



In.Business Central Region Opening Conference

November 18, 2017, First Nations University of Canada, Regina, Saskatchewan

In.Business: A National Mentorship Program for Indigenous Youth uses social media, mobile 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). It was a small Nova Scotia pilot initially comprised of 30 students and six mentors. The pilot has since expanded and now operates in five regions across Canada (Atlantic, Eastern, Central, Pacific and Northern). In.Business is made possible by the generous financial support from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and various other governments, private, and corporate contributors.

The Journey

The Central region encompasses Manitoba and Saskatchewan. During September and October, presentations were made at 8 high schools across Regina with 44 applications received. We had 7 new students for representation from 4 high schools (shown in the map right) and 4 Indigenous communities. The opening conference, held on November 18th, was very well attended with 7 students, and 2 mentors.



Day 1



Students discussing their challenges, 2017-18 Central Regina Mentors, former student Sidney Shacter as our photographer

Meet the mentors!



In the morning, students and mentors ate a delicious breakfast catered by the University of Regina catering company. Once everyone feasted together, the mentors handed each student a copy of their resume, talking about their journey through education towards business. This was the first time the groups came together, sharing mutual stories of first jobs and dreams for the future.

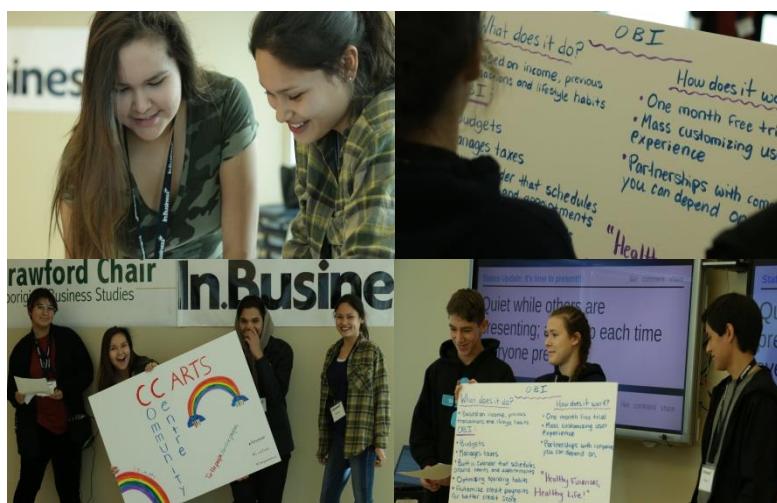


Welcome to In.Business



To begin the morning, Elder Audrey Cochrane invited the group to listen to the time when family was close, and roles were distinct. Her prayer in Cree, and gratitude for the day were inspiring and set an immensely good tone for the day. The groups were then given their first online challenge: to identify their current skills, dreams, and leadership in their lives. We then had local Indigenous entrepreneur Michael Langan speak to the group about creating and maintaining his skateboard company: Colonialism Skateboards. The students were very interested in Michael's story as well as his products which aim to educate Canadian society about the historical and current reality of Colonialism in Canada. "History through graphics" is what Michael calls it; the two boards displayed above illustrate the Pass system and residential schools. Each board comes with a write-up of the story of the graphic.

Pitch It Challenge



After lunch, students competed in the Pitch It Challenge – 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 two-minute pitch. After extensive deliberation, the group led by mentor Jo-anne Goodpipe, won the contest for their product and distribution plan of a finance app that would have the ability to track and generate tax reports with user input. The competition's runner-ups developed a plan for a social community hub for arts.



What's next?

Until the group comes together again in May 2018, social media and apps will be connecting students with their mentors. Each student has been placed in a group with a mentor and other students. Students will be working on bi-weekly business challenges facilitated by their mentors. The main goal of this program is to help our students explore business opportunities and ultimately entice them to study business in the future. A secondary goal is to have students see themselves as future professionals allowing them to build goals to pursue that reality.

The 2017-2018 Central region, in Saskatchewan, has representation from the following First Nation communities:

Saskatchewan: Cowessess, George Gordon, Ochapowave, and Whitebear

The 2017-2018 Central region, in Saskatchewan, has representation from the following schools:

Saskatchewan: Balfour, Miller Comprehensive, and Sheldon-Williams

Pictured below is a group photo of Central Region Regina students



To view profiles, refer to our website:

[Students | Mentors](#)

www.cbuinbusiness.ca

