



Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)

**Symposium:
Strategies for Meeting the Educational Needs of
Aboriginal Learners in Rural and Remote Communities -2007**

Hosted by the Mattagami First Nation and Northern College

October 24 – 26. 2007



1. Introduction

The second ACCC symposium on “Strategies for Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Learners in Rural and Remote Communities” was held from October 24 to 26, 2007 in Timmins, Ontario at Northern College and co-hosted by the Mattagami First Nation. This symposium brought together over 55 participants which included representatives from colleges and institutes involved in the delivery of Aboriginal programs and services, as well as representatives from Aboriginal communities.

The first symposium of this kind was held in October 2006 co-hosted by the College of New Caledonia and the Lake Babine Nation. Participants from the 2006 symposium asked that a second symposium be organized as all felt they benefited significantly from the sharing of exemplary practices and networking. Colleges and institutes that are located in and serve rural and remote communities face specific challenges and often do not get the opportunity to exchange on the specific issues they face in meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners from rural and remote areas.

ACCC would like to thank the Mattagami First Nation for allowing the symposium to be held on their territory, and in particular Chief Walter Naveau for his leadership and for sharing his vision and perspectives on the importance of education and training for Aboriginal communities. ACCC would also like to thank Michael Hill, President of Northern College and all the staff at the Porcupine Campus in Timmins for all the support for the organization of the symposium, as well as the warm welcome and hospitality shown to symposium participants. Special thanks also to the Tri-Chairs of the symposium, in particular John Beck, Director of Education, Omushkego Education who stepped in at the last minute to assist in this role, as well as Randell Morris, Senior Vice-President at the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology and Marti Ford, Dean, School of Indigenous Studies, Red River Community College, who both are co-Chairs of the ACCC Aboriginal Programs and Services Affinity Group.

The report provides an overview of some of the key messages from presenters and participants. Copies of the PowerPoint presentations are available in a zipped format on the ACCC website at: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm>. The description of each session indicates whether presenters had PowerPoint presentations that are available on the ACCC website. The full program is provided as Appendix 1 and the list of participants is included as Appendix 2.

2. Opening Keynote Address – Anne Noonan, Co-Chair, Aboriginal Human Resource Council

Anne Noonan, Co-Chair of the Aboriginal Human Resource Council opened the symposium with an opening keynote address. Ms. Noonan provided an overview of how the Aboriginal Human Resource Council is working to increase awareness among employers of the potential that exists in Aboriginal communities, as well as to promote opportunities for employment of Aboriginal people. Some of the key points and messages from Ms. Noonan’s presentation include:

- Many industries are feeling the squeeze of the skilled shortages. As such employers are beginning to understand that the fast growing Aboriginal population is an important source of potential employees. It is important to understand that employers will invest in training if it helps their bottom line.

- Aboriginal people are part of the answer to the skills shortages challenges in Canada, and colleges and institutes are certainly part of the answer to getting Aboriginal people into meaningful employment.
- Demographics are creating opportunities for Aboriginal employment and demand is at an all time high for Aboriginal employees. However in order to overcome the hurdles it is essential to work together. Some key approaches include:
 - Effective labour market planning;
 - Engagement of Aboriginal communities;
 - Long-term partnerships;
 - Government also has a role but offering tax credits for social capital funds that encourage industry to have a more diverse labour force.
 - Colleges can help make programs more relevant through creative partnerships with industry. For example, Encana provided \$1 million to Northern Alberta Institute of Technology to develop and operate a mobile apprenticeship training program that can be delivered in Aboriginal communities. SIAST is also looking to expand training opportunities by establishing training centres and mobile laboratories to increase accessibility.
 - A key factor for improving Aboriginal access to postsecondary education is to begin working with youth in Grades 8 and 9 so they prepare and set goals early in high school.
 - Recruitment for employment is increasingly web-based but there is a need to make web-based recruitment tools more accessible. Many Aboriginal people do not have internet and broadband access, in particular in rural and remote areas, and in some cases people lack the competencies to access and use such tools. Aboriginal communities, governments and educational institutions have a role in increasing access to such recruitment approaches.
 - Community development is also essential for enhancing Aboriginal access to educational opportunities and participation in the labour market. Community leadership, integrity, land stewardship and administrative excellence are all key factors for successful community development.
 - The need to promote and support community wellness is an integral part of community development, including restitution for the impact of residential schools. It must be recognized that there are at least two generations that fear institutional learning.
 - We must identify effective strategies for working with youth.
 - Common national issues must be addressed, in particular to address the needs for literacy and essential skills training within Aboriginal communities.
 - In the 1980s there was generally a weaker capacity for business development within Aboriginal communities, but this has now

changed. Aboriginal communities need to learn to be more aggressive in a business manner. A key step is to learn how corporations communicate and to learn their language. It also helpful to tap into business networks through organizations such as the Rotary Clubs and chambers of business people.

