



# In.Business

## Smartphone Technology



(Center) Minister Kevin Chief with In.Business students who have received phones

To stay connected between conferences, students and mentors are linked via social media and Smartphone technology. Students have the option to use their own device or to use a device on loan for the duration of the program. Smartphones are necessary (beyond keeping connected) in order for everyone to access business related apps integrated into the program. Students and mentors use their devices to facilitate discussions within two Facebook groups: their working group (six or seven students with their mentor) and the main group (60 students and 12 mentors). Inside their groups, students take on bi-weekly program challenges facilitated by the mentors which explore the many facets of business. Groups are organized to be as diverse as possible to increase exposure to different perspectives.

## Lecture by Wab Kinew

Wab Kinew, Associate Vice-President of Indigenous Affairs, opened his lecture with a song that honoured the heroes of Indigenous people from North America. As he welcomed the students he spoke of Indigenous peoples' involvement in the North American economy before Canada was a country. Indigenous peoples' business skills allowed them to be active participants in the fur trade with newcomers. With that in mind, he covered the importance of business skills within his own life. Armed with an education in business and economics, Kinew described how his education opened up opportunities for him to grow, and delve further into his Indigenous culture. In his conclusion, Kinew described how Facebook was created using Indigenous knowledge. The giving ceremonies that are found in Indigenous cultures were the basis for information sharing in the social network. Everyone has to share in order for the network to function, much like traditional Indigenous communities.



Wab Kinew performing a mash-up of traditional drumming and modern hip-hop music that honoured historical and present-day Indigenous heroes.



(Clockwise from upper-left) Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg President Damon Johnston; Federal Parliamentary Secretary Mark Strahl; Aboriginal Consultant Clayton Sandy; Treaty Commissioner James Wilson

## Welcome Lunch

Following Wab Kinew's lecture, lunch was served while invited delegates gave lunch time greetings. Delegates included Federal Parliamentary Secretary Mark Strahl, Manitoba Provincial Minister Kevin Chief, Treaty Commissioner James Wilson, Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg President Damon Johnston, Provincial Consultant Clayton Sandy, Manitoba Urban Inuit Association President Fred Ford, and Mayor of Winnipeg Brian Bowman who gave greetings via video link.

## Pitch it Contest

The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to a business plan competition. Students paired up with mentors and began looking at developing unique business ideas to present to prospective investors. 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/junior mentor to develop a pitch for an innovative business idea. In the scenario they were given, due to an economy in recession, there were a very limited amount of funds available for business loans. In fact, there was only enough money to approve one loan, which meant teams had to convince them that their idea was the best idea. Each group worked together to brainstorm ideas for their proposal and then made a short 2-3 minute pitch.



(Left to right) Students present in front of the group; this group would use the product presented; Dawson Assiniboine presents his business idea

There were eight business ideas including: An app to remind forgetful consumers about upcoming birthdays/anniversaries and would give purchase suggestions with delivery; A mall that acted as a cultural event centre featuring local artisans to attract tourists; A portable projector that attaches to smartphones; An Indigenous school to learn about mainstream education and traditional culture in a modern setting; Tipi Trails, an app to provide a resource for newcomers to urban centres; A glasses company with imbedded cameras with a focus on sustainability; Portable snow shack that attaches to snowmobiles; A drop-in centre that focuses on art, web-design, social media practices, and hosts art shows near The Forks; Designated Delivery, an overnight delivery services that operates between 12-8am; Automated teller machine business that would provide service to reservations; An Indigenous street vendor that focuses their products on bannock.

## Dinner and Presentation at Neechi Commons



Neechi Commons celebrates their second year in business



Inside Neechi Commons

After the Pitch it Contest, students were taken to Neechi Commons, a community business complex located off Main Street in the north end of Winnipeg. Neechi Commons opened in the spring of 2013 as a local co-operative supermarket, restaurant, bakery, produce courtyard, Indigenous arts'n'crafts store, and a commercial office space area. Students were greeted to a bannock pizza dinner and a presentation made by Kelly Edwards who gave the students an overview of the history of Neechi Commons, an explanation of co-op based business models, Neechi's current products/services and Neechi's hopes for the future.

## Visit to Manitobah Mukluks



Products on display at the Manitobah Mukluks Headquarters

Once the students were well fed, the In.Business group went to visit the headquarters of Canada's fastest-growing footwear brand, Manitobah Mukluks, which is located a short 10 minute drive from Neechi Commons. There they were taken on a tour led by the CEO Sean McCormick. Students were told about the history of Mukluks, the company's humble beginnings in Brandon, Manitoba, followed by its current situation and manufacturing process including its recent expansion to overseas production. Students were invited to register for the Storytime Boots sessions happening in the spring where registered entrants are invited to learn how to make mukluks.

