



# St. Andrew's College Strategic Plan

November, 2020

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## Executive Summary

Over the past eighteen months, St. Andrew's College (SAC) has undertaken a comprehensive strategic planning process. This process included an analysis involving an extensive outreach to key stakeholders, along with a thorough environmental scan to understand the landscape of theological schools in Canada/North America. Also researched were trends associated with The United Church of Canada (the Church/UCC) and associated congregations. Student interests/needs, academic practices and programs, community ministry needs, current social issues, and the impact of Covid-19 on post-secondary education were also considered as components of the environmental scan.

To ensure a comprehensive strategic plan, the planning process and the plan execution utilized a highly collaborative and integrated process. IMPACT Learning Inc. (the strategic planning consulting company) was identified to guide St. Andrew's College in the creation of a "roadmap" of priorities and actions necessary to achieve a shared vision. The planned framework incorporated the school's mission, major goals, services, work streams and action sequences into an integrated plan ready for implementation. A multi-phased strategy was developed and will be described in this document.

Covid-19 and the resultant global pandemic has had a significant impact on St. Andrew's College and other academic institutions, as well as the Church, congregations, and the community at large. Most noteworthy for St. Andrew's has been unanticipated financial losses in lease revenues and other reductions in financial support. These losses have resulted in a need to focus on ensuring financial sustainability over the next years, as well as positioning St. Andrew's as a thriving and transformative theological institution in the future. As a result, the strategic plan was developed using a multi-phased approach. Short term priorities identified in St. Andrew's strategic plan will ensure the College continues its progress toward sustainability. Other priorities and associated action sequences will set St. Andrew's up for a thriving and vibrant future.

Six strategic priorities were identified along with associated actions:

1. **Financial sustainability:** Achieve and demonstrate a model of long-term financial sustainability.
2. **Engagement and Excellence:** Engage students through academic excellence, theological expertise and ministry preparation.
3. **Partnership:** Cultivate and leverage collaborative partnerships.
4. **Visibility and Recruitment:** Develop and implement plans to increase visibility and recruit/retain students.
5. **Creativity and Experimentation:** Embrace and demonstrate a pioneering and resourceful mindset.
6. **Culture:** Foster a justice driven, student-focused culture of collaboration, leadership, research, and innovation.

## The Strategic Planning Process

Several key considerations were established for the strategic planning process. For a highly effective and relevant plan, it was determined that St. Andrew's Strategic Plan must:

- Have the mission and vision of St. Andrew's as its foundation
- Map out the steps to the future state (the shared vision)
- Reflect St. Andrew's legacy, history and assets
- Reflect the partnerships with the Church, the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatoon Theological Union, St. Thomas More College, local/regional congregations and communities and global relationships
- Consider internal and external environment/factors/stakeholders
- Address current/changing realities and trends and incorporate opportunities for innovation/experimentation
- Provide opportunity to "dream big" and "beyond"
- Take on a global view
- Satisfy the requirements of ATS accreditation
- Be multi-phased, actionable, measurable and adaptable

A Strategic Planning Core Team was identified and played a key role in overseeing and managing the strategic planning process. This team consisted of representation from the administration, the faculty, the staff, alumni, and church/community leaders. Core principles of the Strategic Planning Core Team were to ensure the process be inclusive, comprehensive, and transparent.

The content of this document describes key components of the strategic planning process, "refreshed" mission and vision statements for St. Andrew's College, the six strategic priorities, including several short-term considerations and actions to support the priorities. Preliminary detailed action plans for the priorities are in development and are available for review upon request.

### *Stakeholder Outreach and Environmental Scan*

Stakeholder outreach has been an essential component of the Strategic Planning Process. The first phase of stakeholder outreach is complete and included numerous interviews and/or focus groups with the following:

- St. Andrew's administration, faculty and staff
- Members of the Board of Regents
- Students
- Members of various committees and teams: Academic Committee, Finance Committee, Development Committee, Nominations Committee, Green Team
- Alumni representatives
- Past members of the Board of Regents and school leadership
- Representatives from The United Church of Canada
- Practicing church leaders, clergy, and ministry
- Theological schools/industry thought leaders and subject matter experts

Additionally, a retreat was held early in the strategic planning process to gain insights, perspectives, and ideas. This retreat was very inclusive with participation from the St. Andrew's administration, faculty, staff, students, various Board and Committee members, alumni, practicing clergy/ministry, school heads from the other STU colleges, and other key stakeholders. The retreat was facilitated by the strategic planning consultant and included presentations from subject matter experts associated with the Association of Theological Schools and The In Trust Center. Participants were provided with an understanding of the current landscape of theological schools, including trends, and implications for St. Andrew's. They also shared conversation and ideas during several breakout sessions on topics related to partnerships, curriculum, culture, innovation, and student recruitment.

