

**IN.BUSINESS CENTRAL REGION CLOSING CONFERENCE
MAY 5-6, 2016, SASKATOON, SK**

In.Business: A National Mentorship Program for Indigenous Youth is a mentorship program that uses social media, smartphone 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. Since 2011, In.Business has expanded nationally and is 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 and private donors. In addition, the Atlantic Region is financially supported by Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey and the Province of Nova Scotia.

The Journey

In fall 2015, 169 students applied for the 60 spots in the Central Region. The 60 students that were chosen and 9 mentors attended 2 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 9 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 Aboriginal musical bands as they tour across Canada.

DAY 1 HIGHLIGHTS

Twenty-five students representing 13 high schools and 18 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 an evening at Apex Trampoline Park marking the official beginning of our Closing Conference. While the two groups became one as we retired to the hotel for the night.



Group shot at the finale of the conference!

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. Sarah Baxter, of Marten Falls First Nation was our runner up, and Josh Gandier, of Peguis First Nation 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, other factors, and company positions. 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 2015-2016 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 2015-2016 Central region Closing Conference were (pictured from l-r): Kakeka Thundersky, Churchill High School; Hailey West, Sturgeon Heights Collegiate;

Faith Quewezance, Bedford Road Collegiate; (not pictured; Nicholas James, The MET School). In addition, each grade 12 student who was accepted into a post-secondary business program for September received a \$500 bursary. **Bursary recipients were:**

- **Josh Gandier:** entering the BBA program at University of Winnipeg.
- **Ronald Gamblin:** entering the BBA program at University of Winnipeg.

Finally, in recognition of their hard work and dedication, 31 students, representing 17 high schools and 18 Aboriginal communities, received certificates for successfully completing the 2015-2016 In.Business Central program.

<p>Bedford Road Collegiate Justice Perkins Marisa Daniels Taneesha Bear Italia Eagle Faith Quewezance</p> <p>Centennial Collegiate Jessie Brass</p> <p>Churchill High School Kakeka Thundersky Clarissa Garson</p> <p>Children of the Earth School Ronald Castel</p> <p>Evan Hardy Collegiate Honey Viney</p> <p>Glenlawn Collegiate Jasmine Apetagon</p>	<p>John Taylor Collegiate Josh Gandier</p> <p>The MET School Nicholas Reese</p> <p>Miles Macdonell Collegiate Kaeden Pottie</p> <p>Mount Royal Collegiate Keemawan Moostoos</p> <p>Oak Park Highschool Hope McIntyre Brent Mike Duval Clarke Kirsten Cloud</p> <p>RB Russell Phoenix Smith</p>	<p>River-East Collegiate Alyssa Thomas Jaxson Bouchie</p> <p>St. James Collegiate Ashley Taylor Kaley Symonds</p> <p>St. John's High School Robert Witowicz Jullian Swirsky</p> <p>Sturgeon Heights Collegiate Ronald Gamblin Jocelyn Pagee Timothy Amos Hailey West</p> <p>Westwood Collegiate Sarah Baxter</p>
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BY THE NUMBERS

<p>In.Business Central Region 2015-16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 students completed all of the requirements for the program • 16 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating high school • 12 (75%) of whom will be attending post-secondary in September 2016 • 2 (17%) of these 12 will be studying business
<p>In.Business All Regions 2015-16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 144 students completed all of the requirements for the program • 72 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating high school • 48 (67%) of whom will be attending post-secondary in September 2016 • 9 (19%) of these 48 will be studying business
<p>In.Business All Regions 2012-Present</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 235 students completed all of the requirements for the program • 123 of these students were/are in grade 12 • 90 (73%) of whom are/will be attending post-secondary • 29 (32%) of these 84 are/will be studying business