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Brian Bowman is the associate vice-president of Advancement at SAIT.

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SAIT and industry groups work together for success

JOEL SCHLESINGER
Postmedia Content Works

The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology's (SAIT) new head of advancement's role is not unlike that of its founder, who started the post-secondary institution more than 100 years ago.

"In 1916, as First World War veterans were returning home, J.C. Miller, SAIT's first principal, travelled around Alberta to determine the skills needed for businesses to flourish and to help the province achieve economic prosperity," says Brian Bowman, the associate vice-president of Advancement at SAIT.

Bowman's task today is indeed similar, meeting with industry and other stakeholders to determine what training the polytechnic should offer to educate the next generation of skilled workers.

"We have always had strong relationships with industry and alumni who

provide a lot of support, including financial," Bowman says. "But it's not entirely altruistic on their part."

The support industry and alumni provide — be it funding, equipment or their expertise — is fundamental to how SAIT trains the skilled workforce that employers need to thrive today and in the future.

The post-secondary has long had deep roots in the community, with thousands of points of contact with industry and former graduates. In his new role, Bowman will help execute an overarching strategy of engagement to keep curriculum ahead of trends in any given industry, be it construction, energy or health care.

Of course, these consultations are not a one-way street. "We are actually seeing a shift from where we ask industry what it needs."

Certainly, that still happens, Bowman adds, but, "Today, we increasingly help industry stakeholders un-

derstand what they need in the face of the rapid digitization of business."

SAIT's efforts to help advance Alberta's economic prospects, however, are about more than having cutting-edge curriculum. The school's applied research program is an example of how it helps in other ways, fostering innovation as an accelerator for new products and services.

"Our relationship with industry and stakeholders is really about an exchange of value," he adds. "And my job is to ensure we're more strategic about it so SAIT can bring to bear the full potential of graduates for industry, while helping those grads find careers they seek."

When developed the right way, these relationships benefit everyone — students, SAIT, industry and Alberta, Bowman says.

"In the end, it's about building a better SAIT to build a better community and stronger economy."



Nitin Sathawane is the head of Alberta Business at Mphasis, which opened its Canadian headquarters in Calgary in 2022. Mphasis, a global technology services company, specializes in cloud and cognitive services.

Mphasis sees strong tech capabilities in Calgary

JOEL SCHLESINGER
Postmedia Content Works

Calgary has long been known as Canada's energy capital, and the head of the Canadian division of one of India's most successful technology companies says that energy extends beyond the city's oil and gas reputation.

"What I really noticed about the city when I first arrived was a sense of positive energy overall," says Nitin Sathawane, head of Alberta Business, Mphasis.

Mphasis is a global applied tech company, driving digital transformation for clients with design and architecture-led solutions, serving marquee clients across the globe with more than 32,500 employees.

The global firm set up its Canadian headquarters in Calgary in 2022 after forging strong partnerships with the provincial government, Calgary Economic Development and the University of Calgary.

"The whole idea behind

coming to Calgary is to create a technology ecosystem in the city," Sathawane says.

"And that really boils down to bringing all relevant parties together for research and commercialization of fast-emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and quantum computing."

Those synergies are already underway, with Mphasis partnering with the University of Calgary on Quantum City, a multi-million-dollar initiative to transform Calgary into a quantum computing hub to accelerate talent development, drive innovation and the development of nascent technology that could help solve client's business challenges from industries ranging from banking to financial services and supply chain.

Of course, Mphasis sees much more potential in Calgary and Canada. Notably, it aims to help businesses embrace the ongoing digital transformation that has accelerated with advances

in artificial intelligence (AI).

"Mphasis is already a leading player in this area," Sathawane adds, noting it works with top American banks and other global leaders across many industries.

The India-based company is leading the way in AI applications for business, particularly with its recently launched Mphasis.ai business unit, focused on using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for business outcomes, he notes.

With its considerable talent base, including in AI, Calgary was the ideal city for Mphasis to grow in Canada, Sathawane says.

"Overall, the people here make the difference," he says. "There is a strong entrepreneurial spirit."

Now recruiting talent, including a team of Salesforce-focused developers, Mphasis will only accelerate its deepening partnerships to drive Canada's economy forward, Sathawane says.

"The journey has only just begun."

Calgary Stampede's expanded BMO Centre opens new possibilities

JOEL SCHLESINGER
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The unveiling of the newly expanded BMO Centre at Stampede Park involves more than adding convention and events space.

The expansion opens a new world of possibility, making the city a major destination for North America's largest, top-tier gatherings.

"Alberta, Calgary included, was really a bit of a fly-over province when it came to the big national and international conventions," says Greg Newton, executive vice-president, conventions and events and general manager of the BMO Centre.

"The new addition of more finished meeting and

exhibition space allows the city to compete with the other three major cities in Canada — Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

For that matter, the new \$500-million expansion, set to open June 5, makes Calgary a premier destination in North America for conventions and other large events.

More than 100,000 square feet of exhibition space has been added amid the upgrades and will continue to host events like the Calgary International Auto and Truck Show. But the addition of 38 meeting rooms, ranging from 500 sq. ft. to 6,000 sq. ft., and 70,000 sq. ft. between two new ballrooms is game-changing, he adds.

Central to the expansion

is The Exchange — a nexus space connecting the new conference rooms and ballrooms. The public space — complete with a fireplace, comfortable lounge furniture and a fully serviced bar — is designed to spur social interaction among event attendees, Newton says.

"Its layout is meant to 'foster serendipity,' because if people can connect outside the meeting rooms, that is really where the magic of networking happens," he explains. "We want people to stay between the meetings and mingle, as opposed to leaving and going back to their hotel room."

Indeed, the overall expansion is all about bringing people together — no matter

the size of the gathering.

"The layout allows us to have a big meeting in a ballroom, for example, and then a bunch of small gatherings in other meeting rooms, along with a big lunch in the other ballroom," Newton says, adding that the expanded facility might do more than attract events that passed the city by before.

"We're exposing the city to organizations and professionals who may never have come here otherwise, and who may in turn realize all that Calgary has to offer," he says.

"And that can lead to increased tourism and business for the city, including the potential for businesses relocating operations here."



Greg Newton is the executive vice-president, conventions and events and general manager of the BMO Centre at Stampede Park.

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