### Introduction to Music Mogul

After breakfast on day two, we went into a business simulation workshop through a game entitled "Music Mogul" which was developed specifically to support the In.Business program. The concept is that the player is positioned as the Manager of an Indigenous Garage Band that wants to make it big. They start by selecting a home community and then manage a variety of critical decisions to reach one of two goals, either \$1 million or touring at least 39 communities across the country. They have to buy and sell merchandise, negotiate pricing for venues, buy and upgrade speakers and gear, order advertising and schedule tours. All of the music profiled in the game is from Indigenous Canadian artists and venues feature First Nation communities or communities with very high per capita Indigenous population as well as all major urban centres. Music Mogul is available now on Google Play, iTunes, and for PC/Mac via the website: [www.musicmogul.ca](http://www.musicmogul.ca).

Using Music Mogul students worked on best strategies for playing the game, then competed individually for prizes for the most fans, cities played, and profit! The game is free, so try it out for yourself and let us know what you think!



Students get into a business mindset and begin playing their first shows in Music Mogul



Dathan Simms (student) shows off the first decision of his Music Mogul career; selecting his hometown.

### Scavenger Hunt



Mentor Lisa Whitecloud signs off on a student's list, indicating that she can count to ten in an Indigenous language

A scavenger hunt was developed to help students identify the resources already at their disposal via their own social networks, but also to highlight the importance of networking and building relations with one another. Questions were developed in relation to assets both cultural, and experiential that mentors and students brought to the table. Questions related to cultural knowledge, such as language and ceremonial art, to experiences on trap lines, were meant to highlight how cultural understandings can lead to great business ideas like Manitobah Mukluks. Questions related to experiences highlighted the importance of accounting, artistic, marketing, and networking skills like winning youth achievement awards or already having an established business partnership.



Phoenix Smith (student)  
prepares to interview her  
partner

## Instagram Icebreaker

Further to the Scavenger hunt was an ice breaker activity that incorporated Instagram. Students were paired with someone they had not had the opportunity to work with and tasked with interviewing each other and uploading the short video (15 seconds or less) to Instagram. This activity was developed by Junior Mentors from the Atlantic region. We then watched many of the videos as a group, which was a lot of fun! To view some of the videos, search #INBCentral on Instagram!

## Purdy Awards

The “Purdy Awards” were first handed out at our inaugural conference three years ago. They are named after Purdy Crawford and are awarded at each conference to recognize a special contribution to the program by a student. Unfortunately, Purdy passed away this past August. Purdy’s commitment to Aboriginal youth and Aboriginal education are what made this program come alive. Despite the fact that he is no longer with us, Purdy’s legacy will be felt for generations to come as In.Business expands from coast to coast to coast. Allan Mackenzie, Atlantic Regional Manager of the In.Business program helped to close the conference and present awards to the students. To learn more about Purdy Crawford, check out Dr. Brown’s blog post shortly after his passing: <http://www.cbu.ca/blogs/keithbrown/memories-purdy-crawford#.VJMTiF4AAA>

### Purdy Awards were awarded to the following students:



**Rylee Nepinak** of St John’s Highschool for his leadership skills, including being a supportive and driving force for his group during the Pitch It competition.



**Kakeka Thundersky** of Churchill Highschool for her strong public speaking skills throughout the conference and her innovative ideas in the Pitch It competition.



**Michaela Robertson** of the Transcona Collegiate Institute for overcoming obstacles to get her groups ideas presented and for reaching out of her comfort zone.



**Sarah Keicer-Contois** of Tec Voc Highschool for being very engaged, impressing mentors with her focus and capitalizing on all opportunities.



**Dathan Simms** of Tec Voc High School for being a keen, self-motivated student whose inquiries kept students and mentors on task.



**Ethan Courchene** of College Jeanne-Sauve for his maturity and professionalism. He was a great role model for other students.

Since the program was first launched in 2011, 29 students have won a Purdy

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## WHAT'S NEXT?

Until the group comes together again in June 2015, social media and smartphone technology will be relied upon to keep our students connected with their mentors and each other. As mentioned, 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 their future. After spending a few days together, we are well on our way!



