

## Small Business Spotlight: **Skeena Exterior Cleaning and Coatings**

As someone who was preparing to join the RCMP just three years ago, entrepreneurship was never Reid Skelton-Morven's first career choice. Fast forward to today, and Skelton-Morven is a successful indigenous entrepreneur, running an exterior cleaning business, a social enterprise, and a web marketing business. He is also a youth director for the Prince Rupert Chamber of Commerce board.

Finalist of the 2017 ThriveNorth Business Challenge in the Best New Business category, Skelton-Morven's Skeena Exterior Cleaning and Coatings business provides innovative residential cleaning services, roofing refinishing and weatherproof coating services in the Prince Rupert region.

Skelton-Morven's entrepreneurial spirit, combined with key business support resources from Futurpreneur and local chambers of commerce, have been instrumental in his early success.

"My role as a youth director at the Prince Rupert and District Chamber of Commerce has helped me shape the way I do business by seeking out new opportunities with my community's local and regional businesses, identifying common issues and market gaps to further develop my pre-launch business ventures, and also help me utilize partnerships with other businesses and networks so that we can all thrive," Skelton-Morven said.

While Skelton-Morven is dedicated to solving homeowners' problems, he is also creating a big impact in the community. Through his business, he is creating new jobs and making his services affordable and accessible to all. He firmly believes in paying his staff and subcontractors competitive wages to boost local business and support growing families in Northwestern B.C.

Things haven't always been this smooth for Skelton-Morven. After completing the Northwest ACE (Northwest Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs) program two years ago, multiple injuries from a car accident temporarily slowed his progress, but not his ambition. The incident allowed him to channel his vision.



"The challenge of being injured and undergoing physiotherapy with temporary physical limitations and being set back in my projects had actually helped me build some more inspiration to succeed," Skelton-Morven said.

Still in the early stages of his business, Skelton-Morven is now focussed on finding other sources of capital and mentorship. While programs like the Northwest ACE program have been the ultimate skill building foundation to getting him where he is today, he also stresses that "in most cases the lack of confidence to move forward with their ideas, or believing that there is a lack of resources in the region" is still a major challenge for indigenous businesses. Nevertheless, his advice to other indigenous entrepreneurs would be to "evaluate their risks but not overthink them, and just take the leap and dive right into it."

Skelton-Morven says his role with the local Chamber of Commerce as youth director has also positively influenced his networking skills, and he is "very driven to see other entrepreneurs through and one day inspire them to overcome their own adversity and begin to shape a brighter future for themselves as well."