

News Release

For Immediate Release
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High job placement rate, salaries make future bright for engineering technicians and technologists **ASET CEO says profession is virtually recession-proof**

Even in a challenging economy, the future for engineering technicians and technologists remains bright, their skills increasingly in demand in a province that depends on them for the public safety and maintenance of all systems and processes – from water to electricity to transportation.

According to NAIT, in 2008 approximately 93 per cent of graduates in programs accredited by the Association of Science and Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta (ASET) were employed within a year of graduation.

Salaries within the profession are on the rise for the third year in row, having increased a minimum of five per cent since 2008. ASET's 2009 salary survey revealed a salary range between \$56,455 for technicians or technologists in training (TTs)/associates and \$179,973 for self-employed certified engineering technologists (CETs).

In its 2009 Engineering and Technology Labour Market Study, Engineers Canada and the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists found that employment in engineering and technology occupations has grown almost twice as rapidly as employment in non-engineering and technology occupations over the last decade.

"I don't think it's a stretch to say that this profession is virtually recession-proof. It's wide and varied, supporting 120 different occupations – all of which keep this province functioning with the reliability of Swiss watch, advancing the economy and the cause of public safety," said ASET CEO Barry Cavanaugh.

From the moment Albertans wake up in the morning and turn on a light switch or shower until the end of the day, they rely on the work of these professionals. Technicians install cable and phone, monitor traffic, work in labs, and serve as process workers in refineries and manufacturing. Technologists design plans with engineers, create commercial buildings and return well sites properly to nature. They ensure fast-acting telephone networks, smart bus connections, proper water pressure at home, perfectly clean water to drink, reliable natural gas service and electrical power, smooth roads on which to drive, and responsible oil and gas exploration/production/processing/and distribution.

"Our experience at NAIT is that there has been strong demand for engineering technology graduates for many years. From discussion with our industrial partners, we anticipate that the changes to the Engineering, Geological and Geophysical Professions Amendment Act (EGGPA) will further increase this demand from industry. In addition, it will likely raise public awareness of the dynamic and fulfilling career paths experienced by this profession," said David Carpenter PhD, dean of NAIT's School of Electrical and Electronic Technology.

“Proclamation of EGGPA will make ASET-certified technicians and technologists more appealing than ever for employers because ASET members will be bound to a professional Code of Ethics with discipline and standards for practice in the hands of the profession, operating in the public interest. EGGPA will also offer greater flexibility for employers by giving qualified members the opportunity to pursue the brand new P.Tech designation that will allow them to practice engineering independently without supervision by professional engineers, within existing codes and standards,” added Cavanaugh.

Representing approximately 17,000 technicians and technologists across Alberta, ASET provides its members the certification that top employers demand. ASET members play an integral role in driving the Alberta economy and their innovation is one reason why the province maintains its competitive advantage. ASET members represent a wide range of sectors including avionics, biomedical, chemical, computers, electrical, environmental, geological, instrumentation, oil and gas, and telecommunications. www.aset.ab.ca

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