



The National Report on
ABORIGINAL INCLUSION
 Seeds, Strategies, Successes

26 Aboriginal Hires by Safeway Through Workforce Connex

“The connection I made with Safeway Manager, Russell Janus, at the British Columbia Workforce Connex resulted in a meeting to discuss how we could assist them to fill 100 positions in the new Chilliwack store. I am pleased to announce that two months after the May 2006 Workforce Connex event, 26 Aboriginal people have been hired to work in Safeway’s Chilliwack store with a possibility of more to follow.”

Murray Ned, Manager
 Sto:lo Nation Human Resources Development
 Chilliwack, British Columbia



Kelly Lendsay, AHRDCC President and CEO speaks about Aboriginal participation in Canada’s labour market with CH television.

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 Winter 2006 - Issue Ten

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Workforce Connex Nets 281 Employment Commitments

As baby boomers begin to retire, leaving a deep void in the workplace, many employers are searching for an innovative solution to the ensuing skilled worker shortage.

While some aggressively recruit workers from beyond provincial borders, others are awakening to the competitive advantage of local Aboriginal talent.

“Canada is experiencing an Aboriginal baby boom,” said Kelly Lendsay, president and CEO of the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC).

“Aboriginal people are the nation’s youngest and fastest growing human resource...this young, upwardly mobile, labour force wants and needs workplace opportunities for training, skills development and employment,” he says.

But, as Lendsay points out, on a national scale, there is a disconnect that exists between the potential skills contribution made by an Aboriginal workforce and the view held by some business and labour leaders on this contribution.

To address the barriers to accessing and utilizing an Aboriginal workforce, the Sector Council Program, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, has helped fund a series of Workforce Connex forums between various stakeholders including government, industry, business, training institutions and the Aboriginal community. Funding was also provided by the Alberta Government to host the Alberta event.

The forums, which offer employers a local labour solution, help narrow the growing gap between labour demand and supply, while also placing some emphasis on trades and apprenticeship.

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Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion... The tools to help you become an employer-of-choice for top Aboriginal talent

Since the council was founded in 1998, hundreds of managers have expressed their need for strategies, training and tools that will improve Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement in their workplace.

Thanks to the support of a dedicated group of Canadian organizations (Networks of Change partners) committed to workplace diversity, it gives me great pleasure to tell you about the council's *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* (MAI) program, which is being developed to respond to the current gap in Canada's workplace diversity movement.

When the program is ready for commercial distribution, the suite of training tools will include six substantial workbooks, employee assessments, PowerPoint presentations, and other tools, from tip sheets to tutorials... all designed to improve an employer's ability to attract top Aboriginal talent.

The workbooks will centre on five core themes: the business case for inclusion; the historic roots of exclusion; intercultural sensitivity; recruitment, retention, advancement; and partnering with communities. A final workbook presents strategies, tools and resources. The numerous books and tools in the MAI series will also form the first stage of a complete training program that will be offered by the council.

The MAI program will present a model known as the Inclusion Continuum to help employers identify their progress toward a workplace of choice for top Aboriginal talent. (see page ten for more information on the Inclusion Continuum.) To date the council has produced the first draft of three workbooks and many associated Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion tools.

In early November 2006 we released, for beta-testing, among our Networks of Change partners, version one of *Recruitment, Retention, Advancement* — Canada's first publication to assemble a collection of research findings and interviews with Canadian managers that have proven best practices in Aboriginal inclusion. (see page 11 for sample tip sheets from this collection.)

Through the MAI program, the council will continue to develop new tools and training regimen over the next three years. This unique approach to research and development of employer solu-

tions is modeled after the Fortune 500 successful efforts in diversity. Companies that wish to demonstrate their leadership in Aboriginal Inclusion are encouraged to join our Networks of Change partnership. Please call the council office and ask for Crystal Kosa or me, or visit www.ahrdcc.com (Products and Services) to find out more information about the program.

The council is very proud of the Aboriginal diversity products and services we are producing to help Canadian employers and Aboriginal people. The council's work with Aboriginal people in Canada is being acknowledged by other countries such as Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States. In some cases, these countries are using our products or modeling our approach to Indigenous human resource strategies. The MAI program, once beta tested and completed, will be the most comprehensive program of Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement strategies, products and services.

In addition to the growing Networks of Change partners (see page 10) that have provided unwavering support, I would like to acknowledge the expertise of Dr. Neil McDonald in the ongoing development of this program.

Dr. McDonald will provide the council with his knowledge in the field of intercultural Aboriginal-corporate training, which will be incorporated into our MAI training program. Council staff, Craig Hall, C.O.O., has been rendering his support and operational strength to ensure this program is running effectively and on schedule. Crystal Kosa, with her extensive expertise in HR, is managing the MAI program and working closely with organizations to elicit their feedback on materials. Crystal will also be developing the MAI training program. Bill Kuhns, writer and research specialist, has been assiduously tracking down interviewees and researching diversity models and the best cases in HR employment strategies — particularly in recruitment and retention.

