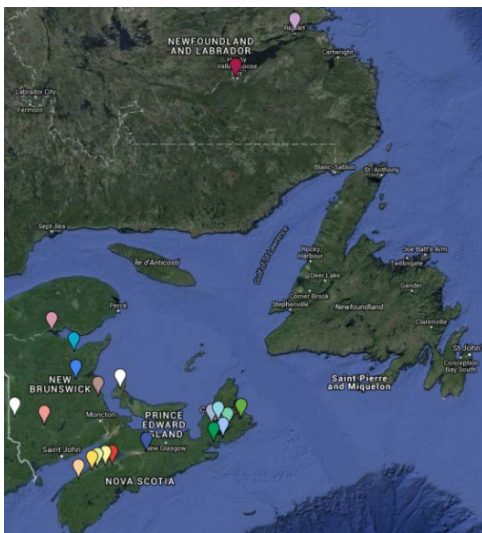


## IN.BUSINESS ATLANTIC REGION OPENING CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 9-10, 2015, UNAMA'KI, NOVA SCOTIA

In.Business: A National Mentorship Program for Indigenous Youth is a mentorship program that uses social media, smartphone technology, Aboriginal mentors, and in-person conferences to educate Aboriginal high school students about business. In.Business was established in 2011 by the Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies at Cape Breton University (CBU). The Nova Scotia pilot of the In.Business program (the Business Network for Aboriginal Youth) was comprised of 30 students and six mentors from across Nova Scotia. Since 2011, In.Business has expanded nationally and is comprised of 275 students and 40 mentors from across Canada, and includes students from every province and territory. In.Business is made possible by the generous financial support from Indigenous and Northern Affairs and various other government and private donors. In addition, the Atlantic Region is financially supported by Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey and the Province of Nova Scotia.

### THE JOURNEY



The Atlantic region includes students, mentors, and peer mentors from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador. From mid-September to early-October, presentations were made at 20 high schools across the region. Applications to the In.Business program were received from 148 students attending 24 high schools. Following the application process, which involved evaluating students' two-page application and a recommendation form, 60 students were selected with representation from 21 high schools (shown in the adjacent map) and 19 Aboriginal communities. All were notified on October 15<sup>th</sup>, with plans for the opening conference in Cape Breton already well underway! Leading up to the opening conference, students introduced themselves electronically via the In.Business Facebook group. With the exception of 13 returning students, most of the students knew only one or two other students in the program, if any at all. Once travel arrangements fell into place, the conference started to become a reality. Four students were scheduled to commute via plane, with the remaining students using a combination of chartered buses and rented

vehicles. Unfortunately, a massive snow storm in Labrador prevented three students from attending. Other than this, the opening conference was very well attended.

### DAY 1 HIGHLIGHTS

Governor General David Johnston joined students via Skype on the morning of November 9<sup>th</sup>. His Excellency participated in a question and answer session with students from around the region, including Julian Marshall of Membertou (pictured right), who asked His Excellency about his visit to Membertou in 2011. Other students asked questions ranging from the Governor General's responsibilities to His Excellency's experience of being inducted as an Honorary Witness for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.



## DAY 2 HIGHLIGHTS

**Intro Videos** – Prior to the conference, students were asked to prepare a short video introducing themselves to the group. With very little guidelines for this challenge, students were asked to explain a little bit about themselves and their community, and why they applied for this program. The videos provided an opportunity for students and mentors to learn about the other people they would be interacting with for the next several months. The videos were very well done! To see for yourself, [click here!](#)



**Pitch It! Contest** – In the business world, getting approved for a loan is sometimes a very competitive process. Students were instructed to work in their groups with the guidance of a mentor to develop a pitch for an innovative business idea. In the scenario they were given, due to an economic recession, there were very limited funds available for business loans. In fact, there was only enough money to approve one loan, which meant teams had to convince judges that their idea was the best idea. Each group worked together to brainstorm ideas for their proposal and then made a 2 minute

pitch. After extensive deliberation, “Mimikejk,” led by mentor Ann Terese Doucette, won the contest for their idea of a café called “Mozzle Tops.” Mimikejk members include (pictured from l-r): Julian Marshall, Sydney Academy; Kailey Simon, Bonar Law Memorial School; Abigail Murphy, Miramichi Valley High School; Kendra Gould, Allison Bernard Memorial High School; and Katerina Basque, Waycobah First Nation School (WFNS). Bailey Googoo, WFNS; and Kendra Simon, Wagmatcookewey School were both missing from this photo.

**The “Purdy Awards”** were first handed out at our inaugural opening conference back in 2012. They are named after Purdy Crawford and are awarded at each conference to recognize special contributions to the program by students. The recipients of the Purdy Awards at the 2015/16 Atlantic region opening conference were (pictured from l-r): Nikki Isaac Pictou, Dalhousie Regional High School; Cole Pilgrim, Mealy Mountain Collegiate; Nichelle Googoo, Allison Bernard Memorial High School; Teague Foxton, Annapolis West Education Centre; and Rebeka Motty, Bathurst High School.



## SURVEY RESULTS

Before students returned home after the opening conference, they completed a survey based on their experiences over the two day conference. Some of the notable results include:

- When asked “What was your favorite part(s) of the opening conference,” 40% of responses were the “CBU Campus tour.”
- 93% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the following statement: “I found the guest speakers engaging and learned from their experiences.”
- When asked, “What topics do you hope to learn the most about while participating in this mentorship program,” marketing and leadership/management were the two most popular responses.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Until the group comes together again in May 2016, social media and various apps will be relied upon to keep students connected with their mentors and each other. Each student has been paired with a mentor and placed in a group with five or six other students. Students will be working on bi-weekly business challenges facilitated by their mentors. In addition, each group will be meeting on a regular basis (virtually) via [Zoom Cloud](#) to discuss their bi-weekly challenges. The main goal of this program is to help our students explore business opportunities and ultimately entice them to study business in the future. After spending a few days together, we are well on our way!

The 2015/16 Atlantic region has representation from the following Aboriginal communities:

**Nova Scotia:** Bear River, Eskasoni, Indian Brook, Membertou, Potlotek, Wagmatcook, Waycobah

**New Brunswick:** Burnt Church, Eel Ground, Eel River Bar, Elsipogtog, Pabineau, St Mary's, Woodstock

**Newfoundland & Labrador:** Qalipu, Rigolet, Sheshatshiu

**Prince Edward Island:** Lennox Island

**Quebec:** Kahnawake

The 2015/16 Atlantic region has representation from the following schools:

**Nova Scotia:** Allison Bernard Memorial High School, Annapolis West Education Centre, Central Kings High School, Horton High School, Middleton Regional High School, Potlotek High School, Richmond Academy, Riverview High School, Sydney Academy, Wagmatcookewey High School, Waycobah First Nation School, West Kings District High School

**New Brunswick:** Bathurst High School, Bonar Law Memorial School, Dalhousie Regional High School, Leo Hayes High School, Miramichi Valley High School, Woodstock High School

**Newfoundland & Labrador:** Mealy Mountain Collegiate, Northern Lights Academy

**Prince Edward Island:** Westisle Composite High School

Pictured below is a group photo of Atlantic region students.



To view profiles, refer to our website: [Students](#) | [Mentors](#) | [Peer Mentors](#)



[www.cbuinbusiness.ca](http://www.cbuinbusiness.ca)

The  
**Purdy Crawford Chair**  
In Aboriginal Business Studies