The Aboriginal Human Resource Council is a key partner at the national level. The federal government, through Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) is currently doing an evaluation of the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy (AHRDS). There is a need to actively work with industry to move the agenda of Aboriginal employment and inclusion forward.

3. Perspectives from College and Institute Leadership

- Michael Hill, President, Northern College, Ontario
- Casey Sheridan, President, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, British Columbia
- Maurice Evans, President, Aurora College, Northwest Territories

Michael Hill provided an overview of the approaches used at **Northern College** for the delivery of Aboriginal programs and services. Some key points and messages from Mr. Hill's presentation include:

- Ten percent of the student population of Northern College is Aboriginal.
- The small size of Northern College enables this institution to be "of the place and relate to people from the geography."
- Service is very important.
- Everything should be done collaboratively for access to postsecondary education for First Nations people and communities. It is important to remember that if you are not doing it collaboratively, you are not doing it correctly.
- It is important that colleges and institutes pass over the right to Aboriginal communities. Northern College changed its governance structure to reflect this. The Aboriginal Council sits beside the Board of Governors of the college and is no longer just an advisory body to the board. The college also asked the Ontario government to include the Chair of the Aboriginal Council as a full member of the Board of Governors. Although this was initially refused, the college went ahead and did it anyway, and challenged the Council of Regents by asking that the Chair of the Aboriginal Council be an automatic seat on the Board. Since then they have put forward the Chair's name and he does have a seat on the board.
- The way to demonstrate leadership is to hand it over.
- The college has been working on changing its image within Aboriginal communities and a different power relationship is developing with Aboriginal leaders.

Casey Sheridan presented the approaches adopted at **Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT)** located in Merritt and Vancouver, B.C. A copy of Mr. Sheridan's PowerPoint presentation is available on the ACCC website at: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> The main themes addressed in his presentation includes recruitment approaches, relevant programs and services, how to define Aboriginal education, access to pathways to overcome barriers, nurture partnerships and respect for culture. In addition, Mr. Sheridan presented a model used at NVIT that focuses the work of the institute and to enhance the use of Aboriginal

culture, language and practice in programs and services. Some of the key messages from Mr. Sheridan's presentation included:

- The importance of community-based programming and delivery for meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners.
- Aboriginal leadership within the institution is essential to ensure relevance of programming and service delivery.

Maurice Evans provided an overview of the demographics of **Aurora College**, the factors driving Aboriginal training needs, the challenges to addressing the needs of Aboriginal adult learners and the approaches the college is using to meet the needs of Aboriginal adult learners. A copy of Mr. Evan's PowerPoint presentation is available on the ACCC website at: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> Some of the main messages from Mr. Evan's presentation include:

- There is a need to develop a traditional knowledge strategy that can be adopted by institutions. More research on how to do this is required.
- Aurora College seeks to be a public institution that is identified as one that recognizes Aboriginal culture. Mr. Evans cited the example of Northwest Community College which has been named as a "bi-cultural college".
- Colleges and institutes must develop more ways to be more culturally relevant to learners.
- The importance of health and wellness for Aboriginal communities must be acknowledged and incorporated into appropriate programs and services. For example, Aurora College was delivering a community-based upgrading program and a teacher training program. Participants indicated that they had health and wellness issues as such the college incorporated a six week wellness component into this program by adapting the Canadore College Indigenous Wellness and Addictions Program.

3. **Exemplary Practices in Program Development: The Integration of Aboriginal History, Culture and Ways of Knowing into College/Institute Programs**

- Marti Ford, Dean, Aboriginal Education and Mike Stuhldreier, Curriculum Consultant, Red River College, Manitoba

Marti Ford and Mike Stuhldreier made a presentation on "*Using the Medicine Wheel as a Basis for Holistic Curriculum Development*" based on how this approach is being applied at **Red River College**. This presentation provided an overview of why the medicine wheel is being used as a model for curriculum development, the approach used to develop this curriculum development approach, the theoretical framework. Ms. Ford and Mr. Stuhldreier demonstrated how it was used and applied for the development of the "Life-Skills Coach Program Accreditation" at Red River College. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available on the ACCC website at: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> .