In May 2007 look for a comprehensive description of how your organization can align with MAI to achieve accelerated and effective outcomes that give you a competitive advantage as an employer-of-choice in the Canadian marketplace.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Lendsay'.

Bold Eagles/Raven Program

Before the birth of Canada as a nation, through the great wars and in modern peacekeeping operations, Aboriginal men and women have created a rich legacy of military service.

Bold Eagles

"(Aboriginal) veterans are held in high esteem by their communities and they remember their time in the army when others were blind to their race..." says Major Neil MacLaine, program director for Bold Eagles, a summer training program that introduces Aboriginal youth and young adults to the basics of army service.

A more recent part of Aboriginal history, the Bold Eagles program has also created a successful legacy for itself – one that was founded 17 years ago when the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations approached the military in the hopes of creating a youth program.

"Understandably, there were concerns about culture shock or about losing their own heritage," says MacLaine.

Eventually, a model was agreed upon which allowed the military to deliver the training aspects while the chiefs, many of whom were veterans themselves, delivered the cultural elements.

Over time, the model has evolved into today's program which includes a six-week basic boot camp, preceded by a three-day cultural camp that stresses the importance of self-discipline, patience, teamwork and persistence. "The cultural component is critical...the participants get the approval and support of the elder to go through the training and getting that blessing eases the job for the military," MacLaine says.

Housed in barracks at Wainwright, Alberta, the participants, aged anywhere from 16-29, begin their training in the middle of July each year. So far, in its 17 years of existence, more than 1,000 men and women have completed the Bold Eagles program and between 20-25 per cent have immediately gone on to serve the military after graduation.

"The longevity of this program has also produced leaders in their communities...even if they didn't opt for military service, they go back to their communities as a changed person," says MacLaine. "In return visits, we often meet up with them and they tell us that it was a summer that changed their life...it awakened a potential inside for what they could be," he adds.

Raven

Raven, a similar program for the navy is run out of Esquimalt, BC, and plans are underway to develop a program for the air force, possibly based on Canada's east coast.

Although the navy's Raven program is only four years old, it's become a quick hit with British Columbia's Aboriginal youth.

In the same manner as the Bold Eagles program, Raven recruits attend a four-day cultural camp and then it's on to seven weeks of boot camp that trains them in weapons, first aid, field skills and physical fitness. In each program, participants are paid a salary, as if they were already serving in the military, which allows them to take home roughly \$4,000 - \$5,000 for the summer.

Upon graduation, participants receive partial military qualifications, making it easier to join the Canadian Forces or, if they are still in high school, they receive four credits as work experience towards their diploma.

Although the training programs are similar between Bold Eagles and Raven, their beginnings were not.

"The genesis of Raven is different," says Lt. Commander Kevin Kirkwood, Raven's program director for the navy.

"It was Admiral Jamie Fraser who first looked out across the Esquimalt waters and watched the First Nations fishing operations," says Kirkwood. "He knew they had always done well in the armed forces but he felt their culture and upbringing might have precluded them from seeing it as a viable option."

"It was then that he decided he wanted to let them know about job opportunities in the navy," says Kirkwood.

Designed to stretch the mental, physical and spiritual skills of the participants, the Raven program often accomplishes a "remarkable metamorphosis."

"Anyone who goes through this program realizes just how little they have been asking of themselves and how much they are capable of now," Kirkwood says. "They have to fight for every ounce of progress that they make but, along the way, they receive a sense of purpose."

When the Raven recruits graduate, they are "changed individuals" says Kirkwood, with the seeds of leadership firmly planted.



Major MacLaine of the Bold Eagles program leads Aboriginal trainees at the Ermineskin powwow



Two Ravens prepare for an exercise requiring camouflouge.

In order to attract more Aboriginal candidates, every Canadian Forces recruiting centre has a designated diversity officer conducts recruiting activities in various communities. The diversity officers also establish ties with elders and community leaders, many of whom remember their own veteran's experience serving their country.

How to Increase Canada's Aboriginal Physicians: Dr. Arlington Dungy's Initiative



Dr. Arlington Dungy, Associate Dean of Alumni and Student Affairs for the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Medicine



Aboriginal students at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Medicine, as of April, 2006, with Dr. Dungy

Dr. Arlington Dungy, associate dean of alumni and student affairs for the University of Ottawa's faculty of medicine, may not personally know the "Aboriginal experience" but he is more than familiar with prejudice.

"As an African-American, I certainly have insights into what it is like to be a member of another minority," says Dungy.

"I can remember, in my youth, that prejudice was an active horse in the community...and that is an experience that shapes your being forever," he says.

Ironically, as Dungy points out, there is a shared history between Aboriginals and African-American slaves that goes beyond the experience of prejudice.

