



**THE BC  
JOBS PLAN**



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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2012AVED0004-000089  
Jan. 30, 2012

Ministry of Advanced Education

### **New training opportunities for Aboriginal learners**

VICTORIA – Aboriginal learners have new opportunities for skills training, thanks to the Aboriginal Training for Employment Program (ATEP).

This program is helping participants pursue further studies and employment opportunities as health-care assistants, chefs, construction workers, entrepreneurs, tourism operators and in many other occupations.

Aboriginal organizations, friendship centres and First Nations offer ATEP projects in urban and rural settings.

With a \$4-million investment from the Province through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement, participants will receive in-class instruction in conjunction with hands-on learning in laboratories or workshops, and work or volunteer experience relevant to their training. In addition, job coaches are available to assist students in resume preparation, interview skills, job search strategies and career planning. All programs have Aboriginal cultural components.

Examples:

- The Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS) in Vancouver is offering a boilermaker foundation program in partnership with the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). The program was developed in response to an existing shortage of workers in this trade and expected demand for boilermakers resulting from the recent shipbuilding contract with Seaspan Marine Corporation that will bring over 4,000 jobs to the West Coast.
- The Native Friendship Centre in Prince George connects the Aboriginal labour force to employment opportunities in the sales and service industry through pre-employment training, job placements and support services.
- Learners in the Victoria Native Friendship Centre's EAGLE program – exploring and acknowledging guidance and leadership through employment – receive life skills and industry specific training for job placement in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors.

Since launching in 2010, over 500 Aboriginal learners throughout the province have benefited from the program.

Contracts have been renewed with 11 Aboriginal organizations to deliver programs, and new programs will be announced based on a Request for Proposals that was posted on BC Bid seeking new service providers to bring training and employment opportunities to more Aboriginal individuals throughout the province.

Under the BC Jobs Plan, the Province is committed to providing funding for community based delivery of programs that meet Aboriginal needs. The Province is also seeking public input on Aboriginal education. To join the conversation visit:  
<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/welcome.htm>

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Naomi Yamamoto, Minister of Advanced Education –**

“We want to make sure young Aboriginal people are prepared to fill many of the million jobs we know will be opening up in British Columbia over the next decade, and this program is providing opportunities that connect Aboriginal individuals with growing occupations.

“Graduates are getting jobs, gaining life skills, learning about paths to further education and developing a stronger sense of community and cultural pride.”

#### **Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development –**

“Our government’s top priority is job creation and economic growth. That’s why we are proud to work with the Province of B.C., through our Labour Market Agreement, to support projects that help Aboriginal youth develop the education and skills they need to enter the workforce.”

#### **Key Le-La, graduate of the ATEP health-care assistant program at Native Education College and now working as a health-care assistant with the home and community care team in the Squamish Valley –**

“This program changed my life completely! It has opened up so many opportunities for me such, as being able to work in a facility or in the community. It opened the door to taking the next step in the nursing field. Having this certification allows me to work with the Elders in my community, which gives me the opportunity to get to know more about them and my own history.”

#### **Nathan Hyam, head chef instructor, Métis Skills and Education Centre culinary arts program –**

“My greatest satisfaction comes from seeing the transformation of our students after just a few months. They often arrive with many barriers, low self-esteem, poor work experiences and very little in their lives that they can consider to be a success. With a supportive environment and the input of the entire team they develop self esteem and the skills they need to succeed in the workplace as well as their community. To see them beaming with pride on graduation day is the inspiration that keeps us motivated.”

### Quick Facts:

- To be eligible for ATEP, participants must be of Aboriginal heritage, 18 years or older, unemployed and not receiving EI benefits, or employed but without a high school diploma.
- Over 21,000 students a year who enrol in public post-secondary education identify themselves as Aboriginal, a 17 per cent increase since the government's Aboriginal Education Strategy was launched in 2007.
- The number of credentials awarded to students self-identifying as being Aboriginal has increased from 2,075 in 2004 to 2,545 in 2009. Over 11,000 Aboriginal students earned post-secondary credentials in the 5 years from 2005 and 2009

### Learn More:

For more information on the Aboriginal Training for Employment Program:

<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/atep/welcome.htm>

To join the conversation on Aboriginal post-secondary training and employment follow the links to Facebook and Twitter at: <http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/welcome.htm>

For information on the Canada – British Columbia Labour Market Agreement:

<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/labourmarketagreement/>

For information on 'Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan': <http://www.bcjobsplan.ca/>

A backgrounder follows.

