

# In.Business<sup>®</sup>

## In.Business Central Region Opening Conference

November 4, 2017, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba

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 August, September, and October, presentations were made at 10 high schools across Winnipeg with 79 applications received. We had 5 returning students and 20 new students for representation from all 10 high schools (shown in the map right) and 15 Indigenous communities. The opening conference, November 4th, was very well attended with 25 students, and 6 mentors.



### Day 1



Students work on their smart devices, 2017-18 Central Winnipeg Mentors, Students figuring out the order of presenting

### Meet the mentors!



In the morning, students and mentors ate delicious Indigenous-inspired breakfast dishes at the restaurant 'Feast Café Bistro.' Feast, for short, is an Indigenous-owned restaurant that is the first restaurant in Winnipeg to cook with Indigenous fusion items on the menu; bannock is an option for toast, squash cakes can be ordered in place of hash browns, among other options. 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.

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## Welcome to In.Business



To begin the morning, Elder Wendy Whitecloud encouraged the group to live today in a good way while focusing on education despite challenges that will come, and to maintain a professional composure while having fun. Regional Manager, Hanwakan Blaikie Whitecloud awarded gift cards to students who posted their first video challenge to the group. The groups were then given their first online challenge, asking them to identify their current skills, dreams, and leadership in their lives. Once their challenge was completed, students competed in a scavenger hunt activity to get to know the rest of the group. Students were encouraged to find other students who are skilled or have had experiences in their culture and entrepreneurship.

## 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, Sarah Cook, won the contest for their product and distribution plan of online grocery and delivery called “Comperceries.” Other ideas included suicide prevention programs, a taxi service for fire trucks, a heated shovel called “Hot Shuv,” a virtual capacity building program, an online marketing company, and a social media hub for people experiencing homelessness.

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## What's next?

Until the group comes together again in April 2017, 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 Winnipeg has representation from the following First Nation communities:

**Manitoba:** Rolling River, Roseau River, Grand Rapids, Fort Alexander, Canupawakpa, Waywayseecappo, Hollow Water, Misipawistik Cree Nation, Muskoday, Lake St. Martin, Peguis, Bloodvein, Norway House Cree Nation, and Berens River

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

**Manitoba:** Argyle, Children of the Earth, Daniel McIntyre, Garden City, Glenlawn, Kildonan East, Miles MacDonnell, Oak Park, RB Russell, River East, and St. Mary's Academy

Pictured below is a group photo of Central Region Winnipeg students



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



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