The data collected from the stakeholder outreach, the retreat, the school's history, and the environmental scan was compiled and summarized in the SWOT Analysis which can be found in the Appendix of this document.

### *Key Considerations*

Integrated in the St. Andrew's strategic planning process was a review of the current mission and a visioning process. An assessment of the current mission description determined that a refresh was necessary. The Strategic Planning Core Team, along with the St. Andrew's faculty, staff, Board and Committee members have all been engaged in the mission and vision refresh. The specific language of the mission and vision statements are in the process of being "fine-tuned".

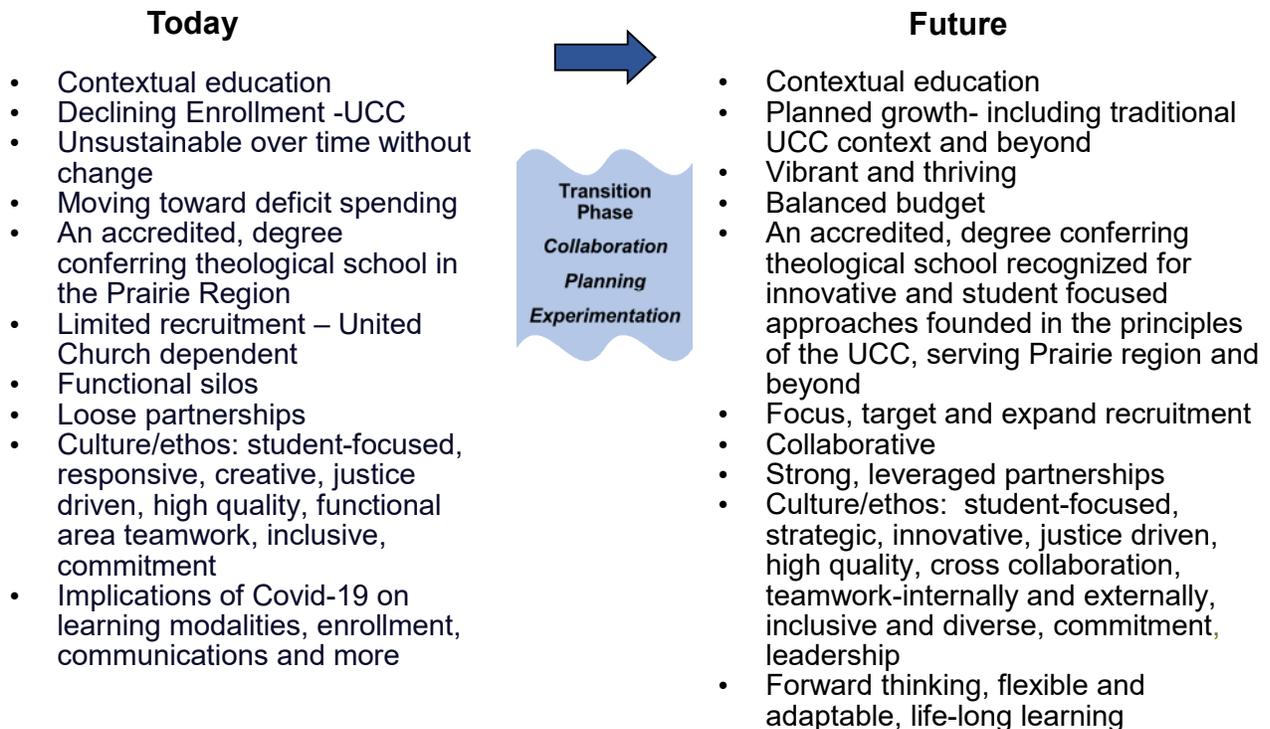
St. Andrew's College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation (COA) of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). The strategic plan addresses considerations relevant and important to the accreditation process.