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# BACKGROUND

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## Skills training for Aboriginal people

The following service providers have had their contracts renewed with the Ministry of Advanced Education's Aboriginal Training for Employment Program and will deliver programs in these areas as indicated:

**Lead Proponent:** Métis Nation of British Columbia

**Award:** \$489,050

**Communities:** Fraser Valley

**Project Summary:** The Culinary and Hospitality Opportunities Program (CHOP) is designed to help individuals who may have a disability who are in need of assistance in improving their skills as well as employability.

**Lead Proponent:** Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government

**Award:** \$150,000

**Communities:** Nemiah Valley, including Williams Lake and the six Tsilhqot'in communities.

**Project Summary:** The program includes both pre-employment and employment training to lead to job opportunities for Aboriginal people with local tourism employers and Xeni Gwet'in First Nations economic development and self-governance projects of varying size, including the operation of the Visitor Information Services Centre and Traditional Village site.

**Lead Proponent:** Shuswap Nation Tribal Council Society

**Award:** \$500,000

**Communities:** Interior Region including 30 communities

**Project Summary:** Provides services to directly connect Aboriginal people to employment opportunities in the Interior of B.C. through assisted job and career planning activities and contacts with businesses and industry. This includes placements in the hospitality, trades, office support, and utilities industries.

**Lead Proponent:** Prince George Native Friendship Centre

**Award:** \$149,996

**Community:** Prince George

**Project Summary:** Directly connects the Aboriginal labour force in Prince George to employment opportunities by facilitating pre-employment training, job placements, and support services with a culturally sensitive approach. The sales and service industry will be the focus of the job placements and sustained employment.

**Lead Proponent:** Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS)

**Award:** \$150,000

**Communities:** Richmond, Vancouver and Vancouver North Shore

**Project Summary:** The boilermaker program provides basic theory and field-related information along with hands-on shop practice at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) to enable students to become competent in basic boilermaker tasks. Upon graduating, participants will have the life skills and technical skills to work as first year apprentices in the boilermaker trade.

**Lead Proponent:** Musqueam Indian Band

**Award:** \$149,583

**Communities:** Musqueam Reserves and adjacent urban communities of southwest Vancouver, Richmond and the Downtown Eastside.

**Project Summary:** The project will use and adapt existing curriculum for core components of tourism and construction training. Certificate training encourages completion of industry-standard, entry-level courses that better prepare participants for work. Skill development and training will use existing industry-recognized curriculum for heavy equipment operators training and Aboriginal tourism culinary arts training.

**Lead Proponent:** Tla'amin Community Health Board Society

**Award:** \$150,000

**Communities:** Tla'Amin (Sliammon), Powell River

**Project Summary:** In the Yix meh towlth (Taking Care of Each Other) project ATEP participants will be placed in the growth areas of retail and administration, health care and social services, hospitality and tourism, and construction trades. The project will be operated by a consortium of community partners (highly skilled in the delivery of results-based employment and training programs) providing in-kind services, and includes screening, pre-employment training and job placements with a strong cultural component.

**Lead Proponent:** Tsleil-Waututh Nation

**Award:** \$149,250

**Communities:** Vancouver Coastal Region

**Project Summary:** The Reawakening Our Entrepreneurial Spirit Aboriginal Self Employment Program is a 48-week program comprising 12 weeks of full-time, in-class instruction followed by 36 weeks of professional support and coaching while starting a business. This program will incorporate a six-month full-time contract for employment.

**Lead Proponent:** NEC Native Education College

**Award:** \$489,000

**Communities:** Vancouver, North Vancouver and Squamish First Nation

**Project Summary:** The Health Care Assistant program prepares Aboriginal students to work as front-line health-care providers in a variety of community and facility-based settings. The program follows the provincial health-care assistant curriculum (2008) and is enriched with Aboriginal health and well-being content including Elder participation, medicine wheel workshops, guest speakers, and workshops. Graduates of the program provide culturally sensitive and holistic care when working with Elders, families, and individuals with special needs. Graduates gain registration with the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry, acquire all essential certifications to practise, and may wish to ladder into a licensed practical nurse program after gaining some experience in the field.

**Lead Proponent:** Port Alberni Friendship Centre

**Award:** \$149,000

**Communities:** Port Alberni and the Nuu-chah-nulth territory

**Project Summary:** The program provides pre-employment and on the job training, employment opportunities, life-long learning opportunities and individual support to participants and will focus on the retail, janitorial, and clerical/office support areas.

**Lead Proponent:** Victoria Native Friendship Centre

**Award:** \$280,000

**Communities:** Capital Regional District (CRD) of Southern Vancouver Island

**Project Summary:** In the EAGLE project (exploring and acknowledging guidance and leadership through employment) participants will be involved in a three-part pre-employment training: life skills, essential skills, and industry/job specific training. Participants will work with a master carver to approach life skills through an artistic and cultural learning experience. Three industries for job placement are: retail, hospitality and tourism.

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