

IN.BUSINESS NORTHERN REGION CLOSING CONFERENCE
JUNE 3RD AND 4TH, 2016 KWANLIN DÜN CULTURAL CENTRE & CANADA GAMES CENTRE
WHITEHORSE, YUKON

In.Business: A National Mentorship Program for Indigenous Youth is a mentorship program that uses social media, smart 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. In 2015, In.Business expanded nationally and is now 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, private, and corporate contributors.

The Journey

In the fall of 2015 with the inaugural opening of the In.Business program in the Northern Region, 62 students applied for the program with 35 students being selected and their nine mentors attended two overnight conferences in Whitehorse, YT; the opening at the Yukon College in November, and more recently, our closing at the Canada Games Centre and Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. In between conferences, students worked in their virtual groups on nine 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 the effects of community debt on youth. 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 Aboriginal musical bands as they tour across Canada.

1 DAY 1 HIGHLIGHTS

14 students representing eight high schools across Northern Canada travelled by plane, bus, van and car rides 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 at the Canada Games Centre marked the official beginning of our Closing Conference. We had a welcoming song with traditional drumming by Starr Drynoch and opening prayer from Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) Elder Billy Giroux with many dignitaries who were eager to speak to and congratulate the graduating students; Senator Daniel Lang, Premier Darrel Pasloski, Grand Chief Ruth Massie, Ta'an Council Chief Kristina Kane, KDFN Councilor Sean Smith, Chancellor for Yukon College Geraldine Van Bibber, Yukon College President Janet Moodie and Cape Breton University Vice President Dr. Keith Brown. After a great presentation by In.Business mentor and CBU MBA Geordan Clark on the economics of education and positive choices, students and mentors ended the evening with a facilitated Nerf War team-building activity and drop-in basketball and swimming, wristbands provided in sponsorship by the City of Whitehorse.



In.Business mentor and CBU MBA Geordan Clark presenting the merits of education.



Group shot at the fire pit of the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, Whitehorse Yukon

DAY 2 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 how confident, well educated, and creative they are. Isaiah Schab from Porter Creek Secondary School was runner-up with Asia Winter-Sinnott from J.V. Clark School was our winner. To view their videos, [click here!](#)

Building Bridges – Each group selected a business from a predetermined directory that they would like to operate for the day. Groups were given information about their business including: background/situation, goals, other factors, and company positions. There were four companies to choose from: a marketing firm, a trucking company, a seafood wholesaler, and a restaurant. The objective was to work together to brainstorm the possible partnerships and connections that they could make with the other three 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
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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.

Closing Award Presentation – To close out the conference and the In.Business Northern Region for 2015-16, there were a number of awards and certificates presented. It was time for the “Purdy Awards” which were first handed out at our inaugural Opening Conference back in Atlantic Canada 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 Northern region Closing Conference were (pictured left to right): Madi Dixon, Vanier Catholic Secondary School; Isaiah Schab, Porter Creek Secondary School; Jenna Furlong, Diamond Jenness Secondary.



Finally, in recognition of their hard work and dedication, 14 students, representing eight high schools and ten Aboriginal communities, received certificates for successfully completing the 2015-16 In.Business (Northern) program.

<u>NORTHWEST TERRITORIES</u>	<u>YUKON TERRITORY</u>
<p>Saint Patrick High School Deanne Whenham Jaida Edjericon</p>	<p>J.V Clark Asia Winter-Sinnott</p>
<p>Sir John Franklin High School Rebecca Nitah Roberta "Simone" Washie Charlene Sayine Krischan Smith</p>	<p>Robert Service School Zarah Sidney</p>
<p>Diamond Jenness Secondary Jenna Furlong</p>	<p>Porter Creek Secondary School Logan O'Shea Isaiah Schab</p>
	<p>F.H. Collins Secondary School Ashley Cummings</p>
	<p>Vanier Catholic Secondary School Shania Hogan Madison Dixon</p>

EXIT SURVEY RESULTS

An exit survey was completed at the end of the closing conference and here are some of the results:

- When asked, “Why did you choose the In.Business Program?” the majority of responses were to learn more about business (want to own their own business, interested in business, want to pursue business at post-secondary, etc.)
- 91% of students strongly agree or agree that they gained valuable skills during the program
- 91% of students strongly agree or agree that they were satisfied with the program
- 100% of students said they would recommend this program to other students

BY THE NUMBERS

<p>In.Business Northern Region 2015 – 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 students completed all of the requirements for the program • 10 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating high school • 6 (60%) of whom will be attending post-secondary in September 2016 • 1 (17%) of these 6 will be studying business
<p>In.Business All Regions 2015 - 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 144 students completed all of the requirements for the program • 72 of these students were/are in grade 12 • 48 (67%) of these students are/will be attending post-secondary • 10 (21%) of these 48 are/will be studying business
<p>In.Business All Regions 2012 - Present</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 227 students completed all of the requirements for the program • 127 of these students were/are in grade 12 • 90 (71%) of these students are/will be attending post-secondary • 31 (34%) of these 42 are/will be studying business



Facilitated “Nerf War” team building activity with Northern students and mentors at Canada Games Centre

To check out even more conference highlights, [click here!](#)