

Oct. 4, 2024

Warden Brian Milne  
Grey County  
595 9th Avenue East  
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3E3

Dear Warden Milne:

Aaniin, She:Kon, Nakurmiik, Tanshi, which means hello in Ojibwe, Mohawk, Inuktitut and Michif (the traditional language of the Métis). On behalf of Georgian College, I want to update you on how the [recent announcement from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) (IRCC) may impact our shared communities. As we assess the implications of the federal government's changes, we know our partnership with you will remain critical in advancing new opportunities, developing innovative solutions and addressing potential challenges. I look forward to our continued collaboration.

As you may know, on Sept. 18, IRCC announced expansive measures to reduce the number of temporary residents – particularly international students – eligible to enter Canada. One such measure is the decision to limit post-graduate work permits to those studying in programs that align with “national labour-market needs.” We’re concerned as a college and as a sector that those needs may not reflect the unique needs of our communities.

For additional context, since the initial changes were announced in January, Georgian is down 1,000 international students this fall and well below the new caps introduced. The combination of reduced international enrolment and the uncertainty in our ability to align enrolment with local and regional labour market needs, causes me significant concern. With each IRCC announcement comes more uncertainty and continues to make Canada less attractive as a study destination.

At Georgian, we work closely with our community, industry and government partners to respond to local demands and ensure our programs align with the labour market. The dedication of our team, students, alumni and partners has allowed our graduates to maintain an impressive employment rate of 90.3% across our seven campuses – consistently surpassing the provincial average, which is currently 85.8%.

We’re proud to be a strategic leader and partner in producing a highly skilled workforce. Our more than 130 market-driven programs not only prepare our students for in-demand jobs in their field of study, but also support the economic development of the communities and industries we serve.

Georgian is a comprehensive college with a wide range of credentials to suit every goal – from apprenticeships and diplomas to graduate certificates and degrees. Recently, we expanded our focus in areas such as health care, the skilled trades, advanced manufacturing, agri-business and hospitality to

address local shortages arising and distinct to Central Ontario. For example, among many new programs introduced over the past few years, we launched an Honours Bachelor of Science – Nursing degree, Medical Laboratory Technology diploma, Business – Agriculture diploma and Electromechanical Engineering Technology – Mechatronics advanced diploma.

In addition to launching new programs or revising current ones, Georgian also continues to be the only provider of highly specialized marine training and education in Ontario through our Centre for Marine Training and Research in Owen Sound. There are more than 67,000 jobs that make up Ontario's marine sector, generating \$9.6 billion in economic activity. That activity will be in jeopardy if we're unable to continue to attract new talent since 19,000 new marine sector workers must be trained in Canada over the next 10 years.

Forcing colleges to align programming with national labour markets would put our ability to be agile and meaningfully serve at risk. Georgian would be slower to develop new in-demand programs, and it would be significantly more difficult to respond to local employers. While we agree with the need for greater alignment between labour-market needs and international student intake, IRCC's changes must be slowed and implemented in close consultation with institutions, provinces, the federal government, and our communities.

To this end, we seek your support to demonstrate the critical need for IRCC to align post-graduate work permit eligibility with local-labour markets, recognizing the individual needs of communities across Canada and the immense value our own communities realize from our continued partnership.

I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this matter further as we continue to build the resilient, sustainable and modern workforce needed to fuel Ontario's growth and prosperity.

Thank you for your consideration. Chi-Miigwech.

Kind regards,



Kevin Weaver  
President and CEO