



SUPPORTING ACCESS TO A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

The Issue: As Ontario's economy continues to transform, a postsecondary education is increasingly vital for developing the broad set of skills required in today's and tomorrow's workplaces. Government and educators must continue working together to ensure that all Ontarians who are willing and qualified can access a postsecondary education as well as the learning and economic opportunities that come with it.



KEY FACTS

70%

The increase in university enrolment in Ontario since 2000

The background

- For the last decade, Ontario's universities have seen an increase in applications and enrolment. In recent years the number of applicants has continued to climb even as the number of young adults in the province has decreased, showing that Ontarians are seeing the value of a university education for their future.
 - Universities work with the government, through OSAP, to remove barriers to a postsecondary education and support all students who need financial assistance. Since 2001, Ontario has led the country when it comes to increasing the on-campus proportion of students from lower income families.¹
 - The work of promoting access to university has to start early, however. High school students need to be informed about their postsecondary choices and prepared for campus challenges such as managing workload in their studies and being financially literate for life away from home.
- University enrolment has increased by more than 70 per cent since 2000, helping Ontario hold one of the highest graduation rates for postsecondary around the world – a key factor in the province's reputation for talent.

“Today's economic prosperity [is about] the fact that diverse teams are teams that prosper and deliver better results for companies. But it is also about that individual prospering, a community prospering, a family prospering, and... that idea that we can't prosper unless all of us are prospering.”

– Margaret Eaton, Executive Director of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council, at the Ontario's Universities Roundtable on Diversity and Inclusion

¹Frenette, Marc. "Postsecondary Enrolment by Parental Income: Recent National and Provincial Trends." Statistics Canada, April 10, 2017. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-626-x/11-626-x2017070-eng.htm>

What Ontario's universities are doing

Ontario's universities are committed to helping ensure any willing and qualified Ontarian can access a university education. To achieve this, universities are engaged in a wide range of work:

- Our eINFO website offers comprehensive and easily accessible information about programs, scholarships and the application process to support prospective students in making informed decisions.
- Universities also work closely with high school counsellors, and are committed to doing so further to continue improving the delivery of information about options at colleges and universities and how students can best use a postsecondary education to set themselves up for the jobs of the future.
- Universities are committed to increasing access for students from low-income families. We provide students with more than \$900 million in scholarships and bursaries, and run programs to reach out into our communities and help underserved students prepare for a postsecondary education.

Partnerships to increase access:

Brock University's Leaders Citizenship Society holds a fundraising gala every year to raise money for bursaries for students from the DSBN Academy, a school specifically designed to help first-generation students reach postsecondary.

In Hamilton, the McMaster Children & Youth University strives to lower barriers to accessing a postsecondary education in resource-challenged areas of Hamilton and its surrounding communities by delivering programs that inspire and academically empower youth to complete high school and pursue postsecondary education in subject areas such as science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.

For more examples of how universities are partnering for success, visit ontariosuniversities.ca.



KEY FACTS

\$900M

Amount provided annually by universities in scholarships and bursaries

How government can help

To ensure all willing and qualified Ontarians can access a university education, the Ontario government should:

- Help high schools prepare students for the transition to university by providing students with training on managing university workloads, financial literacy and living independently.
- Continue to improve access to data about in-demand jobs and marketable skills, so students and parents can better assess career opportunities and understand how a university education can help lead the way to a successful future.
- Work with universities to attract and support first-generation university students.

Partnering for a better future

- By making a postsecondary education accessible, Ontario can ensure that all Ontarians have access to the high-quality education that will help them launch a fulfilling career and ensure Ontario has the talented workforce it needs to succeed in the future.

Stay informed

- Go to ontariosuniversities.ca to learn more about how to support access to postsecondary education.

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