

Ray D. Block, PhD, CPA, CGA
NAIT, Vice President Administration & CFO

Dr. Ray Block joined NAIT's executive as vice president administration & CFO in April, 2011, following more than two decades in leadership and management roles in a variety of sectors in Alberta, including post-secondary education, health care and financial services.

The position brings Dr. Block full circle. He began his extensive education at NAIT, completing an Honours Diploma in Accounting in 1974. Following that, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Commerce, a Certified General Accountant designation, a Master of Agriculture in Agriculture Economics, and, in 2007, a PhD in Public Health Sciences. With the exception of the CGA designation, he earned each degree at the University of Alberta.

In addition to this background, Dr. Block brings a great deal of experience to his role at NAIT, the majority of it in leadership and management roles.

Previously in a parallel position at Athabasca University, Dr. Block has developed a solid understanding of the opportunities and challenges of the post-secondary environment. As the university's VP finance and administration, he successfully managed a diverse portfolio that included finance, human resources, capital projects, facilities and risk management. As part of those responsibilities, and along with his colleagues, he maintained the \$30-million Academic Research Centre capital project on budget. Through innovative budget strategies, he generated more than \$1.4 million in divisional savings (\$5 million university wide) while avoiding staff layoffs. As well, he oversaw growth in the university's investment strategies. At the end of the 2010 fiscal year, its bond fund was double the industry benchmark.

As former president and chief executive officer of the Alberta Mental Health Board, Dr. Block understands the importance of effective leadership within a large and complex organization. During that time he introduced new services, including the facilitation of a province-wide mental health plan and Mental Health First Aid Canada, a program directed at providing early mental health treatment. In addition, he streamlined and improved existing services, largely through his skills to unite people around a common vision. He also oversaw the completion of a \$110-million geriatric and adult facility in Ponoka.

Previously, in 2005, he received the Alberta Centennial Medal from the Government of Alberta for his contributions to the province's health care system. In February, 2011, he was named a member of the Alberta Health Services Board where he will continue to have a positive influence on Alberta's Health Care.

Further experience Dr. Block brings to NAIT includes his role in the merger of Alberta Hail & Crop Insurance and Alberta Agriculture Development Corp. to become Agriculture Financial Services Corporation. During the seven years employed with these organizations he held the roles of VP finance and administration and, following the merger, VP insurance operations. Earlier in his career, Dr. Block was the Controller of Red Deer College.