Covid-19 has resulted in unexpected financial implications for St. Andrew's. With revenue sources stressed, including a loss of lease income (approximately \$500,000 annual) from the primary tenant, financial sustainability has become a more urgent concern to address. Safety practices associated with Covid-19 have limited opportunities to hold in person events and activities resulting in challenges associated with development/fundraising. Availability of fundraising dollars have also become more competitive due to community needs due to the impact of Covid-19. Additionally, infrastructure support provided by the University of Saskatchewan is anticipated to be discontinued in 2021 which will result in new technology and other infrastructure expenses for the College.

Also related to Covid-19, the delivery of academic programming has been entirely online most of 2020, with some being synchronous and some asynchronous. With the continuation of virtual learning in the fall of 2020, it will be important to consider delivery and methodologies for future programming. International students have unique challenges including their inability to travel into Canada, difficulties associated with obtaining proper academic permits, and time zone challenges for online class attendance.

## Strategic Intent

The strategic plan is intended to advance St. Andrew's from its current state to a future state that is sustainable, thriving, and vibrant. The current and future states are described as follows:



## Mission and Vision

Recognizing that the strategic plan needs to link directly to the St. Andrew's Vision of the future and Mission, it was determined that the current statements needed to be refreshed. Although the specific words may be further refined, the mission and vision concepts are described below.

### *St. Andrew's College Dream*

***To be a vibrant and thriving, justice-driven theological college recognized for leadership practice, academic excellence, and connected to God and all creation.***

### *St. Andrew's College Mission Concept*

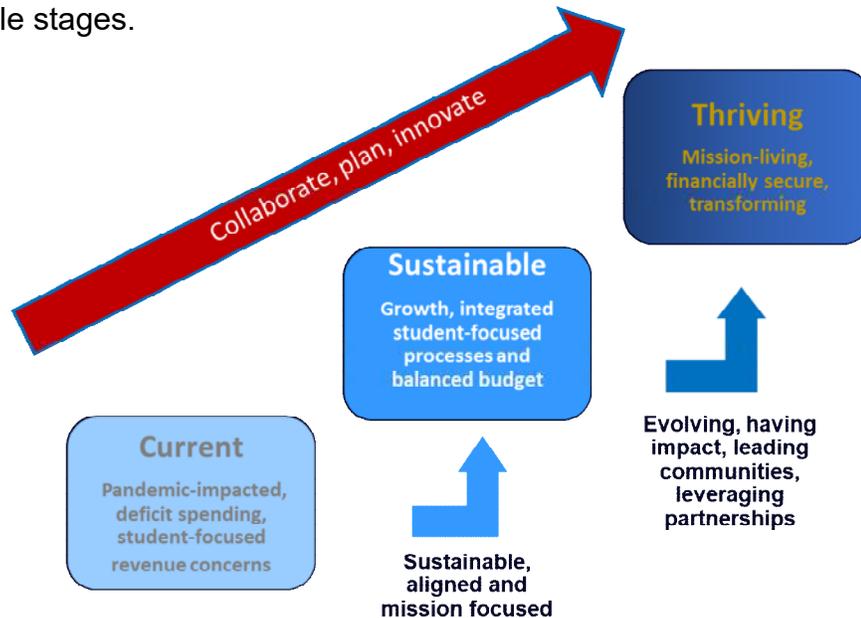
***“Theological Education to Embody Compassion, Hope, and Justice”***

**St. Andrew's College is a theological school that prepares innovative and inclusive leaders who embody Jesus Christ's message of compassion, hope, and justice.**

- Located in the Prairie Region of Canada and rooted in The United Church of Canada, St. Andrew's demonstrates a progressive mindset and is highly engaged in collaborative partnerships locally, nationally and globally.
- St. Andrew's creative, inclusive and student focused approach well prepares Christian leaders to engage people through God's messages of love and justice

## A Multi-Phase Strategy

Early in the strategic planning process, it was determined that a successful plan would require the consideration of a multi-phase approach with sequencing of action items, to ensure that St. Andrew's prioritizes the work of the strategic plan in manageable and achievable stages.



