



**BUSINESS NETWORK FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH  
YEAR 3 CLOSING CONFERENCE  
JUNE 3-4, 2014**

The Business Network for Aboriginal Youth (BNAY) is a mentorship program linking 30 Aboriginal high schools students from across Nova Scotia with 6 Aboriginal business mentors. The BNAY was established in 2011 by the Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies at Cape Breton University (CBU). This is the conclusion of year 3 of a 3 year pilot program funded by the Province of Nova Scotia, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, and Bell Mobility.

### The Journey

Since the 30 students were chosen in October 2013 from the 106 applicants, they have attended two overnight conferences: the opening conference in Membertou and Eskasoni on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, and most recently, our closing conference in Millbrook and Indian Brook on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. In between conferences, students worked in groups on 12 bi-weekly business challenges via social media, which were facilitated by their mentors. In total there were over 50 different topics explored, ranging from: stock market simulation; skills needed for management; the business side of social media; funding options for entrepreneurs; interview preparation; marketing your home community as a tourist destination; and the effects of community debt on youth.

### DAY 1 – CLOSING CONFERENCE: MILLBROOK



Mr. Denny speaking to our students.

With the help of our mentors, students were transported from all ends of the province to gather for one last time as a group. Some grade 10 and 11 students will return to the program next year, and the grade 12's are all moving on to new chapters in their lives. A buffet dinner marked the official beginning of our closing conference. Sister Dorothy Moore of Membertou provided our opening prayer, and Mr. Justin Denny of Eskasoni delivered a fantastic keynote address. Mr. Denny is a Bachelor of Business Administration graduate (2005) from St. Francis Xavier University and a Finance Officer with Membertou Corporate. He spoke to our students about leaving his community to pursue a university degree and his current position with Membertou.

### Rant Your Resume



Rant Your Resume Winners: (l-r) Noah Holleman, Nyeshia Sylliboy, and Hannah Peter-Paul.

After the keynote, it was time for the unveiling of the Rant Your Resume videos. As the 12<sup>th</sup> and final challenge for year 3 of BNAY, students were tasked with creating a 30-45 second video "rant." The Rant Your Resume competition, currently in its third year, sees students compete for bursaries (\$1000 and \$500) to attend the Shannon School of Business at CBU. The objective is to record a video that outlines why they should win the bursary. Winners were chosen by a panel of three judges based on style, creativity, uniqueness, and relevance. The judging panel included Dr. Keith Brown, Purdy Crawford Chair; Ms. Mary Beth Doucette, Interim Executive Director, Purdy Crawford Chair; and our keynote speaker Mr.



Justin Denny. With very little guidance, the students created fantastic videos showing how confident, well educated, and creative they are. In the end, there was a tie for second place, which meant there were three winners: first place: **Hannah Peter-Paul**; second place (tie): **Noah Holleman** and **Nyasha Sylliboy**. To view their videos [click here](#).

### Tour of the Glooscap Heritage Centre



Heather Stevens, Heritage Interpreter at the Glooscap Centre in Millbrook, speaks to students about the legend of Glooscap.

### DAY 2 – CLOSING CONFERENCE, INDIAN BROOK

#### Indian Maiden Maple Syrup



Ms. Bernard posing with a copy of her book.

Day two was hosted at the Eagle's Nest in Indian Brook. The day began with a presentation by Ms. Mary Louise Bernard on her many business ventures, including Indian Maiden Maple Syrup. Ms. Bernard is a former Chief of the Wagmatcook First Nation and a self-described social entrepreneur. After the passing of her parents, Mary Louise started to write her mother's stories and the 'Legend of Maple Syrup' stuck in her head. The story was then brought to life by creating her own brand of maple syrup, "Indian Maiden Maple Syrup. Mary Louise has also published a book: "Indian Maiden Story: Sismoqnapui'skwe'j – Sweet Water Maiden: The Legend of Maple Syrup." Students were delighted to each receive a signed copy of the book at the end of her presentation.

#### Credit and Budget Management

Next students listened to a presentation by Mr. Bob MacGillivray of Ulnooweg Development Group on credit and budget management. Mr. MacGillivray spoke about the importance of establishing and maintaining good credit, the difference between buying and leasing, and how to effectively create and monitor a budget as a post-secondary student and as an entrepreneur.



### Building Bridges



**Nichelle Googoo** (2nd from left), Director of Operations - Welamsit Cosmetics, negotiates a contract with **Lateesha Denny** (2<sup>nd</sup> from right), Assistant Manager - MAC Gift Shop.

