

# HHEP

## HALIFAX HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

September 5, 2023

HALIFAX, N.S. – Today marks the return of close to 38,500 post-secondary education (PSE) students to metro Halifax area university and community college campuses and a pledge by members of the **Halifax Higher Education Partnership (HHEP)** to contribute solutions to metro’s housing challenges.

The HHEP, chaired by Mayor Mike Savage, includes the Presidents of NSCC, Atlantic School of Theology, Dalhousie, King’s, Mount Saint Vincent, NSCAD, Sainte-Anne and Saint Mary’s universities as well as the CEO of Halifax Partnership (Partnership).

“Our valued post-secondary institutions are uniquely positioned to help the Halifax Regional Municipality address the acute need for more accessible and affordable housing, while continuing to play a vital role in the economic and social development of the city,” said Mayor Savage.

Wendy Luther, President & CEO, of the Partnership, said growing enrolments of students from across the province, around the region, the rest of Canada and worldwide, have made Halifax a prime education destination. Over the past five years, enrolments among metro’s six universities have increased by about 2,500 students.

“Post-secondary education (PSE) students have profound economic and social impacts on our city,” said Ms. Luther. “Halifax’s highly educated talent pool is critically important to attracting and growing businesses and driving our current and future success. Working together, we can help ensure these students have a positive experience during their studies in Halifax, increasing the likelihood they will build careers here after they graduate. A big part of that experience is doing our collective best to ensure all students have a safe, accessible, and affordable place to live.”

There are currently 4,198 student housing spaces on metro area university and college campuses with plans by all institutions to significantly expand student housing options on and off campus by close to 1,000 spaces soon. The provincial government is funding at least 300 of these spaces through two new student housing builds at two NSCC campuses in Dartmouth. A further 700 spaces remain in their planning stages with financial requirements or funding cited as the primary barrier to proceeding. The University of King’s College envisions having up to 250 additional residence spaces on its campus, doubling its current number.

William (Bill) Lahey, President, University of King’s College, speaking on behalf of his HHEP colleagues, said, “Halifax is a unique education destination nationally and internationally. An important aspect of our institutional and collective responsibility is to proactively address the increasing demand for student housing and contribute to helping address the housing challenges facing the greater community. We will do that by working collaboratively and cooperatively with our sister PSE institutions, the three levels of government and our local communities.”

Dr. Rob Summerby-Murray, President, Saint Mary’s University and Chair, Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU), noted that the federal government has an important role to play in student housing development by expanding the eligibility criteria to include specific provisions for PSE institutions in the National Housing Strategy as well as providing the sector with access to low-cost financing programs.

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