In addition to human capital assets and robust academic programs for both ordination and non-ordination tracks, for many years St. Andrew's has been blessed with a strong financial asset with its building. The St. Andrew's College building has provided a sense of financial security through its leased space over the past several years. The substantial revenue provided by leasing space has enabled the school to function with a small student body. Due to Covid-19, the loss of a significant lease contract has resulted in the necessity to closely assess the school's finances and to consider deficit spending with tighter budget management until contracts with new tenants are accomplished and new sources of revenue are identified. With denomination support also declining, there is a renewed focus on the importance of increasing student enrollment and considering other revenue streams to ensure St. Andrew's, not only remains sustainable, but can also grow and thrive well into the future. Additionally, with a deepened relationship with partnership schools, there are new possibilities associated with resource sharing.

The strategic plan has identified specific actions that are essential to move from the current critical state to a condition of sustainability and then to advance toward the future vision. With confidence that "sustainability" is underway through short-term initiatives, St. Andrew's will be able shift focus from financial security to those strategic priorities that drive toward the future dream. These priorities include initiatives associated with building collaborative partnerships, adapting curriculum/programming to meet student and ministry needs, and positioning St. Andrew's as a life-long learning community that develops justice-seeking Christian leaders and ministers for today's complex world.

## St. Andrew's College Strategic Priorities

The six strategic priorities have been defined and are depicted in the graphic below:



Initiatives and actions have been identified for each of the six priorities and are described in the following section. Some have been sequenced for immediate action to address the negative impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic and to set up St. Andrew's for financial sustainability as an accredited, degree-conferring theological college. These will be described in the section titled: Short-Term Initiatives.

### *Six Priorities Initiatives with Actions*

Initiatives and actions have been identified for each of the strategic priorities. All will be sequenced based on prioritization, resources, and timing requirements. A progress dashboard will be used to monitor progress. See Appendix for a draft dashboard.

#### **1. Financial Sustainability: Achieve long term financial sustainability as a thriving theological school**

- Manage/prioritize toward a balanced budget addressing revenue losses/increased expenses (Immediate/ongoing)
- Develop and implement donor development/fundraising and donor outreach plan with Principal and new Development Committee (Fall 2020)
- Increase student enrollment, including with UCC (2021 and ongoing)
- Manage building assets
  - Address zoning issues to include opportunity of leasing to private education institutions (Fall, 2020-2021)
  - Establish contracts for new tenant leases (2021)
  - Establish processes to manage shared resources with STU/partner schools
- Continue to assess and address the theological and socio-cultural landscape to ensure relevancy and sustainability through collaborative problem solving



## 2. Engagement and Excellence: Engage students through academic excellence, theological expertise, leadership, and ministry preparation

- Continue to demonstrate a college-wide student-focused approach for Canadian and international students
- Continue to assess curriculum/delivery to ensure flexibility and growth to address student/prospective student, church, community needs and interests and adapt as needed (Annual assessment by Faculty Council, including feedback from Recruitment Officer and Registrar)
  - Enhance teaching capacity and capabilities to develop programs that engage and prepare students
  - Enhance and expand integrated non-degree, lay ministry and leadership development by promotion of the DLM Program (Fall 2020 and ongoing)
  - Ensure recruiting efforts promote the flexibility and extensive programmatic offerings, including ecumenical through the STU, to ensure clarity/positioning with prospective students and recruiting sources (Fall 2020 and ongoing)
  - Outreach to current international connections to recruit students (Fall 2020-2021)
- Plan, enhance and deliver collaborative STU ecumenical offerings through efforts associated with new partnership team (Fall 2020 and ongoing)
- Enhance alumni database and develop alumni outreach plan (2020-2021)



## 3. Partnerships: Cultivate and leverage collaborative learning partnerships

- Identify, assess, jointly develop a plan for/with partners in support of SAC mission through a new partnership team: St. Andrew's, STU, St. Thomas More (Fall 2020-2021)
  - Establish communication processes, tools, coordination and roles to ensure success
  - Explore opportunities for resource sharing, including infrastructure, programming, positions, etc.
- Plan/develop a clearly defined, coordinated, integrated, well-communicated and mutually beneficial STU partnership that adds great value to the SAC student experience (Fall, 2020-2021)
  - Establish communication processes, tools, coordination and roles to ensure success
  - Position a high-value, well-resourced, easy access library meeting ATS requirements (2021)
- Sustain and establish relationships and process to continue/grow enrollments of international students considering impact of Covid-19 (Fall 2020 and ongoing)