Ms. Ford and Mr. Stuhldreier also provided participants with a hand-out with questions on applying the Medicine Wheel approach with a view to having participants reflect on how this approach can be applied for course design and development, as well as for student assessment strategies and teaching.

4. The Pivotal role of Aboriginal Student Services

- Doug Dokis, Manager, Chinook Lodge Aboriginal Resource Centre at SAIT Polytechnic, Alberta
- Mary Wabano, Director, Aboriginal Learning Unit, Canadore College, Ontario
- Roberta Oshkawbewisens Martin, Native Student Advisor and Willard Small, Student Advisor, Northern College, Ontario

Doug Dokis presented an overview of the **National Aboriginal Student Services Association** as well as the approaches used at **SAIT Polytechnic** for the delivery of Aboriginal student services. Some of the key messages from Mr. Dokis' presentation include:

- The **National Aboriginal Student Services Association (NASSA)** is a division of the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS). CACUSS is an association which represents and serves administrators and staff working at Canadian post-secondary institutions in Student Affairs and Services. NASSA's mission is to empower postsecondary institutions to become welcoming environments where Aboriginal Peoples can successfully pursue educational goals while maintaining their cultural identities. NASSA seeks to promote Aboriginal cultural awareness/participation within all areas of post-secondary institutions; to increase abilities of all Student Services providers to effectively respond to the needs of Aboriginal peoples; and to develop a national network of Aboriginal post-secondary Student Service providers. NASSA is currently working on a journal and is welcoming papers from academics on the issues and challenges Aboriginal postsecondary students are facing.
- **SAIT Polytechnic** has a very visible, welcoming and culturally appropriate Aboriginal student services centre on campus – the Chinook Lodge. Mr. Dokis explained that although SAIT Polytechnic is an urban-based institution, they work significantly with Aboriginal learners from rural and remote communities. Some innovative approaches and key messages from Mr. Dokis' presentation include:
 - Involve students in the delivery of student services in order to make students services more relevant and to build Aboriginal student leadership. The Chinook Lodge aims to provide an environment that encourages and promotes Aboriginal student success.
 - Chinook Lodge is open to all students on campus in order to promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding.
 - Students are hired as “greeters” for meetings with industry representatives. This enables them to build contacts for future employment opportunities and also allows graduates to become well versed in corporate language.
 - Chinook Lodge collects the resumes of graduates and organizes a corporate mixer. Corporate representatives and graduates present themselves, and students are interviewed for potential job opportunities.
 - Industry partnerships are key to providing funding for innovative student services. For example, oil and gas companies have made important contributions, but so has Safeway in providing food cards to provide students with emergency assistance to cover food costs, and also by providing healthy snacks for the events held at Chinook Lodge.

- Professional development lecture services are offered on a monthly basis with funding from TransCanada. This is a way to engage industry people and promote the hiring of graduates.
- Recruitment is a challenge because of limited human resources. To address this challenge, Chinook Lodge has organized an Aboriginal Student Symposium targeted at high school students. The first year 40 students participated in this symposium and they are now at 500 participants.
- Chinook Lodge has also partnered with the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.
- They have organized a “Skills City” – a hands-on career expo with industry people which also generates revenue for the Aboriginal students association.
- Responsibility for Aboriginal student success rests at all levels: communities, postsecondary institutions, provincial and federal governments.
- It is essential to develop leadership capacity to work with multiple groups, including Aboriginal communities, industry, government departments.
- Industry is ready to work with Aboriginal communities but it is important that these communities understand the language used by industry.
- Aboriginal communities need to get well, develop business plans and find partnerships that work.
- There is a need to educate communities so that relevant partnerships can be developed to improve service delivery. In order to make this work, support from the top is needed. This will not work as a “special interest” type of approach”.