Students spent the remainder of the morning working in their groups on an activity called “Building Bridges.” Each group chose a business from a predetermined business directory that they would like to run for the day. Group were given limited information about their business: background/situation, goals, other factors, and company positions. There were five companies to choose from: a marketing firm, a gift shop, a cosmetics company, a gaming company, and a tourism lodge. The objective was to work together to brainstorm possible partnerships/connections that they could make with the other four companies. Once

the “marketplace” opened, the objective was to negotiate as many contracts as possible. Each time a signed contract was approved, each group received a piece of the bridge. Once there were at least 15 contracts signed, there were enough pieces to successfully build the bridge. At the end of the activity, each General Manager/Director of Operations was asked to outline what they learned. These are some of the noteworthy comments:

- **Jeneva Dennis**, General Manager, MAC Gift Shop: “Being the boss is hard work, but is definitely something I can see myself doing in the future.”
- **Leah Alkenbrack**, Director of Operations, Back to Nature Lodge: “I didn’t realize there was going to be so much pressure involved with doing business.”
- **Cecil Doucette**, General Manager, MCNN Marketing Creations: “People will pay a lot for marketing services when demand is high.”
- **Quinten Gloade**, General Manager, QCB Studios: “In order to be successful, it is very important to have a great team behind you.”
- **Nichelle Googoo**, Director of Operations, Welamsit Cosmetics: “There is a lot more involved with negotiating a contract than I originally thought.”



**Dr. Keith Brown**, Contract Lawyer for the day, approving a contract.



Students putting the finishing touches on their bridge!



### Closing Awards Celebration



Ms. Bernard speaking to our students.

The Emcee for our Closing Awards Celebration was Dr. Keith Brown. We were fortunate to have several delegates join our students for the afternoon – all of whom offered remarks: Ms. Julie Towers, CEO, Nova Scotia Office of Aboriginal Affairs; Ms. Eleanor Bernard, Executive Director, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey; Mr. Joe Shannon, Chair of the Shannon School of Business Advisory Board, CBU; and Sister Dorothy Moore, Elder in Residence, Unama'ki College, CBU. Also in attendance was Spencer Wilmot, Director of Education and Student Services, Native Council of Nova Scotia, along with many parents, teachers, and representatives from school boards around the province.

### Question Period



Mr. Shannon offering advice to the group.

For the second year in a row, students had the opportunity to ask Mr. Shannon questions about his many years in business and his involvement with this program. For those of you who don't know Mr. Shannon, he is the prominent Cape Breton businessman who has been inducted into both the Nova Scotia and Canadian Business Hall of Fame. He is also the namesake for the Shannon School of Business at CBU, and one of the driving forces behind the Business Network for Aboriginal Youth. Without Mr. Shannon's support, this program would not exist.

One of the questions came from **Mika Francis**: "What was your greatest struggle in business?" Mr. Shannon explained the challenges he faced with obtaining financing in the early years as his greatest struggle. All questions and answers were both interesting and insightful.

### Closing Award Presentations



Mika Francis and Nyesha Sylliboy posing with their new Samsung tablets.

To close out the afternoon, there were several awards presented. Firstly, **Mika Francis** and **Nyesha Sylliboy** each won Samsung tablets for being the most engaged in the social media challenges this year. Next, Dr. Brown presented four special awards called "Purdy's." The Purdy Awards are presented at each conference to recognize special contributions to the program by students. During our closing conference, four students stood out as "rising to the occasion" and exhibiting outstanding leadership during the Building Bridges activity. Our Purdy Award winners for spring 2014 are: **Brennan Googoo**, **Jeneva Dennis**, **Nichelle Googoo**, and **Leah Alkenbrack**. In addition, each grade 12 student who was accepted into a post-secondary business program for September received a \$500

bursary. Bursary recipients were: **Lateesha Denny** (entering the BBA program at Cape Breton University); **Charles Jesso** (entering the B.Comm program at St. Mary's University); and **Autumn Dennis** (entering the Business Administration program at Nova Scotia Community College). Lastly, in recognition of their hard work and dedication, Mr. Shannon presented our 22 program graduates with completion certificates. Fifteen new students have joined the BNAY Alumni family, bringing our grand total to 54! That number is bound to grow at a rapid pace. Due in large part to the success of this program, it is expanding nationally as the *In.Business* program and will include 300 students annually from coast to coast to coast.



(l-r) Jeneva Dennis, Brennan Googoo, Nichell Googoo, and Leah Alkenbrack posing with their Purdy Awards.



Bursary recipients: Lateesha Denny and Charles Jesso.  
Missing from photo: Autumn Dennis.



Group photo at the Glooscap Centre in Millbrook.