"There is a commonality between Aboriginals and the slave community...with many Aboriginals providing safe haven to slaves escaping to freedom on the underground railway," explains Dungy.

"Anyone who has experienced something like that needs to defray that experience for others."

In his professional quest to 'defray that experience for others,' Dungy has spent the last year ensuring that eight vacancies for Aboriginal students are made available in the University of Ottawa's medical faculty.

It's a bold step that will, in time, ensure better representation of Aboriginal medical professionals across the country.

"Currently, there are no more than 200 self-declared Aboriginal doctors in Canada and there should be about 1500-2000 to be representative of the population," says Dungy.

It is a sad statistic that is reflected in almost every other trade and professional sector as well.

But thanks to the university's Aboriginal admission program, 13 Aboriginal student doctors are now enrolled and, although some graduating Aboriginal doctors may decide to return to practice in their home communities, Dungy says others will head into cities given that more than 50 per cent of the Aboriginal population now lives in urban areas.

"No matter what the choice, I am confident that they will go wherever their talents lead them... and they will stimulate others to become more aware and engaged in Aboriginal healthcare issues," he says.

The University of Ottawa's concept of designated Aboriginal admissions can be credited to Dean Peter Walker who first proposed the idea. A collective effort followed, on the part of faculty staff members, and eventually the university's administration was convinced to designate eight spots for qualified students.

The province of Ontario also had to approve the plan and, eventually, it also provided a small one-time only grant of \$150,000 to see the program through its start-up phase.

"The next step was to learn about best practices," says Dungy.

Due to the competitive nature of medical schools, Dungy was adamant that the entrance requirements for his eight Aboriginal spots be the same as for any other candidate.

"There was some stigma that presumed these students received some special favour," he says, "but nothing could be further from the truth."

"None were less qualified academically and all could have easily gone to another medical school."

"They are all first class students and they will all make first class doctors," he says.

Looking ahead, Dungy says the medical faculty's Aboriginal admissions program hopes to graduate 20 Aboriginal doctors by the year 2010.

Recently, Dungy, who initially practiced as a pediatric dentist before spending the past 25 years in an academic role at the University of Ottawa, handed off the running of the program to Dr. Stanley Vollant.

"Dr. Vollant is a bilingual, Aboriginal surgeon from Quebec who assumed the position of director of Aboriginal admissions in August, 2006...and I have passed the torch to him," says Dungy.

"Now, I have become the elder," he adds, with a laugh.

Today, with Aboriginal healthcare issues heading the priority list of many organizations, Dungy says he'd like to challenge other academic institutions to set-up similar Aboriginal admissions programs.

In fact, he says he hopes that, considering how competitive the field of medicine is, others will try to outdo the University of Ottawa's program.

"If all took the same approach, we could make a huge dent in the disparity of Aboriginal representation," Dungy says.

A Unique Partnership Addresses Driller Shortages: The Encana Example

With 350-400 new wells being drilled in northern BC and a shortage of trained drillers already hampering growth, EnCana and the Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) have joined forces to train 100 Métis drilling rig technicians over the next three years.

This unique educational training partnership was designed to accomplish two important goals; to advance the participation of Métis workers in the drilling industry and to address the growing demand for skilled workers.

"The Métis are not looking to become part of the workforce – they already are a part of the workforce," says Andrew Popko, vice-president of Aboriginal relations for EnCana, one of North America's leading natural gas producers and one of the largest holders of gas and oil resource lands onshore in North America. Mr. Popko, it should be noted, is a member of the council's Board of Directors.

"They are a force to be reckoned with...and we are tapping into the energy of the Métis," he says.

The project first began with a proposal submitted to EnCana by MNBC and Trinidad Drilling last December that discussed the idea of developing a pilot project for Métis roughneck oil field training.

In four short weeks, the idea turned into an escalated Pre-Employment Floorman (Roughneck) training program that resulted in 24 participants successfully completing the course on March 14, 2006. With a 100 percent graduation rate and a 90 percent employment rate, this joint training partnership has proven to be an astounding success.

Participants in the comprehensive 20-day program learn how to safely operate and maintain drilling equipment in a practical, hands-on, realistic drilling camp environment. Trainees also learn the job responsibilities of the drilling floor and deck crew operations as well as the specific skills of a roustabout and lease hand.

All students participate in an oilfield fitness program as well as job readiness training and, upon graduation, students also receive industry help in securing employment. It's a partnership that has created a win-win for both the oil industry and BC Aboriginals.

"This agreement will provide valuable opportunities for our Métis workforce," says MNBC president Bruce Dumont.

"The completion of the intensive training offers the graduating Métis students full time employment and an excellent starting wage which will enhance and improve their lifestyle," he adds.

