

News of the arts

Ontario colleges get together to sell services abroad

A dozen Ontario colleges have joined together to market their skills worldwide and act as a resource for Ontario companies bidding on overseas projects with a training component.

"It began with a feeling that the community college system here was well-established and seemed to be doing things right," explains David J. Pugsley, dean of marketing and development at Centennial College in Toronto.

"And we knew that the developing countries need to train people. We in Ontario have what they need."

Colleges such as Centennial, George Brown, Humber, Cambrian, St. Lawrence and Northern, with its Haileybury School of Mines are part of the new organization called Ontario Colleges International (OCI). They were all successfully involved in training foreign students in Canada or sending faculty members abroad to serve as teachers or consultants, and they found that selling services overseas offered many advantages.

Mr. Pugsley, who initiated International Outreach in November 1976, notes that exporting knowledge can boost college finances in a time of restraint. It can employ faculty even when enrolment declines. And it is good experience for participants. "We're always concerned that teachers will become less relevant," he says. "Moving them into a challenging

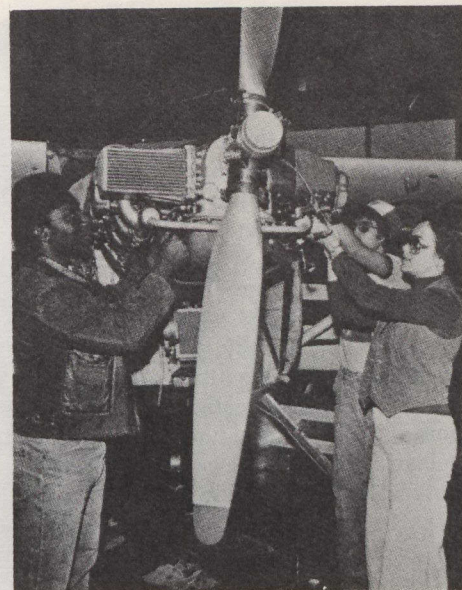
situation renews their creativity. It's a great way to avoid *rigor mortis* setting into the system."

Exploring possibilities

At Centennial, Mr. Pugsley launched Operation Outreach to explore the possibilities. He visited the federal Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, the Canadian International Development Agency, and the World Bank; and they all gave him leads to upcoming projects. He visited Gambia and nearby countries and, within a month, had landed Operation Outreach's first job: a feasibility study on textbook production in Afghanistan. Liberia asked for help for a Baptist college in a rural and primitive area carved out of the rain forests. Gambia wanted proposals for developing training centres. Jamaica asked for help in launching a course to teach auto mechanics to the disadvantaged.

The opportunities escalated and Mr. Pugsley reached out to private enterprise companies for help with equipment supply and to other community colleges for specialized faculty. Gradually he became their semi-official representative on overseas projects.

After discussions between Mr. Pugsley and Nigerian officials in Canada and Africa, Nigeria wanted an Ontario group to bid on the designing, staffing, equip-



Students of aircraft maintenance: (left to right) Frempong Fordjour of Ghana, Mario Carualho of Kenya and Hazel Mann of Toronto.

ping, curriculum planning, and training of faculty and administrators for a college at Bida with an eventual student enrolment of 6,000.

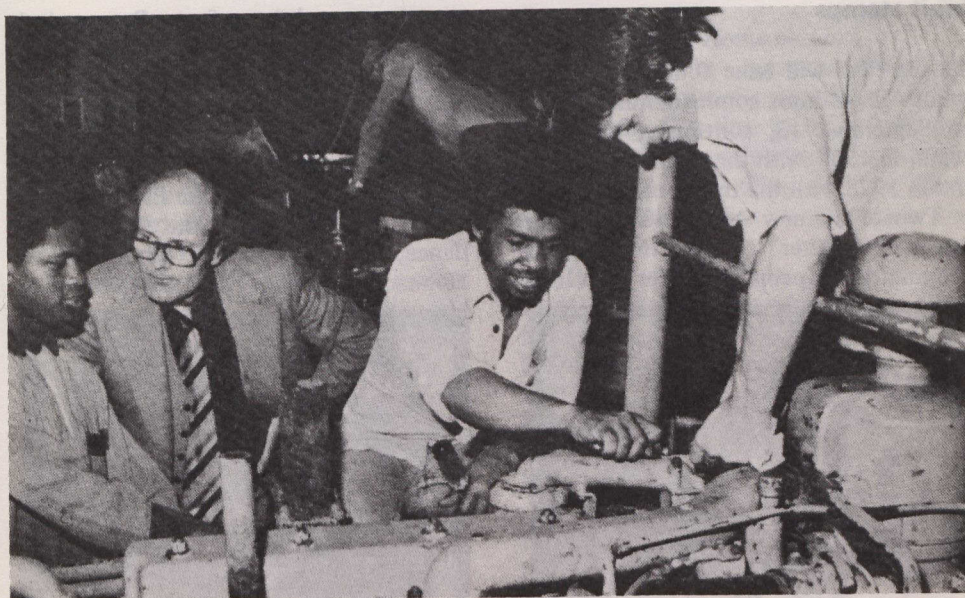
The \$100-million Bida project would bring about \$25 million into Ontario. A special consortium was formed involving Cansult (consulting engineers), Perrytech (suppliers of educational equipment), and Page and Steele (architects). As educational participant, Ontario Colleges International, was formed to extend beyond Operation Outreach and involve a dozen or more community colleges. The new consortium, called Educansult, with funding assistance from Ottawa and PEATE, an Ontario government program for the export of administrative and technical expertise, invested \$100,000 to prepare a highly professional proposal for Nigeria.

Joint funding

OCI now operates as a marketing and administrative body. Member colleges each contribute \$5,000 a year plus 10 per cent of any revenues they receive through its activities. This is intended to build a level of funding that will let OCI assume projects that no one college could undertake alone.

"I believe," says David Pugsley confidently, "that OCI will make a significant contribution to Ontario's world trade."

(*Ontario Business News*, May/June 1979).



A bulldozer diesel engine comes under the hands of inquisitive students; (left to right) Patrick Edwards of Jamaica; David Pugsley, secretary of OCI; Henry Bedminster of Dominica and Mike Snowdon of Toronto.