To view more photos of our event [click here](#)

### THE LAST 3 YEARS AT A GLANCE

#### Year 3 (2013-2014)

- ✚ 22 students completed all of the requirements for the program
- ✚ 12 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating later this month
- ✚ 11 of whom will be attending post secondary in September
- ✚ 4 of these 11 will be studying business

#### Years 1 – 3 Combined

- ✚ 54 students completed all of the requirements for the program
  - 13 completed multiple years of the program
- ✚ 42 of these students were/are in grade 12
- ✚ 24 of these students are/will be attending post secondary
- ✚ 13 of these 25 are/will be studying business



**BUSINESS NETWORK FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH  
CLASS ON 2013-2014**

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**Noah Holleman**

Grade 11  
Central Kings High School  
Lakeville, NS



**Arnelle Paul**

Grade 12  
Chief Allison Bernard Memorial High School  
Eskasoni First Nation, NS



**Nevada Pierro**

Grade 10  
Wagmatcookewey School  
Wagmatcook First Nation, NS



**Brennan Googoo**

Grade 12  
Cobequid Education Centre  
Millbrook First Nation, NS



**Nyeshia Sylliboy**

Grade 11  
East Antigonish Education Centre  
Paq'tnkek First Nation, NS



**Alannah Poulette**

Grade 11  
East Antigonish Education Centre  
Paq'tnkek First Nation, NS



**Kitpu Herney**

Grade 11  
North Nova Education Centre  
Pictou Landing First Nation, NS



**Jeneva Dennis**

Grade 11  
Potlotek High School  
Potlotek First Nation, NS



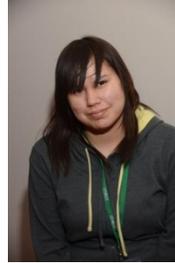
**BUSINESS NETWORK FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH  
CLASS ON 2013-2014**

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**Joe Isadore**

Grade 11  
Wagmatcookewey School  
Wagmatcook First Nation, NS



**Victoria Peck**

Grade 12  
Wagmatcookewey School  
Wagmatcook First Nation, NS



**Nichelle Googoo**

Grade 10  
Waycobah School  
Waycobah First Nation, NS



**Cassidy Bernard**

Grade 12  
Waycobah School  
Waycobah First Nation, NS



**Leah Alkenbrack**

Grade 12  
Horton High School  
Wolfville, NS



**Mariah Drever**

Grade 11  
Bridgetown Regional High School  
Lawrencetown, NS



**Quinten Gloade**

Grade 12  
Cobequid Educaiton Centre  
Millbrook First Nation, NS



**Hannah Peter-Paul**

Grade 12  
Hants East Rural High School  
Indian Brook First Nation, NS



**BUSINESS NETWORK FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH  
CLASS ON 2013-2014**

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**Autumn Dennis**  
Grade 12  
Waycobah School  
Waycobah First Nation, NS



**Starr Smith**  
Grade 12  
Wagmatcookewey School  
Wagmatcook First Nation, NS



**Lateesha Denny**  
Grade 12  
Wagmatcookewey School  
Wagmatcook First Nation, NS



**Charles Jesso**  
Grade 12  
Sackville High School  
Qalipu First Nation, NL



**Cecil Doucette**  
Grade 12  
Richmond Academy  
Potlotek First Nation, NS



**Mika Francis**  
Grade 11  
Yarmouth High School  
Acadia First Nation, NS



## MEET OUR PROGRAM MENTORS

We are very fortunate to have six Mi'kmaw business professionals who volunteer their time as program mentors. All of our mentors are university educated and work in business related careers. It is important to note that all of our mentors have full time jobs; many have children, but still devote a countless number of hours to our program. In addition to participating in two overnight conferences per year, each mentor facilitates business challenges via social media on a bi-weekly basis.



(l-r): Lesley Cremo, Rebekah Price, Jude Gerrard, Tracy Menge, and Ann Terese Doucette.  
Missing from photo: James Michael.

**Rebekah Price** currently works as the Admissions Representative with the Centre for Distance Education in Sydney. She resides in Sydney with her two daughters, and is originally from Wagmatcook First Nation. Rebekah holds a Bachelor of Hospitality Tourism Management Degree (BHTM) from CBU. Rebekah has also obtained a certificate in Aboriginal Leadership Development from St. Francis Xavier University and various other certificates from the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS). In addition, she has also completed a Certificate in Introduction to Employment Services from Dalhousie University. In the past she has sat on various committees such as the Wagmatcook Daycare Advisory Committee, Wagmatcook Interagency Committee and the TIANS Steering Committee. Rebekah's volunteer experience includes roles with the Heart & Stroke Foundation, Celtic Colours International Festival, and this position as program mentor for the Business Network for Aboriginal Youth at CBU. Rebekah has a passion for guiding youth toward their desired career goals.