With an agreement to host the training program over the next three years, the Pre-Employment Floorman (Roughneck) course represents a commitment of approximately \$1 million CDN. EnCana has generously committed \$250,000 (over two years) with MNBC contributing the balance through their training resource funding. Trinidad Drilling has agreed to facilitate the training program through its Bear Training Centre in Red Deer, AB.

Given that skilled worker shortages are occurring in other trade sectors and not just in the drilling industry, Popko says corporations need to consider the Aboriginal workforce as a solution to future demands.

"All companies need to step-up to the plate and work with local communities on training initiatives," says Popko.

"Then, hopefully, one day, there will be no more Aboriginal relations departments in corporations because an Aboriginal workforce will be a normal part of doing business," he adds.



With a 100 per cent graduation rate and a 90 per cent employment rate, this joint training partnership has proven to be an astounding success

“The Alice Springs workshop conducted by Gray Poehnell was a unique observation experience for DEWR staff because of the variety of differences in the participants’ work history. Some of the participants coming to the table were developing professional careers in career counselling, while others explained that they could not get past all types of barriers that perpetuated their dependence on welfare. It was a heartening experience to witness how deeply some of the activities, particularly story telling resonated with those who might end up extensively practicing the Guiding Circles career path activities with clients and with the participants that have little or no work experience. Even though this latter group did not have jobs, they had life experience and this activity awakened recognition and self confidence in the skills they have developed to survive life events that were daunting and often tragic.”

– Amanda McNamara,
Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations,
Government of Australia

For more information about Guiding Circles, contact Trina Maher at 1.866.711.5091 or trina.maher@ahrdcc.com.



Guiding Circles Co-Author Gray Poehnell and Kerry Phillips, an Aboriginal trainee, share a dawn camel ride in the Uluru region of Australia.

For three years in a row now, Gray Poehnell has journeyed to Australia on behalf of the AHRDCC, to share a workbook concept he helped develop – the Guiding Circles approach to creating a successful career path.

As a guest of Australia’s Department of Education and Workplace Relations, Poehnell’s task was to help the department discover new career strategies for Aboriginals. “The Guiding Circles workbook is not a book to push people through steps but, instead, it’s a process or approach... the intent is not just to educate individuals but whole communities, in the process,” says Poehnell.

Ultimately, the purpose of the guiding circle workshop is to foster self-esteem, restore hope and create vision. In doing so, lives and communities can be changed for the better, Poehnell says.

Like Canada, Australia also has a low percentage of Aboriginal representation in the workplace. “What we saw was very similar to Canada...the issues are virtually identical between the two countries,” Poehnell says.

As an example, Poehnell notes that a famous Ayers Rock resort is serviced by 1200 staff of which only 14 are Aboriginal workers.

“The challenge for many Aboriginals is to become pathfinders...to break new ground,” says Poehnell. “But they also need employers who are pathfinders as well.”

This year’s Australian program saw the Guiding Circles concept tested in three types of Aborigi-

nal communities; a major city, a rural centre and a remote area. To accomplish this, one-week workshops were delivered in Darwin, Alice Springs and Ayers Rock.

Much of the success of the Australian guiding circle program lies with its enthusiastic participants and its tangible results. These results include the forging of new relationships with the business community, a proposed adoption of the concept nation-wide and future train-the-trainer workshops to facilitate the deployment of instructors across the country. Eventually, an Aussie version of the guiding circle workbook may also be developed.

Celebrating on the heels of this latest successful visit down under, Poehnell says that another government department, the Department of Education and Skilled Trades, is also interested in pursuing Canada’s guiding circle model.

Since 2003, Poehnell has delivered nearly 50 workshops across Canada, helping to facilitate the guiding circle process at home. Participants have come from a cross-section of society and include artists, business people, corrections officials and government staff.

So far, in Australia, the bulk of the attendees have been career or human resource practitioners, although staff from Parks Australia have also attended.

According to many workshop participants, the impact of the guiding circle process of self-discovery is profound. “By the end, the participant gets to know themselves...to feel they have value,” says Poehnell.

IBM Youth Program Ignites Interest in Science

An innovative Aboriginal youth camp program, initiated by IBM Canada, is igniting interest in future engineering and science careers and, in doing so, the corporation is also generating future interest in itself.

"Our population is growing and these are (potential) future employees of the company... the hope is that they'll remember IBM and they'll go into these occupations and come work for us," says Eva Stang, IBM's Aboriginal resource management specialist (sales and distribution) in Edmonton, AB.

"A lot of the young campers don't think of technology as a viable career and it's just having them touch, feel and see...once they can do that, they can grasp that idea," says Stang.

Launched as part of IBM Canada's national Aboriginal strategy, IGNITE camps are modeled after IBM's successful EXITE camps that encourage girls to pursue careers in technology.

The IGNITE program, however, has been modified to include both genders between the ages of 8-14. All of the challenging hands-on science and engineering activities are designed to provide Aboriginal youth an opportunity to build confidence in their technical abilities and to meet the following goals:

- To build an awareness of opportunities in engineering, computer science and technology.

