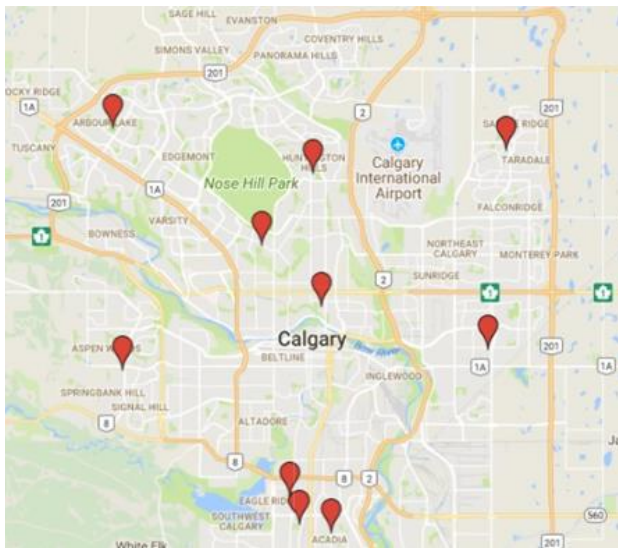


IN.BUSINESS PACIFIC REGION OPENING CONFERENCE DECEMBER 8, 2017, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY, CALGARY, ALBERTA

In.Business: A National Mentorship Program for Indigenous Youth is a mentorship program that 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). This small Nova Scotia pilot initially comprised of 30 students and six mentors has since expanded and now operates across Canada. The following institutions have partnered with CBU to deliver In.Business: Nipissing University, Lakehead University, the University of Winnipeg, First Nations University, the University of Calgary, and Vancouver Island University. In.Business is made possible by the generous financial support from Indigenous and Northern Affairs and various other governments, private, and corporate contributors.

The Journey

The Pacific region includes students, mentors, and peer mentors from British Columbia (BC) and Alberta (AB); however, this year we decided to hold separate programs in both provinces. This allowed the program to focus recruitment regionally, as well as increase the number of students accepted in each province. Recruitment in Alberta was focused on the city of Calgary and southern First Nations in Treaty 7 territory. In October, Koren Bear, Pacific In.Business Regional Manager, gave presentations at 8 high schools. Applications to the In.Business program were received from 44 students attending 13 high schools. Following the application process, which involved evaluating students' two-page application and a recommendation form, 32 students were selected with representation from 13 high schools from British Columbia (schools in Calgary shown to the left; schools from Piikani, Siksika and Kainai First Nations not shown), and representing 11 Indigenous communities. In the end, 19 students attended the opening conference in Calgary, AB and there are currently 19 students in the program.



HIGH LIGHTS

Upon arrival, students listened to welcoming remarks from Dila Houle Provost, Piikani Nation Elder; Dr. David Lertzman, Associate Professor, Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary; and Shawna Cunningham, Director, Indigenous Strategy, University of Calgary. In the morning, students gathered in their mentoring groups and took part in a social media challenge in which they took pictures around UofC's campus and posted them to social media.

In the afternoon, students got to watch their peers' introductory videos. Prior to the conference, students were asked to prepare a short video introducing themselves to the group. With very little guidelines for this challenge, students were asked to explain a little bit about themselves, their community, and why they applied for this program. The videos provided an opportunity for students and mentors to learn about the other people they would be interacting with for the next several months. The videos were very well done! To see for yourself, click [here!](#)



After the introductory videos students got back in their groups for the Pitch It! Contest, which was judged by Brian Smith, National General Manager, In.Business, CBU; Dr. David Lertman, UofC; Lisa Harris, Aboriginal Coordinator, Aboriginal Mentoring Program, Lakehead University; and Bobbie-Jo Racette.

Pitch It! Contest – 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 to develop a pitch for an innovative business idea. Each group worked together to brainstorm ideas for their proposal and then made a 2-minute pitch. Under the mentorship of Kyle Sangret, the “Red Tribe” won the Pitch It! Contest. Their winning idea was an app, called E-Z-P, that shows users the available public washrooms in cities across North America. Members of the winning team (pictured below from l-r) included: Jessinia Horsefall, Crescent Heights High School; Anthony Beebe (in back row), Nelson Mandela High School; Bessie Meguinis, Bishop Grandin High School; Charith Poucette, Ernest Manning High School; and Dylan Gearing, Lord Beaverbrook High School.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Until the group comes together again in April 2018, social media and various apps will be relied upon to keep students connected with their mentors and each other. Each student has been placed in a group with five to seven other students, and each group is assigned a mentor. 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 practices and ultimately entice them to study business in the future. After spending time together at the opening conference, we are well on our way!

In.Business[®]

The 2017-2018 Pacific region, in Alberta, has representation from the following Indigenous communities:

Alberta: Kainai, Piikani, Saddle Lake, Siksika, Tsuut'ina, Stoney, and Sampson Cree

Other Provinces and Territories: Little Pine, Sweet Grass, and Pasqua

The 2017-2018 Alberta program has representation from the following schools:

Bishop Grandin High School, Crescent Heights High School, Ernest Manning High School, John G. Diefenbaker High School, Kainai High School, Lord Beaverbrook High School, Nelson Mandela High School, Piikani High School, Robert Thirsk High School, Siksika High School, and St. Francis High School

Pictured below is a group photo of Alberta students.



To view profiles, refer click on the following links:

[Students](#) | [Mentors](#)



[CBU_InBusiness](#)



[Purdy Crawford Chair](#)



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