

Director's update to alumni

April 8, 2020

In the weeks since Alberta implemented social distancing, we have all been encouraged to keep connected virtually with friends and family.

You are an important member of SAIT's alumni family, so I am writing to share what Alumni and Development is working on right now and how we are making it easier for you to stay in touch with us and with fellow graduates in the weeks to come.

Three things became apparent as SAIT instructors, students and administration rapidly shifted to an online world, and as our city witnessed dramatically reduced economic activity.

The first was the immediate financial impact on students. We know how difficult it is for students to focus on their studies while dealing with urgent concerns such as paying rent and buying food. So, in mid-March, SAIT launched a funding drive for the I.G. Lewis Student Emergency Fund, and I want to sincerely thank the many who have given a donation – your generosity is making a sudden and significant difference in the lives of students trying to finish this year's education. The need continues, and [donations to the fund](#) can still be made online.

Next, we've realized that students enrolled in SAIT's new May semester will be financially impacted as well. We are adjusting emergency funding dollars to support them by providing 70 entrance bursaries of \$2,500 each. This assistance will help offset registration and tuition expenses, and is especially crucial for those students who have lost part-time jobs or drained their savings trying to meet daily expenses because of challenges created by the pandemic.

The third is just how crucial SAIT alumni are on the front lines of the response to COVID-19. We're so proud and grateful that our alumni are at the heart of essential services in our communities.

To celebrate and honour these everyday heroes, we're sharing their stories in an online series called "[We're better together, even when we are apart.](#)" I encourage you to visit this website, and to send us an email at alumni@sait.ca if you know of an everyday SAIT hero whose story we might tell.

Those stories provide the human connections that I believe will help lift us through this challenging time, and SAIT staff and instructors are putting their creative hats on to make the most of digital technologies that can bring us together.

You are invited to join in on the vast and varied SAIT-hosted programming being made available online, as well as informative virtual experiences that are open to alumni. Please check the LINK story, "[Stay connected with the SAIT community](#)" for more information and to register.

I hope you will visit us online and often. Drop us a line, anytime, at alumni@sait.ca to tell us what stories you enjoyed, and what virtual events you find most informative. Your honest feedback helps ensure we provide the best possible educational opportunities and the most compelling stories about the SAIT family.

As always, I wish you and your loved ones good health. Please keep in touch, take care and stay safe!

Brian Bowman
Director, SAIT Alumni and Development