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**CAMBRIAN COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND
TECHNOLOGY: ORDER-IN-COUNCIL APPOINTMENT
OF MICHELE DI BRINA***

Prepared for:

Standing Committee on
Government Agencies

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INTRODUCTION

This paper has been prepared for Members participating in the Committee's review of the Order-in-Council appointment of Michele Di Brina as a part-time member of the Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology Board of Governors. It describes the operations of the board, presents information about the appointee, and identifies possible lines of questioning.

CAMBRIAN COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Enabling Statute and Regulation	Responsible Ministry	
Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002 and O. Reg. 34/03	Colleges and Universities	
Agency type	Most Recent Annual Report	
N/A	2018-2019	
Activities		
The Board of Governors is authorized to govern the college and is responsible for ensuring that it is effectively and appropriately managed to achieve the mandate of the college. The Board is responsible for defining the role and mission of the college and, thereby, setting the strategic directions for the college to achieve. The Board of Governors has responsibility for fiduciary oversight and institutional performance.		
Board Membership		
Statutory Number of Members: 17	Position	Remuneration
Number Appointed by Cabinet: 4	Members (part-time):	Nil
Term of Office: Not to exceed 3 years and an individual shall not serve for more than 6 years consecutively. ¹		
Position Requirements		
The board will seek to reflect a complementary mixture of skills, experience, knowledge, and background, while considering the strategic directions of the college. The nomination and appointment process shall be guided by the principles of merit, diversity, and probity. ²		

CURRENT OPERATIONS

Role of the Board of Governors

The role of the Board is to provide the college with strategic leadership and direction. This role includes responsibilities such as approving the annual budget and report, assessing attainment of corporate goals, outcomes and effectiveness, and hiring the president of the college and evaluating their performance.³

¹ After an absence of two years and not to exceed six years in total, an individual becomes eligible for reappointment.

² Cambrian College, [Board of Governors Nomination Policy](#).

³ Cambrian College, [Board of Governors](#).

Board membership

As stated above, the board of governors is composed of seventeen members: four members appointed by Cabinet; the president of the college; one elected student; one elected academic staff member; one elected administrative staff member; one elected support staff member; and eight members appointed by the members of the board holding office at the time of the appointment.⁴ The board meets bi-monthly.

Overview of the College

Founded in 1967 and among the first community colleges in Ontario, Cambrian College is the largest college in northeastern Ontario. The college currently operates from three campuses located in Sudbury, Espanola, and Little Current of Manitoulin Island.

Cambrian College offers programs in health sciences, nursing, and emergency services; skilled trades; engineering technology; creative arts, music, and design; community services; law and justice; business and information technology; safety and environmental studies; and general studies.⁵

[Cambrian R&D](#), the college's applied research department, works closely with the private sector to coordinate applied research and development projects by providing funding, faculty expertise, and facilities. Cambrian College has been ranked as one of the top 50 research colleges in Canada since 2012. It was ranked 24th in Canada for the value of research activity in 2020.⁶

Pre-pandemic, Cambrian College had a yearly total of more than 11,000 enrolments, including over 4,100 students in 80 full-time programs, and over 7,000 students in almost 900 part-time courses and programs.⁷ For the 2020-2021 academic year, the college anticipated a 15% reduction in domestic students and minimum enrolment levels for international students.⁸

In October 2020, the *Sudbury Star* reported that the college surpassed its enrolment target of 4,000 students for the fall semester. At the registration deadline, 4,727 students had enrolled in classes (3,547 domestic, 1,180 international, and 256 part-time) representing a decrease of 344 students, mostly from the international cohort, compared to last year.⁹

⁴ Cambrian College, [By-Law #1](#).

⁵ Cambrian College, [Programs](#).

⁶ *Sudbury Star*, "[Cambrian recognized for research](#)," December 22, 2020.

⁷ Cambrian College, [About](#).

⁸ Cambrian College, [Business Plan 2020-2021](#), p. 10.

⁹ *Sudbury Star*, "[Cambrian College enrolment surpasses targets](#)," October 2, 2020.

Financial Information

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the total revenue and expenditures of the college were \$105 million and \$96 million, respectively. Figure 1 illustrates the main categories of revenue and expenses for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Figure 1. Total Revenue and Expenditures

Year ended March 31, 2020, with comparative information for 2019

	2020	2019
Revenue (Schedule):		
Grants and reimbursements	\$ 38,077,045	43,070,412
Tuition fees	38,406,959	33,237,150
Business development	5,827,351	5,930,598
International programs and other	18,744,952	16,452,570
Restricted	760,721	683,345
Investment income	988,000	739,807
Amortization of deferred capital contributions (note 9)	2,436,430	2,342,785
	105,241,458	102,456,667
Expenses (Schedule):		
Academic	42,385,389	41,214,177
Administration	16,238,473	15,202,501
Special projects	7,517,841	7,771,359
Physical resources	8,049,479	9,214,322
Student services	7,945,732	8,063,056
Business development	3,946,110	4,077,257
International activities	4,907,617	4,484,675
Amortization of capital assets	4,132,725	3,994,996
Scholarships, bursaries and other	876,229	933,117
Provision for employment-related obligations	58,560	132,648
	96,058,155	95,088,108
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 9,183,303	7,368,559

Source: Audited Financial Statements, [Year ended March 31, 2020](#), p. 2.