## Partnerships Priority Continued

- Grow and promote dual degree program and pursue other academic partnerships with University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon Theological Union partners, St. Thomas More, the Church, and other seminaries (Fall 2020-2021 and ongoing)
- Identify ways to leverage other partnerships (CPE, ATS, other schools, etc.)
- Engage alumni and other stakeholders in specific activities that provide support and resources in strategy execution (Fall, 2020-2021)

## 4. Visibility and Recruitment: Develop and execute plans to promote St. Andrew's College and recruit/retain students

- Hire, onboard and establish a new integrated recruitment position
- Establish a 2-year targeted plan and goals (Fall 2020)
  - Understand/promote St. Andrew's strengths, programs, culture, degrees, offerings, culture, flexibility, and core values
  - Expand pool of prospective students within the Church and outside the Church
- Conduct market research, develop marketing plan, brand identity and brand promise (Summer 2021)
  - Clearly identify and describe SAC value proposition including: degrees, offerings, programming, culture, flexibility, and core values



## 5. Creativity and Experimentation: Embrace and demonstrate a pioneering and resourceful mindset

- Define, establish goals, processes and provide tools that encourage the SAC community to demonstrate a pioneering and resourceful “mindset” (Strategic Implementation Team - 2021)
- Assess and develop a forward-thinking technology plan, upgrades, support, as well as to address the loss of the University as an infrastructure resource and provider (Establish a technology team- Fall, 2020)
  - Explore shared infrastructure resources with STU
- Establish a team to look at ways St. Andrew's can integrate concern and caring for the environment into all aspects of college life (2021)
- Cost effectively and creatively manage facility, leases, residential areas (2020 and 2021)
- Continually assess, understand, adapt and create programming to meet the needs of congregations and other ministries (Ongoing)
- Encourage innovative faculty research and opportunities to understand and address the dynamic changes in the Church, congregations, ministries, and our community (Ongoing)



## 6. Culture: Foster a justice driven, student-focused culture of collaboration, leadership, research, and innovation

- Enhance communication processes by utilizing existing and establish processes that support transparency, collaboration, assessment, planning, academic research, and experimentation
  - Faculty-staff meetings
  - Formal and informal connections
  - Clear communication processes with Principal, Board, faculty, staff, committees, and partners including understanding of governance processes
  - Kick off and utilize a Strategy Implementation Team (SIT) to ensure(“situate”) strategy execution, to serve as liaison to internal teams and to support governance and partnerships (Fall, 2020)
  - Implement onboarding processes for new roles and positions including Recruitment Officer, Board members, committee members and team members (Fall 2020 and ongoing)
- Define the desired SAC culture and necessary processes, practices to demonstrate (2021)
  - Practice the core principles taught to students
- Implement a progress dashboard and processes to utilize (Fall 2020)



### Short-Term Initiatives to Ensure Sustainability

The following are critical short-term initiatives and actions necessary to achieve financial and academic sustainability over the next year:

#### 1. Financial Sustainability

Address 2020/21 financial issues (Immediate and ongoing)

Donor development plan (Fall 2020)

Increase enrollment (2021)

Obtain rezoning to increase opportunities for new leases (Fall, 2020 -Q1, 2021 (ongoing)

Obtain new lease contract (Summer/Fall 2021)

#### 2. Engagement and Excellence

Linkage of recruiting role to academic programs and processes to ensure clarity/positioning (2020-20210 and ongoing)

Enhance alumni database and develop alumni outreach plan (2020-2021)

Assess curriculum to match prospective student, Church and ministry needs (2021)

#### 3. Partnerships

Plan/operationalize clearly defined/communicated, coordinated, integrated, SAC beneficial STU/STM partnership (Partnership team) (Fall 2020 and ongoing)

Assess resource sharing opportunities including a more integrated curriculum and faculty sharing (Fall 2020-2021)

