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**IN.BUSINESS PACIFIC REGION CLOSING CONFERENCE  
MAY 29-30, 2016, VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY, BC**

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.

### **The Journey**

In fall 2015, 99 students applied for 60 spots in the Pacific Region; 47 students were selected to participate in the program. Over the course of the year, the chosen students and ten Aboriginal business mentors attended two overnight conferences: the opening was held at Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo, Nov. 27-28<sup>th</sup>, 2015, and most recently, our closing conference was held in Nanaimo on May 29-30, 2016. In between conferences, students worked in virtual groups on 10 bi-weekly business challenges via social media, which were facilitated by their mentors. In total, over 10 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 researching different careers. 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-nine students representing 20 high schools and 19 First Nation communities across British Columbia and Alberta travelled by plane, ferry, bus and automobile to gather for one last time as a group! Some grade 10 and 11 students will return to the program next year, and 16 grade 12's are all moving on to new chapters in their lives. Dinner at the Royal Arbutus Room marked the official beginning of our closing conference. Elder Pearl Harris provided opening remarks and welcomed the group to the traditional territory of Snuneymuxw First Nation. She encouraged youth to further their education and used herself as an example, that even at 61 years of age and a retired principal of a secondary school she was finishing her course work and obtaining a Masters in Indigenous Languages later this year. Dr. Keith Brown, Vice President of International and Aboriginal Affairs and current Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business, Cape Breton University spoke to students about the benefits of studying business at the post-secondary level. Terri Mack, Owner, Strong Nation Books, spoke to youth about her journey in opening one of Canada's largest online Indigenous education bookstores.



## 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. The students created fantastic videos showing their confidence, business knowledge, and creativity. Austin Charlie, Lake Babine First Nation, BC was our runner up, while Wenonah North Peigan, of the Piikani First Nation, AB and Deja Red Crow, of the Kainai Tribe, AB, tied for first place! [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 eight companies to choose from: a marketing firm, a gift shop, a gaming company, a printing company, a trucking company, a seafood wholesaler, a waste management company and a restaurant. The objective was to work together to brainstorm the possible partnerships and connections that they could make with the other seven 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



Left to Right: Georgia Thorne, Lauranna Karlsen, Janessa Horne and Justin Little Light" posing in front of our bridge!

**Closing Award Presentations** – To close out the conference and the In.Business Pacific Region for 2015-2016, there were several awards presented. The “Purdy Awards” were first handed out at the 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 Pacific Region Closing Conference were (pictured from l-r): Jaykob Pranteau, Britannia Outreach School; Austin Charlie, Britannia High School; Kariya Bruised Head, Lord Beaverbrook High School; Mercedes Tatoosh, VAST Education Centre; and Angelina Harris, Ladysmith Secondary 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:**

- **Wenonah North Peigan:** entering the BBA program, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC.
- **Justin Little Light:** Bachelor of Health and Physical Education – Ecotourism and Outdoor Leadership, Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta.
- **Kariya Bruised Head:** entering the Business Transfer Program, St. Mary’s University, Calgary, Alberta.

Finally, in recognition of their hard work and dedication, 32 students, representing 20 high schools and 19 Aboriginal communities, received certificates for successfully completing the 2015-2016 In.Business (Pacific) program.

**IN.BUSINESS PACIFIC REGION – CLASS OF 2016**

In recognition of their hard work and dedication, the following students received certificates for successfully completing the 2015-2016 In.Business program:

<p><b>ADSS</b> Lauranna Karlsen Miranda Lauder</p> <p><b>Britannia – Outreach</b> Austin Charlie Jaykob Pranteau Tanisha Brown</p> <p><b>Catholic Central High School</b> Deja Red Crow Sierra Shade</p> <p><b>Cowichan Secondary School</b> Calli Najera Georgia Thorne Janessa Horne Shaina Currie</p> <p><b>Dover Bay Secondary School</b> Selina Jules</p>	<p><b>Dr. E.P. Scarlett High School</b> Nicole North Peigan Wenonah North Peigan</p> <p><b>Edward Milne Community School</b> Jordon Tynes</p> <p><b>Father Lacombe High School</b> Jonah Turning Robe</p> <p><b>Frances Kelsey Secondary School</b> Deborah Sawyer-Fairfield Jasmin Marston</p> <p><b>James Fowler</b> Zarek Wright-Winnipeg</p> <p><b>Ladysmith Secondary</b> Amanda Harris Angelina Harris</p> <p><b>Lord Beaverbrook High School</b> Kariya Bruised Head Nathan Running Bird</p>	<p><b>Piikani Nation Secondary School</b> Trey Shining Double</p> <p><b>Robron -Outreach</b> Hayley Hemstead Tianna Thomas</p> <p><b>Spectrum Community School</b> Cheyenne Perry</p> <p><b>Strathmore High School</b> Justin Little Light</p> <p><b>Vancouver Tech. Secondary</b> Echohawk Lavallee</p> <p><b>Vast Education Centre</b> Mercedes Tatoosh</p> <p><b>Victoria High School</b> Myles Rumley-Nukon Patrick Jones</p>
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**BY THE NUMBERS**

<p><b>In.Business Pacific Region 2015-16</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 students completed all of the requirements for the program</li> <li>• 16 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating high school</li> <li>• 12 (75%) of whom will be attending post-secondary in September 2016</li> <li>• 3 (19%) of these 16 will be studying business</li> </ul>
<p><b>In.Business All Regions 2015-16</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 144 students completed all of the requirements for the program</li> <li>• 72 of these students are in grade 12 and will be graduating high school</li> <li>• 48 (67%) of whom will be attending post-secondary in September 2016</li> <li>• 9 (19%) of these 48 will be studying business</li> </ul>
<p><b>In.Business All Regions 2012-Present</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 235 students completed all of the requirements for the program</li> <li>• 123 of these students were/are in grade 12</li> <li>• 90 (73%) of whom are/will be attending post-secondary</li> <li>• 29 (32%) of these 84 are/will be studying business</li> </ul>