- To provide an environment that facilitates learning and excitement about engineering and computer science.
- To introduce children to role models who can help mentor and encourage them to consider careers in information technology.
- To demonstrate that technology can be fun and exciting.

The camps vary in length, with programs from three days to five days long. Camp activities include creating a website, working with robotics, science trivia games and building an electronic circuit board. In 2006, 165 campers completed the program.

"It's wonderful to see these young people get so excited, knowing it could influence their lives... IBM is, at the end of the day, about business but it is also about giving back to the community," says Stang.

Collaborating with Industry Canada, Stang is part of an HR team at IBM that works in partnership with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities to create initiatives like IGNITE.

"Our relationship with various Aboriginal organizations proves that corporate Canada and the community can work well together," she says.

Partners for initiatives like IGNITE are typically non-profit charitable organizations that have pre-existing relationships in the community with a strong focus on building the strengths of Aboriginal children, youth and their families.

IBM looks to these partners for assistance with announcement of the camp, registration, transportation, volunteer group leaders and elder participation.

"The children not only gain knowledge about science and technology but they are also exposed to traditional teachers in the community," explains Stang.

"The elder provides guidance and support to the children as they walk on their path of knowledge."

IBM enhanced its Aboriginal diversity strategy with the hope that the Aboriginal community will see themselves as a part of the greater global economic future of Canada.

"IBM's commitment to supporting diversity has opened many doors for individuals from many different cultures...as an Aboriginal child, I never dreamed that I could be part of such a large organization," says Stang.

Thank you, 2005 Champions' Event Sponsors

Acknowledging Contributors to the 7th Annual Champions Event

The council, in conjunction with our event host, The Honourable Oscar Lathlin, Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Government of Manitoba, warmly acknowledges the 7th Annual Champions' Event sponsors.

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Due to the generous support of our sponsors and Canada's esteemed leaders in workplace diversity in attendance at the 7th Annual Champions' Event, the council has been able to accelerate forward on last year's theme – **Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion: Leadership and Engagement.**

Your financial and intellectual support is respectfully accepted and appreciated.

An Aboriginal Journalist Joins the Ivy League: the Maureen Googoo Story



Maureen Googoo, recipient of a scholarship to Columbia University School of Journalism in New York.



Maureen Googoo, behind the camera.

Within a few days of starting her summer job at the Mi'kmaq News in Sydney, NS, Maureen Googoo knew she wanted to be a reporter. Born and raised on the Indian Brook First Nations reserve, located an hour outside of Halifax, Googoo says she also knew she wanted to be the kind of storyteller who could reach an Aboriginal audience that had been overlooked by mainstream media.

Today, with 19 years experience as a journalist, reporting for the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN), CBC Radio and a variety of newspapers, Googoo says her stories often reflect the conversations she once had around the kitchen table with her family.

"I've always wanted to cover Aboriginal issues," she says. "Some stories aren't very good but they still need to be told."

From her current position as a video journalist and Halifax correspondent for APTN, Googoo has proven that she can cover difficult Aboriginal stories objectively.

"When I worked in mainstream media, some people were very encouraging but others were resistant...they didn't think I could cover these issues because of my race," she says. "Working at APTN has been my dream job because I can do it without the additional scrutiny of people wondering if I can do it objectively...I've proven that I can."

Ironically, today, it is mainstream media that often contacts Googoo looking for background information on a story or sources they can interview.

"I get phone calls from others in the industry and I'm happy to help out...getting the story out is the important thing," she says. "But I'm also proud that we are usually about a month ahead of mainstream media and that, by the time they call me, we have already covered the story and moved on."

Over the years, Googoo has reported on both the tragic and the encouraging – from addicted glue-sniffing children in northern Canada to monetary compensation for sufferers of residential school abuse.

Recently, her accomplishments and impressive portfolio helped her win a \$37,000 full tuition scholarship to Columbia University in New York, which enables her to complete a Master's degree in journalism – a goal she had considered for some time.

"I had been at APTN for six years when I decided I wanted to do my Master's...I have always valued higher education and I needed another challenge," she explains.

With two previous degrees, one in political science from Saint Mary's University in Halifax and another in journalism from Ryerson University in Toronto, Googoo was accepted into the elite journalism program at Columbia University.

"Columbia is an Ivy League university with a long tradition of high standards in journalism...they take their role seriously," she says. "With recent scandals like the one about the New York Times reporter making up sources, they are trying to restore the reputation of journalism...I like that they are strong on ethics and leadership," she adds.

Although the Columbia Master's program is only 10 months long, it is intense and hectic with a portion of each week spent actively covering events in local communities.

More than 200 students are enrolled and, as part of the "international group," Googoo says she's met journalists from countries all over the world including India, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia.

"I think the program is actually a semester-long experience in time management," says Googoo, with a laugh. "It's definitely a great experience... and I see this as a step to eventually becoming a journalism educator."