## **Short Term Initiatives Continued**

### **4. Visibility and Recruitment**

Hire Recruitment Officer and develop/implement comprehensive recruitment plan (Fall 2020)

Develop marketing plan (TBD and ongoing)

### **5. Culture**

Enhance communication processes (Fall 2020)

Onboard new roles effectively (Fall 2020)

Kick off/Operate Strategy Implementation Team (Fall 2020 and ongoing)

## Appendix

### SWOT Analysis

#### SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Strengths (Internal)	Weaknesses (Internal)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff and faculty commitment to students and SAC</li> <li>2. Strong efforts toward student focused approaches</li> <li>3. Highly engaged students</li> <li>4. Very diverse student body/safe space for diversity</li> <li>5. Inclusive community</li> <li>6. Spiritual formation</li> <li>7. Location on the University of Saskatchewan campus</li> <li>8. Ownership of our building</li> <li>9. Prairie location</li> <li>10. Curriculum that has a strong application focus</li> <li>11. Academic standards and rigorous accreditation</li> <li>12. Library resources</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Low student enrollment</li> <li>2. Limited marketing – no comprehensive plan or focused effort</li> <li>3. No strategic recruiting and retention plan for students</li> <li>4. Very high per student cost to SAC</li> <li>5. Internal communications could be improved – who is doing what, what's going on with committees, etc.</li> <li>6. Faculty have high number of administrative responsibilities</li> <li>7. Current situation is not sustainable long term – low enrollment, funding cuts, per student cost</li> <li>8. Reactive not strategic</li> <li>9. No strategy for the Library</li> </ol>
Opportunities (External)	Threats (External)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Closer alignment, collaboration, sharing with STU and STM</li> <li>2. Leverage Prairie Region location</li> <li>3. Closer alignment with and ongoing support of local churches and other ministries</li> <li>4. Engage donors and potential donors</li> <li>5. Focused marketing to community, recruiting sources, prospective donors, prospective students</li> <li>6. To be a theological expert/voice/resource center for Prairie Region and beyond</li> <li>7. Alumni engagement</li> <li>8. Leverage faculty/staff strengths</li> <li>9. Closing of churches</li> <li>10. Development of lay people</li> <li>11. Learning partnerships</li> <li>12. Provide more leadership in Prairie Region and beyond</li> </ol> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">©2018 IMPACT Learning, Inc.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Competitive environment for theological education</li> <li>2. Decline in enrollments/interest in theological schools</li> <li>3. Competitive environment for donors and funders</li> <li>4. Speed of technology change</li> <li>5. 24/7 society expectations</li> <li>6. Need for continuous education for faculty and staff</li> <li>7. Difficult engagement of a increasingly polarized and diverse society</li> <li>8. Loss of University support</li> <li>9. Loss of United Church of Canada support – students/financial</li> <li>10. Students was a fast, customized, applicable education with ROI</li> </ol>

### Draft Progress Dashboard

Priority Area	Objective/Timing	Progress
<b>Culture</b>	Enhanced communications across all functions	
<b>Financial Sustainability</b>	Plan to address decline in revenues and to move away from deficit spending (new tenants) Plan to address infrastructure and IT Development/fundraising plan for 2020-21	
<b>Engagement and Excellence</b>	Define student-focus and its components Continue to assess curriculum	
<b>Partnerships</b>	Development of partnership team and collaborative process, including principles/covenant Explore options for shared resources	
<b>Visibility and Recruitment</b>	Hiring, onboard of recruitment officer Development and implementation of recruiting plan	
<b>Creativity and Experimentation</b>	Define, establish goals, processes and provide tools that encourage the SAC community to demonstrate a pioneering and resourceful “mindset” (technology plan, environmental plan, curriculum planning)	

### *Members of the Strategic Planning Core Team*

Team Members consisted of:

Don Barss, Alumnus and Church leader

Taylor Croissant, Alumnus and Church leader

Leslee Harden, Chief Administrative Officer

Richard Manley-Tannis, Principal

Doug Neufeld, Chair of the Board of Regents

Melanie Schwanbeck, College Secretary

Don Schweitzer, Professor of Systematic Theology

Carol Marturano-Becker, President IMPACT Learning Inc. - Consultant

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