

**IN.BUSINESS CENTRAL REGION CLOSING CONFERENCE  
MAY 5-6, 2017, SASKATOON, SK**

In.Business: A National Mentorship Program for Indigenous Youth is a program that uses social media, smartphone technology, Indigenous mentors, and in-person conferences to educate Indigenous 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 593 students have completed the program to date, 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.

**The Journey**

In fall 2016, 83 students applied for the 60 spots in the Central Region. The 60 students that were chosen and seven mentors attended two overnight conferences: the opening at the University of Winnipeg in November, and most recently, our closing in Saskatoon in May. In-between conferences, students worked in their virtual groups on 10 bi-weekly business challenges via social media, which were facilitated by their mentors. In total, over 50 different topics were explored, including: 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 a call to action from the Truth & Reconciliation Report about business. Students also learned about running their own business using “Music Mogul,” a smartphone gaming app that was designed specifically for the In.Business program. Music Mogul explores business concepts by letting the player manage Indigenous musical bands as they tour across Canada.

**DAY 1 CLOSING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

Twenty-nine students representing 13 high schools and 12 First Nation communities across Central Canada travelled by bus 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. The Winnipeg group met up with the Saskatoon group for dinner then an evening at Apex Trampoline Park marking the official beginning of our closing conference. The two groups joined and we retired to the hotel for the night.



Group shot at the finale of the conference!

## DAY 2 CLOSING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

**60 Second Sell** – As the final challenge of the year, students were tasked with preparing individual videos promoting themselves in 60 seconds or less. The ultimate goal of these videos was to convince the judging panel they should be one of the two students sponsored to study business. The winner and runner up of this challenge were awarded bursaries of \$1000 and \$500 respectively to study business at CBU or any of our partner institutions (University of Winnipeg, Yukon College, Nipissing University, and Vancouver Island University). If the winners study business at any other post-secondary institution in Canada, their awards are valued at \$500 and \$250 respectively. The videos were scored on the following: content, creativity, persuasion, relevance, and enthusiasm. With very little guidance, the students created fantastic videos showing their confidence, education, and creativity. Kaeden Pottie, of Miles MacDonnell Collegiate was our runner up, and Sidney Ray Shacter of Evan Hardy Collegiate was our winner! [View their Videos here.](#)

**Building Bridges** – Each group chose a business from a predetermined directory that they would like to run for the day. Groups were given information about their business including: background/situation, goals, company positions, and other factors. There were five companies assigned: a marketing firm, a gift shop, a gaming company, a printing company, and a trucking company. The objective was to work together to brainstorm the possible partnerships and 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. The marketplace was open for a mere 30 minutes, and everyone worked together to establish at least three contracts per group – which unlocked all of the pieces needed to build the bridge.



Everyone working to complete the bridge



**Closing Award Presentations** – The In.Business Central Region closed with awards for our 2016-2017 standout students. First, it was time for the “Purdy Awards” which 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 2016-2017 Central region Closing Conference were (pictured from l-r): Kirsten Cloud, Oak Park High School; Joel Redsky, Argyle Alternative High School; Aurora Howden, Argyle Alternative High School; Denisha Crow, Oak Park High School; Faith Perkins, Bedford Road Collegiate.

In addition, each grade 12 student who was accepted into a post-secondary business program for September received a \$500 bursary. The bursary recipient was Kaeden Pottie; she is entering the BBA program at University of Winnipeg.

Finally, in recognition of their hard work and dedication, 32 students, representing 15 high schools and 12 First Nation communities, received certificates for successfully completing the 2016-2017 In.Business Central program.

<p><b>Argyle Alternative High School</b> Aurora Howden Joel Redsky Judith Paul</p> <p><b>Bedford Road Collegiate</b> Italia Eagle Justice Perkins Marisa Daniels</p> <p><b>Centennial Collegiate</b> Celystin Moosomin Jessie Brass</p> <p><b>Children of the Earth School</b> Bear Harper Denzel Harper Kyler Harper Seth Henderson</p>	<p><b>Evan Hardy Collegiate</b> Sidney Ray Shacter</p> <p><b>Glenlawn Collegiate</b> Shaynah Baptiste Sidney Butler</p> <p><b>John Taylor Collegiate</b> Troy Kemball</p> <p><b>Margaret Barbour Collegiate</b> Gabrielle Umpherville</p> <p><b>Martin Collegiate</b> Brianna LaPlante Heather McArthur</p> <p><b>The MET School</b> Nicholas James</p> <p><b>Miles MacDonnell Collegiate</b> Kaeden Pottie</p>	<p><b>Miller Comprehensive</b> Javin Ames-Sinclair Jordan Ames-Sinclair</p> <p><b>Oak Park High School</b> Adrian Esquash Brent Mike Denisha Crow Hope McIntyre Kirsten Cloud</p> <p><b>River East Collegiate</b> Jaxson Bouchie</p> <p><b>St James Collegiate</b> Ashley Taylor</p>
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**BY THE NUMBERS**

<p><b>In.Business Central Region 2016-17</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 students completed all of the requirements for the program</li> <li>• 20 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating high school</li> <li>• 13 (65%) of whom will be attending post-secondary in September 2016</li> <li>• 2 (15%) of these 13 will be studying business</li> </ul>
<p><b>In.Business All Regions 2016-17</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 101 students completed all of the requirements for the program</li> <li>• 52 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating high school</li> <li>• 36 (69%) of whom will be attending post-secondary in September 2017</li> <li>• 10 (%) of these 36 will be studying business</li> </ul>
<p><b>In.Business All Regions 2012-Present</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 593 students completed all of the requirements for the program</li> <li>• 184 of these students were/are in grade 12</li> <li>• 107 (58%) of whom are/will be attending post-secondary</li> <li>• 32 (30%) of these 107 are/will be studying business</li> </ul>