Concerned about the lack of Aboriginal representation in journalism, Googoo says she hopes to encourage and teach others to consider it as a profession.

"It's a tough profession to get into...but if you love to write, love to read and love to tell stories, then journalism is the choice for you," she says.

But Googoo also notes that being a published writer requires confidence...a trait that is often lacking in Aboriginal youth.

"Part of the reason they don't choose journalism is that our youth don't have confidence," she says. "It becomes a confidence issue because writing is personal but then it's published and it becomes public and people can critique it," Googoo adds.

Still, she encourages anyone with a desire to report or write to consider journalism as an option.

"I didn't get accepted the first time I tried out for journalism school but I didn't give up," she says. "Don't be discouraged...just learn what you need to do to be successful."

Workforce Connex Nets Commitments, continued from page 1

In 2006, Workforce Connex presented six regional forums (in BC, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Labrador and Ontario) with more than 600 participants taking part in interactive discussions designed to collaborate on methods of recruitment and retention.

With 80 Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders (Aboriginal employment centres) across Canada, one of the main outcomes of the forums has been the higher awareness of these centres and their associated worker supply.

"During the forums, many employers learn, for the first time, about their ability to access Aboriginal talent through Aboriginal employment centres...and how to develop strategies to effectively train, recruit and retain an untapped Aboriginal workforce," says Lendsay.

"Learning that these centres exist and how employers can tap into them as a pool of talent has been a huge step forward," he says.

As the forum series unfolded, interest and momentum picked up across the country, with many employers engaging in the thought of how to become the 'employer-of-choice' for Aboriginal workers.

Participant enthusiasm also led to an outstanding level of commitments from each of the regions -- a total of 281, including 135 commitments alone from the Alberta Workforce Connex forum.

"Canada Safeway is confident this forum will result in jobs for Aboriginal people and hires for our company," says Bill Campbell, co-chair of the Alberta Workforce Connex regional planning committee and director of human resources for Canada Safeway's Alberta operation.

"Two months after Canada Safeway attended British Columbia Workforce Connex, 26 Aboriginal people were hired at our Chilliwack store, with a possibility of more to follow."

Much of the success of the Workforce Connex forums has been attributed to its architecture of open and honest dialogue to reduce barriers, although, as Lendsay notes, the series could not have been rolled out without the unwavering support of the provincial planning committees, comprised of representatives from business, the Aboriginal community, Service Canada and provincial governments.

"Aboriginal communities and employers have benefited from the opportunity to connect, learn more about one another and share information about resources and career opportunities," says Doug Moulton, a senior consultant for sectoral partnerships, Sector Council Program, Human Resources and Social Development Canada

"The partnerships established from these connections have resulted in tangible workforce benefits for Aboriginal people and employers," he adds.

And, as most employers and HR departments know, recruitment and retention is all about building long-term, successful employee relationships – a reality that is one step closer for many Aboriginal workers now.

Following on the heels of this year's achievements, future forums are planned for 2007 in Quebec (April 2007), New Brunswick (May 8-9, 2007), Manitoba and Saskatchewan (TBA).

An interim report on the Workforce Connex forums is available at:
www.workforceconnex.com/planning/studies.htm



Bill Campbell, Co-Chair of the Alberta Workforce Connex, brought his staff to help facilitate breakout sessions. Everyone in this picture works at Canada Safeway.



Aboriginal professionals share their career success stories at Alberta Workforce Connex (left to right) Dan Calhoon, Mechanical Engineer, Suncor Russell Snyder, IT Consultant Michael Jakeman, Lawyer, Vinni, Coobe, Jakeman Barristers and Solicitors



Six year old Chad Yellowbird of the Northern Cree Singers and Dancers respectfully represents his culture and the future of Aboriginal people during an opening ceremony dance.

MASTERING ABORIGINAL INCLUSION

NETWORKS OF CHANGE

Meet Our Partners in Networks of Change

The workbooks and tools in the series *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* are only possible through the commitment and resources of our partners, members in the Networks of Change initiative. These are leading Canadian organizations who see the competitive benefit of a Canadian workforce truly inclusive of Aboriginal people. To date, 24 partners have joined with the council to develop and beta-test these tools. The council intends to grow the membership to 50 members.

We proudly salute our partners:

- Air Canada Jazz
- Cameco Corporation
- Cisco Systems Canada Co.
- Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.
- Duke Energy
- EnBridge Pipelines Inc.
- EnCana Corporation
- First Nations & Métis Relations, Government of Saskatchewan
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- Shell Canada Limited
- Suncor Energy Limited
- Syncrude Canada Limited
- Teck Cominco Limited
- TransCanada Pipelines Limited
- Trinidad Drilling
- Weyerhaeuser

Join the Inclusion Network

The council is looking for companies who are determined to become leaders in Aboriginal Inclusion. For more information on this partnership, contact Crystal Kosa at 1-866-711-5091, or crystal.kosa@ahrdcc.com.

