

**TOWARDS EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN
HIGHER EDUCATION: THE COLLEGE, THE ECONOMY AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO THE
REGION'S FUTURE**

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ABSTRACT

According to the Conference Board of Canada (2016), the province of British Columbia's economy is foregoing up to \$7.9 billion in GDP and over \$1.8 billion in lost taxes annually because too few people have the education and skills needed to help businesses innovate and grow. Additionally, "B.C. employers have strong concerns about the future availability of highly educated workers in the face of an aging population and rising retirement rates" (Conference Board of Canada, 2016, p.i). The British Columbia 2025 Labour Market Outlook (2017) states that 78% of jobs will require a trade, college or university education.

College of the Rockies is a globally engaged Canadian public post secondary institution that offers trades, college and university programs are located in a region where only 57% of the population has a post secondary certificate, diploma or degree (Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, 2016). As part of a network of over one hundred colleges across Canada, College of the Rockies has been at the forefront of regional economic development, producing many of the skilled workers that the Canadian economy needs and successfully linking graduates to the workforce through their education programs.

Ms. Patricia Bowron of College of the Rockies will provide a practical approach on how Colleges can link to industry and the broader community, creating a skilled workforce for a stronger economy. She will explore the approaches used by College of the Rockies to enhance economic competitiveness in the region and will provide an overview of how the College supports the industry with job-ready graduates. Innovations in program development, creative program delivery strategies and applied learning opportunities to extend both program reach and relevance will be outlined utilizing case studies in diverse sectors including tourism and hospitality, driver and equipment operator training and nursing and health.