## MEET THE STUDENTS



**Aaron Schick**

Grade 11  
College Jeanne Sauve  
Winnipeg, MB



**Amber Murdock**

Grade 11  
RB Russell High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Ashley Cummings**

Grade 11  
Inuksuk High School  
Iqaluit, NU



**Ashley Demery**

Grade 12  
Winnipeg Adult Education  
Centre  
Winnipeg, MB



**Austin Throop**

Grade 12  
Oak Park High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Amanda Cowley**

Grade 10  
Glenlawn High School  
Winnipeg, MB

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**Baylee Giroux**

Grade 12  
Tec Voc High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Ben Flack**

Grade 9  
Inuksuk High School  
Iqaluit, NU



**Brenden Esquash**

Grade 12  
Children of the Earth High  
School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Brenna Beauregard**

Grade 11  
Oak Park High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Brennen Young Skye**

Grade 12  
RB Russell  
Winnipeg, MB



**Brianna Knott**

Grade 11  
West Kildonan High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Cassandra Groen**

Grade 12  
Oak Park High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Caylin Knott**

Grade 12  
Gordon Bell High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Chase McCorrister**

Grade 12  
West Kildonan HS  
Winnipeg, MB



**Chevaz Everett**

Grade 10  
Churchill High School  
Winnipeg, MB



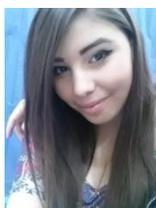
**Christian Hunter**

Grade 11  
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**Dakota Woitowicz**

Grade 12  
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Winnipeg, MB



**Danielle Anderson**

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Gordon Bell High School  
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**Daren Hamilton**

Grade 11  
Children of the Earth HS  
Winnipeg, MB

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**Dathan Simms**

Grade 11  
Tec Voc High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Dawson Assiniboine**

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**Duval Clarke**

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Winnipeg, MB



**Ethan Courchene**

Grade 10  
College Jeanne-Sauve  
Winnipeg, MB



**Geordi McKay**

Grade 12  
Oak Park High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Grayson Tourand**

Grade 11  
Glenlawn High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Hope Carpenter**

Grade 10  
Inuksuk High School  
Iqaluit, NU



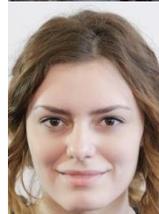
**Iroc Levasseur**

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U of W Collegiate  
Winnipeg, MB



**Jamie Anderson**

Grade 10  
U of W Modal School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Jamie Nienhuysch**

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Glenlawn Collegiate  
Winnipeg, MB



**Jasmine Apetagon**

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Glenlawn High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Jenessa Sinclair**

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**Jessica McGillivray**

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**Joey Pacey**

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**Jordon Tourand**

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**Kakeka Thundersky**

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Churchill High School  
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**Leanne Flett**

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**Naomi Anderson**

Grade 12  
Gordon Bell High School  
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**Phoenix Smith**

Grade 10  
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**Rebecca Svens**

Grade 12  
Children of the Earth  
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**Ronald Castel**

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Winnipeg, MB



**Kachina Desjarlais**

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Vincent Massey Collegiate  
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**Zoe Fontaine**

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West Kildonan High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Michaela Robertson**

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Winnipeg, MB



**Tyler Woodhouse**

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RB Russell  
Winnipeg, MB



**Raven Guiboche-Bluebird**

Grade 10  
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Winnipeg, MB



**Robert Woitowicz**

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St John's High School  
Winnipeg, MB



**Rylee Nepinak**

Grade 12  
St John's High School  
Winnipeg, MB

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**Tuesday Woodhouse**

Grade 12  
RB Rusell  
Winnipeg, MB



**Sarah Keicer-Contois**

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**Shana Alluvut**

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**Shaynah Baptiste**

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**Skye McLean**

Grade 12  
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**Takita Henderson**

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Transcona Collegiate Institute  
Winnipeg, MB



**Tooma Laisa**

Grade 10  
Inuksuk High School  
Iqaluit, NU



**Tori Sinclair**

Grade 10  
Transcona Collegiate Institute  
Winnipeg, MB

## MEET OUR PROGRAM MENTORS

We are very fortunate to have 12 Aboriginal business professionals who volunteer their time as program mentors. All of our mentors are university educated and work/have worked in business related careers. All are very busy with their personal and work lives, but still devote countless number of hours to our program. In addition to participating in two overnight conferences per year, each mentor facilitates business challenges via social media on a bi-weekly basis. These challenges require mentors to be in contact with each student on a daily basis. Without the hard work of these individuals, this program would not be possible.



**Graham Constant**

Marketing Director  
Fort Garry FireTrucks



**Lisa Whitecloud**

Former CEO  
Native Images



**Sarah Cook**

Accountant  
BDO LLP



**Joe Lanceley**

CEO  
Tipi Joe Creations

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**Marilyn Tanner-Spence**

CEO  
Teekca's Boutique



**Zach Unrau**

HR Co-op Student  
Manitoba Public Insurance



**Dan Richard**

Accountant  
USand Group



**Jenny Bihun**

CEO in-training  
Western Safety Sign



**Andrew Ward**

Business Teacher  
Inuksuk High School



**Tiffany Monkman**

Former Loans Manager  
First Peoples Bank



**Rachel Marsch**

HR Manager  
ID Fusion Software Inc.



**Jay Desrosiers**

Sales Manager  
Native Communications Inc.