Focus Testing Recruitment, Retention, Advancement

In his president's message this issue, Kelly Lendsay describes the council's venture into corporate HR training with *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion*, a series of workbooks and tools currently in development for preparing workplaces for Aboriginal inclusion. While *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* provides the content, the council's partners in the initiative called Networks of Change, are supplying best-cases and support for the project.

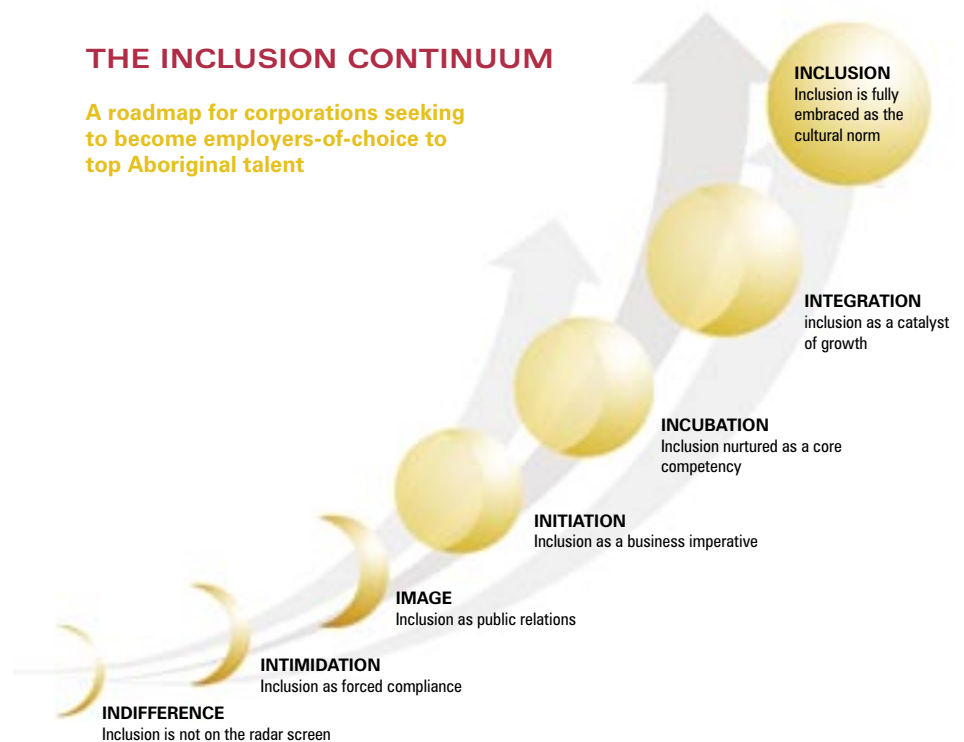
At a focus group in Toronto on November 2nd, members and other guests met to discuss the latest in the six-module series, *Recruitment, Retention, Advancement*. This volume, assiduously researched in interviews with dozens of leading companies, presents the best-case scenarios for hiring and retaining top Aboriginal talent.

The discussions throughout the day were extremely productive, guiding the next version of the workbook and associated tools. At the end of the day Dr. Neil McDonald of Cross-Cultural Consulting said:

"This can work. I don't know of any program that's been so well thought out and developed."
– Dr. Neil McDonald, Cross-Cultural Consulting

THE INCLUSION CONTINUUM

A roadmap for corporations seeking to become employers-of-choice to top Aboriginal talent



Tip Sheet: A Synopsis of Differences Between Traditional Aboriginal Cultures and Mainstream Western Culture

Note: these differences represent only portions of the highly diverse Aboriginal population, and in varying degrees.

Traditional Culture

Community is the foremost of all values
 Oral tradition
 The present is the dominant tense
 The world is understood mythically
 Goals are met with patience
 Ownership is often communal
 Gifts are regarded as social glue
 Work is often motivated by group need
 Aging is a source of wisdom
 Eye contact is thought over-assertive
 Silences are acceptable anywhere
 Assertiveness is non-communal
 Listening skills are prized
 Soft spoken words carry farthest
 Nodding signifies understanding
 Handshake is soft, signaling no threat
 Collective decisions are consensual
 A faith in harmony with nature
 Family is extended family
 Responds to praise of the group

Mainstream Western Culture

Individualism is the foremost value
 Tradition of printing and literacy
 The future tense is dominant
 The world is understood scientifically
 Goals are met with aggressive effort
 Ownership is reward for hard work
 Gifts are regarded as holiday issues
 Work is motivated by ambition
 Aging is decay and loss
 Eye contact is part of conversation
 Silences are a waste of time
 Assertiveness is a basic social skill
 Communication skills are prized
 Emphasis carries the day
 Nodding signifies agreement
 Handshake is firm, assertive
 Collective decisions are put to a vote
 A faith in scientific control of nature
 Family is nuclear family
 Responds to praise of the individual

From *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion*, Module 3, *Communicating Across Cultures*

Materials from *Recruitment, Retention, Advancement*, Module Four in the training program, *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion*.



