources, and use financial resources responsibly.
- 8) The College of the Rockies will develop efficient systems for collecting and managing information.
- 9) The College of the Rockies will maintain, renew, and enhance technology systems.
- 10) The College of the Rockies will continue to deliver programs in the East Kootenay.
- 11) The College of the Rockies will promote the unique qualities of our region in our programs and promotional activities.
- 12) The College of the Rockies will ensure that we operate in ways that respect our natural environment.

*These 12 corporate priorities will build the foundation for all internal planning documents and action plans. From these priorities, we will set goals, measurements, assign both resources and accountability to achieve our vision. It is our aim to have all departmental plans in place by July 31, 2002.*



**MISSION STATEMENT:** “Empowering citizens and communities through knowledge and skills.”

## Educational Priorities and Directions

### PRIORITY #1: Quality

The College will ensure that our learners experience the highest quality training and education possible. Learner success will be the measurement for the quality and relevance of our program and services.

#### ACTIONS

- All courses, programs and training provided will be developed and delivered following the Principles of Quality Education and the Principles of Quality in Distance Education Guidelines developed and approved by COTR in 2000.
- Critical success factors that measure the quality of programming will be identified and used to improve courses and programs.
- Core employability skills for each course or program will be identified and implemented into curriculum.
- Practical work experience will be incorporated into all programs when possible and as required by 2006.
- The College will recruit, retain, and develop talented, qualified and motivated staff. All regular faculty will complete a portfolio by 2007 and participate in professional development activities as identified in their professional development plans that will develop exemplary teaching skills.
- The College will establish program advisory committees for each program and hold at least two meetings annually. In addition, the College will conduct regular community consultations to ensure that external feedback is provided on the quality and relevance of programming.
- A formal recognition plan that recognizes excellence in teaching and learning will be implemented in 2003.
- The College will promote the unique qualities of our region into our programs.

### PRIORITY #2: Accountability

The College will use financial resources responsibly and deliver education and training that meet the needs of learners of our region.

#### ACTIONS

- The College will meet a minimum of 95% of its program profile if not 100% for each year 2002 - 2007
- The College will achieve student satisfaction rates of 80 - 90% for students attending the College.
- The College will achieve student success rates of 85 - 95% (employability, satisfaction and transfer rates that will be measured six to nine months after they depart the College)
- The College will review and analyze the success and relevance of our programs on a regular basis and make changes when necessary.
- The College will solicit student feedback on instructor performance regularly

### PRIORITY #3: Access

The College will continue to offer a wide variety of educational programs and courses to support the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

#### ACTIONS

- The College will develop an Aboriginal program by 2006/2007
- The College will increase international education enrolment by 5% annually.
- The College will deliver programming to support learners in employment transitions.
- The enrolment in all College Learning Support Centers will increase by 100% over the next five years.
- The College will partner with at least one institution each year to expand access to additional post-secondary programming in the region.
- The College will partner with the school districts in the Kootenay region to increase access and transitions from the K -12 system to post-secondary education.

### PRIORITY #4: Flexibility

The College will expand the flexibility of its educational programs and services to meet learner needs.

#### ACTIONS

- The number of courses delivered by distance learning each year will double in two years and double again in five years.
- The College will maintain the following flexible delivery options for learners (e.g. rotating programs between campuses, semi-distance offerings, on-line courses, video-conference courses, distance courses, Saturday, weekend, evening classes, and summer school). All programs will explore and include, as appropriate, flexible delivery options for learners by 2003.
- The College will expand the use of technology to improve learning. This includes implementing on-line application and registration, electronic distribution of documents, exams, and assignments, an electronic reference, student support services, work placement and help desk, implementation of e-commerce applications for the purchase of textbooks, and increase the electronic research resources available to students by 2004.
- With the assistance of PLN through expanded bandwidth, video-conferencing courses will be available at all campuses within two years (2004).
- The College will continue to participate in the provincial on-line project(s).

### PRIORITY #5: Program Expansion

The College will expand its programming to meet the increasing and changing needs of the community's skilled workers.

#### ACTIONS

- **Health:** The College will implement in 2002/2003 a Nursing degree in partnership with BCIT. In the next five years a Child Youth and Family Studies diploma and additional health program(s) will be explored and implemented.
- **Trades:** by 2006/2007 the College will implement apprenticeship programs in conjunction with all of the existing entry-level trades training programs and add one additional entry-level trades program.

■ **Adult Basic Education:** The College will expand our preparation courses for Health and Trades.

■ **Degrees:** Increased access to choice for higher learning is critical for career advancement and opportunity for transition into new fields or occupations. By combining and reorganizing existing program choices, access to a degree with the rigor and quality delivered by traditional degree granting institutions, would be made available in our region. Specific applied degrees will be explored in: Business and University Studies; Tourism Business; and Child, Youth and Family Studies. Other applied degree concepts with the Trades, Health and Computer areas will also be explored.

■ **Information Technology:** In 2003/2004 the Applied Computer Certificate will be offered followed in two years by a Data Networking Technician program and a web-based media program.

■ **Continuing Education:** In 2002/2003 continuing education at the College will be reviewed and programming will be expanded. Examples: Industrial Management Certificate, expanded Health and Trades upgrading courses, community college leadership program.

■ A Criminology diploma will be added in 2002/2003.

### PRIORITY #6: Renewal

The College will continue to support new program development and change by seeking new sources of revenue and reallocating existing funding.

#### ACTIONS

- The College will continue to support entrepreneurship and innovation in program development.
- The College will take opportunities to expand program areas to a cost-recovery basis.
- The College will identify and implement programs that could be delivered through joint ventures or on a shared basis with other post-secondary institutions.
- The College will provide courses related to the continuous learning needs of people in our region.