For the 2020-2021 budget year, the board approved a balanced budget at \$92 million. The 12% reduction in revenue from the previous year reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the postsecondary education system such as reduced enrolment projections and declining ancillary incomes due to remote learning. The budget also reflects pandemic-related expenses such as increased cleaning, personal protective equipment use, and items to support virtual delivery and physical distancing.¹⁰

¹⁰ Cambrian College, [Business Plan 2020-2021](#), p. 10.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In June 2018, Cambrian College signed the [Indigenous Education Protocol](#) that commits the college to a number of measures, including

- integrating Indigenous education into the college's academic programming;
- providing ongoing education to faculty and staff on Indigenous culture, traditions, and history;
- acknowledging the [Calls to Action](#) outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada;
- providing cultural, academic, and counselling support to Indigenous students; and
- strengthening relationships and accountability with Indigenous communities.¹¹

Since the signing of the protocol, Cambrian College has started to offer programs with Indigenous specialization components. Among these are [Social Services Worker - Indigenous Specialization](#) and [General Arts and Science - Indigenous Specialization](#). Through these programs, the students also have the opportunity to take Indigenous language courses.¹² According to the college, approximately 16% of Cambrian's full-time students self-identify as Indigenous.¹³

In May 2019, the board appointed President Bill Best, who has been in the office since August 2014, for a second term.¹⁴ In October 2020, Paul Pedersen, chief of Greater Sudbury Police, became the chair of the board for the 2020-21 term.¹⁵

In recent years, Cambrian College has received significant government funding for its applied research and pre-apprenticeship training programs:

- In June 2019, the college received \$1.75 million in federal funding along with the title of being a [Technology Access Centre](#) (TAC) for its expertise in mining research and technology. The funding is being allocated over a five-year period through the Natural Sciences and

¹¹ Cambrian College, "[Cambrian College Signs Indigenous Education Protocol](#)," news release, June 20, 2018.

¹² Cambrian College, "[Cambrian College Introduces new General Arts and Science Program with Indigenous Specialization](#)," news release, January 20, 2020.

¹³ Cambrian College, "[Cambrian College Signs Indigenous Education Protocol](#)," news release, June 20, 2018.

¹⁴ Cambrian College, "[Bill Best Appointed to Second Term as Cambrian College President](#)," news release, May 1, 2019.

¹⁵ *Sudbury Star*, "[Sudbury's police chief to lead Cambrian College board of directors](#)," October 27, 2020.

Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) for the creation of the college's Centre for Smart Mining.¹⁶

- In July 2019, through the [Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation](#), the college received \$1.9 million from the Government of Ontario for the purchase of specialized equipment that would increase its research capacity in fields such as mining, advanced prototyping, electronics, and chemical engineering.¹⁷ The college also received \$484,000 to fund two pre-apprenticeship skilled trades projects offered to women.¹⁸
- In May 2020, the college received \$715,000 in federal funding, through NSERC, for two new initiatives (an urban agriculture monitoring project and an Indigenous post-secondary transition program) led by the college's applied research department.¹⁹
- On February 10, 2021, the college received \$378,000 in funding from [FedNor](#) for a three-year pilot project that targets late-stage, pre-commercial R&D projects in mining, automation and advanced manufacturing, robotics, and information and communications technology.²⁰

In fall 2020, the college introduced, for the first time, a November intake of new students in a number of its graduate certificate programs. These programs are geared to people who already have a post-secondary diploma or degree and want to advance their skillset.²¹

In February 2021, the Greater Sudbury City Council approved the recommendation from the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation (a not-for-profit agency of the City of Greater Sudbury) to commit \$250,000 in funding for Cambrian College's proposed Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) lab. The BEV technology is believed to be the future in mining as battery electric vehicles are efficient for ventilation and cooling in underground mines and improve worker health and safety by being emissions-free and generating a fraction of the noise and vibration that traditional diesel machines do.²² For its BEV lab, Cambrian College hopes to secure \$2 million in funding from the federal and provincial governments, through the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Ontario Research Fund.²³

¹⁶ Northern Ontario Business, [Cambrian College lands \\$1.75M funding for research in mining technology](#).

¹⁷ Ontario, "[Ontario Building Skilled Workforce in Sudbury](#)," news release, July 15, 2019.

¹⁸ Cambrian College, "[\\$2.48 million in funding for applied research and skilled trades](#)," news release, July 15, 2019.

¹⁹ Cambrian College, "[Growing Minds! Cambrian R&D Receives \\$715,000 for research into community agriculture, Indigenous learning](#)," news release, May 28, 2020.

²⁰ Canada, "[Government of Canada invests to support local innovators and maximize business growth opportunities](#)," news release, February 10, 2021.

²¹ *Sudbury Star*, "[Cambrian says it's ready for the fall semester](#)," August 19, 2020.

²² Alisha Hiyate, "[BEV options for miners grow](#)," *Canadian Mining Journal*, January 1, 2020.

²³ City of Greater Sudbury, "[Cambrian College's Proposed New Battery Electric Vehicle Lab Secures City Funding](#)," news release, February 5, 2021.

THE WITNESS

The witness, Michele Di Brina, is seeking appointment as a part-time member.

According to the Office of the Premier, the witness, of Greater Sudbury, is Area President for Gallagher Benefit Services (Canada) Group Inc. His community involvement includes volunteering with Laurentian University's Faculty of Management Advisory Board.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. *What has motivated the witness to seek this appointment?*
2. *What particular contribution does the witness hope to make to the Board?*
3. *The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the way postsecondary education is delivered in Ontario and globally. What does the witness see as the role of the Board in how this challenge is overcome at Cambrian College?*
4. *What does the witness see as a possible recovery strategy for declining college revenues due to the pandemic?*