**Lesley Cremo** is a lifetime resident of Eskasoni First Nation and is currently working in the Accounting/Administration Department at Eskasoni Foodland (formally Eskasoni Supermarket); a position she has held for over 10 years. Lesley graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree (BBA) from Cape Breton University (CBU) and a Certificate in Management (CIM) from the Canadian Institute of Management. Before working at the Eskasoni Supermarket, while attending CBU, Lesley worked as an Accounting Clerk for Eskasoni Tobacco Wholesale and Eskasoni Gaming Commission.



**Jude Gerrard** is the Student Services Consultant, Mi'kmaq Services Division for the Province of Nova Scotia. He was raised in both Sheet Harbour and Cole Harbour, and currently resides in Aylesford in the Annapolis Valley. Jude's education and experience is quite broad. He was at one time a member of the RCMP. He then decided to return to school, where he obtained a B.Comm, with a Double Major in Finance and Human Resource Management & Industrial Relations, as well as a Certificate in Human Resources. Upon graduation, he was hired by Correctional Services of Canada as Finance Officer at the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan. The healing lodge is a minimum/medium security facility for Aboriginal women. After a few years living in Saskatchewan, Jude moved back to Nova Scotia to be closer to family and was hired as Chief of Finance for a privately owned high tech security firm. His move from commerce to education occurred when this company was bought out by an international firm. Jude recently spent seven years as the Mi'kmaq Services Specialist for the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board. He also holds a Bachelor of Education from Acadia University and is returning to school in September to pursue and Masters of Education.

**Tracy Menge** is currently the Director of Community Economic Development for the Eskasoni First Nation where she has worked for the past 13 years. Before becoming the Director, Tracy was the Economic Development Officer. She holds a BBA from CBU and is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration Degree in Community Economic Development, also from CBU. Ms. Menge is very active on various committees and volunteers for various community and/or youth initiatives, including being Co-Chair of the Unama'ki Economic Benefits Office Steering Committee, as well as being a Board Member for Destination Cape Breton representing the five Unama'ki Chiefs. She is very committed to the success and promotion of economic development for Aboriginal people with a special interest in tourism and youth. Her volunteer experience with youth has included work with Junior Achievement, E-Spirit National Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Competition, and this position as Program Mentor with the Business Network for Aboriginal Youth at CBU. In addition, she has developed and delivered entrepreneurship summer camps and programs for Mi'kmaq youth in her community. Ms. Menge believes that there is a great need and value in collaborating with issues that affect all first nations.

**James Michael** is a Senior Associate of Mi'kma'ki All Points Services (MAPS) with the portfolio of Manager of Advisory Services and Public Relations. James is a proud member of Shubenacadie First Nation. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and a Bachelor of Laws, both from Dalhousie University. James articulated at a large Halifax law firm that practiced in various areas of law. The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society honoured him as the First Mi'kmaq called to the Bar in the province by placing a portrait of him at the Law Courts in Halifax and hosting a conference to commemorate the occasion that was attended by members from the Judiciary, as well as families and friends. James has over 18 years of experience and has worked extensively on First Nation issues. He was elected to two terms as a Councillor for the Shubenacadie Band when he first returned home to the Indian Brook Reserve after completing his education and being called to the Bar. During this time frame, he first started to work on the Aboriginal Title Project (ATP), a joint initiative of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians and the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, as a historical researcher. He later became the Co-Manager of the ATP, serving also as the Manager of the province wide Traditional Use Study (TUS). Both the ATP and TUS were administered by the Treaty & Aboriginal Rights Research Centre of Nova Scotia (TARR Centre). He later became Director of the TARR Centre.

**Ann Terese Doucette** is currently working as the Marketing and Aboriginal Support Specialist for the Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies at CBU. She is on a leave of absence from her position as Finance Officer for the Membertou Band Council, where she has worked for over seven years. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree (B.Comm) from St. Mary's University with a Major in Marketing. Ms. Doucette is a Membertou Band Member who grew up on the outskirts of Sydney and currently resides in Sydney. Currently, Ann Terese sits on the Board of Directors for the Cape Breton Ski Club (Ski Ben Eoin) and the Board of Directors for the Sydney Harbour Dragon Boat Club, which just started its second season in the water. She also sat on the organizing committee for the CIBC Run for the Cure in Sydney from 2006 to 2011 as the volunteer coordinator.