Tip Sheet: The Exit Interview

Exit interviews will invariably disclose trends within smaller organizations. In a larger organization, with different managers and different management styles within different workgroups, trend analysis may prove more difficult, but exit interviews will spotlight trends within departments and identify problematic managers.

Exit interviews offer one of the best sources for uncovering why people leave an organization. This is a starting point for any solid retention strategy: know why people are walking out, so the issue can be addressed head on rather than treated blindly.

Some questions to ask in an exit interview:

1. Did anything trigger your decision to leave?
2. What was most satisfying about your job?
3. What was least satisfying about your job?
4. Did your job duties turn out to be as you expected?
5. Did you receive enough training to do your job effectively?
6. Did you receive adequate support to do your job?
7. Did you receive sufficient feedback about your performance?
8. Did this company help you to fulfill your career goals?
9. Do you have any tips to help us find your replacement?
10. What would you improve to make our workplace better?
11. Were you happy with your pay, benefits and other incentives?
12. What was the quality of the supervision you received?
13. What could your immediate supervisor do to improve his or her management style?
14. Based on your experience with us, what do you think it takes to succeed at this company?
15. Did any company policies or procedures (or any other obstacles) make your job more difficult?
16. Would you consider working again for this company in the future?
17. Would you recommend employment at this company to your family and friends?
18. What are your general feelings about this organization?
19. Can this company do anything to encourage you to stay?
20. Did anyone in this company discriminate against you, harass you or cause hostile working conditions?

From *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion*, Module 4, *Recruitment, Retention, Advancement*

Upcoming Events

Val D'Or, Quebec

April 2007

Workforce Connex Conference

Saint John, New Brunswick

May 8-9 2007

Workforce Connex Conference

For more information on the Workforce Connex national forum series go to www.workforceconnex.com.

Call for Presentations

AHRDCC invites submissions for conference workshops that highlight promising strategies/case studies/research and workforce partnership strategies that may generate creative new workforce solutions about:

- human capital leadership initiatives
- the implementation of Aboriginal workforce inclusion strategies
- innovative concepts for recruitment, retention or advancement strategies
- new methods to reach and engage the Aboriginal labour market.

For more information please visit www.ahrdcc.com

Mark Your Calendar April 3-5, 2007

Unlocking Aboriginal Potential in the Workforce... National Aboriginal Recruitment, Retention and Advancement Conference

April 3, 2007 - Pre-conference Workshops

April 4-5, 2007 - Conference

Fairmont Château Laurier, Ottawa

Who Should Attend:

- Employers • Aboriginal Employment Practitioners
- Human Resource & Diversity Managers • Educators • Career Development Community

Banquet and Entertainment Gala
Only 250 seats available
Register early!

Registration Fees

Early Bird Registration

(Deadline: January 26, 2007)

\$595.00

\$495.00 (Non-Profit Aboriginal Organizations)

After January 26, 2007

\$795.00

\$595.00 (Non-Profit Aboriginal Organizations)

Registration Deadline: March 16, 2007

Register at www.ahrdcc.com

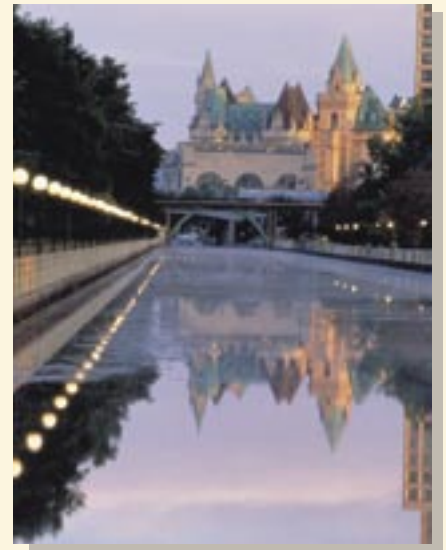
Awesome Hotel Rates!

Fairmont Château Laurier, Ottawa

\$129.00 per night

Conference Reservation/Rate Deadline:

March 9, 2007



Pre-Conference Workshops

- Recruitment, Retention and Advancement: Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion
- Guiding Circles: An Aboriginal Approach to Career Paths

Workshops

- New solutions and insights on Aboriginal workforce development and employment inclusion strategies.
- Over 20 dynamic and interactive sessions with practical applications for the workplace.

Keynote Speakers

- Farley Flex, Canadian Idol
- Dr. Norm Amundson, International Career Development Specialist
- Chief Clarence Louis, Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corporation

The National Report on Aboriginal Inclusion

Brought to you by the...

Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada

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