Mary Wabano described student services approaches offered at **Canadore College**. There are approximately 350 Aboriginal students at Canadore College on a yearly basis. The Aboriginal Learning Unit has four full time and 1 part time staff. Some innovative approaches and key messages from Ms. Wabano’s presentation include:

- Canadore College has a mandatory cross-cultural training for all college teachers and staff, a total of 450 employees. This program is available on-line, is modularized and staff received professional development recognition for completing it.
- The college has developed partnerships agreements with five Aboriginal institutes in Ontario for the delivery and accreditation of programs in Aboriginal communities.
- The college has also developed and offers the Indigenous Wellness and Addictions Prevention (IWAP) program which is a Native drug and alcohol addictions program which is based on Anishnabe culture.
- Canadore College has also organized a cross-cultural community tour in road-accessible Aboriginal communities in Quebec for faculty and employees of the college. The aim of this activity was to provide faculty and employees with real life experience in Aboriginal communities.

A copy of the PowerPoint used as part of Ms. Wabano’s presentation is available on the ACCC website <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> , with photos of the cultural and cross-cultural activities organized by Canadore College.

Roberta Oshkawbewisens Martin and **Willard Small** provided an overview of some approaches used at **Northern College** for student services delivery. Some of the key messages and approaches Ms. Oshkawbewisens Martin and Mr. Small presented include:

- It is important that the institution has sufficient space to meet with Aboriginal students.
- There is a need to increase the awareness of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students on cross-cultural issues and challenges faced by Aboriginal students.
- Networking with Aboriginal communities is a key measure to be adopted, but is somewhat limited due to scarce resources.
- Students and communities must be involved in the delivery of services and to help Aboriginal students recognize the importance of education. Colleges should connect with community agencies to support the delivery of student services, as required.
- It is important to build life management skills for Aboriginal learners given the challenges many face.
- Colleges must also recognize the importance of wellness and nutrition and address them through support services and programs.
- College programming needs to be flexible to enable Aboriginal students to continue to participate in traditions such as hunting, fishing and trapping, that occur in the fall and spring.
- Community-based delivery is a key approach to providing training opportunities for isolated and remote communities.
- In order to assist with the financial challenges many Aboriginal learners face, Northern College is looking at increasing bursary opportunities for students. An annual golf tournament is held to raise funds for bursaries to cover emergency funds for Aboriginal students.

5. Retention Strategies for Aboriginal Students – Residential School Impacts and Healing

- Arlene Herman, Dean of Student Services, Human Services & Literacy and Kaarlene Lindsay, First Nations Access Coordinator/Instructional Assistant, Northwest Community College, British Columbia

Arlene Herman and Kaarlene Lindsay presented the strategy they developed at **Northwest Community College** to begin addressing Aboriginal student retention issues. The college developed an awareness program for college students, faculty and staff on the impacts of residential school experiences on First Nations communities and the importance of addressing this issue in order to help students achieve their educational goals. NWCC addresses these difficult issues by showing the film “A Century of Genocide”, which is followed by a debriefing session and follow-up support. The same approach was used in this session, and participants discussed this strategy and the impact this approach on college students and staff. A copy of Ms. Herman’s and Ms. Lindsay’s PowerPoint presentation is available on the ACCC website <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm>. This presentation also includes a list of impacts that intergenerational survivors face on a day to day basis. Some key messages from the speakers and participants include:

- It is important for colleges and institutes to recognize that many students begin their studies without an understanding of how this trauma has impacted their families and their own personal development.
- Awareness and understanding can lead to acceptance. Flexibility and acceptance can lead to success.
- Non-Aboriginal participants also acknowledged the importance of increasing the awareness of non-Aboriginal Canadians about the impacts of residential school experiences.

6. Perspectives from Aboriginal Students

- Cherie Corbière, President, Cambrian Native Students' Association, Cambrian College, Ontario
- Ian Crow, President of the Oshki-Anishnawbeg Student Association, and Jon Hendle, President, Student Union of Confederation College Inc., Ontario
- Kimberly Naveau, Student, Northern College, Ontario

Cherie Corbière presented her experience at **Cambrian College** in Sudbury, Ontario, based on her leadership role at the college as the President of the Cambrian Native Students' Association (CNSA). Ms. Corbière's presentation emphasized the importance and value of supporting Aboriginal student leadership within colleges and institutes and is available on the ACCC website at <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> . Some of the key points and messages from Ms. Corbière's presentation include:

- Recognize and celebrate Aboriginal student successes to encourage more Aboriginal students to participate in college life;
- Recruitment is an important step and must start early on in high school and must involve the community.
- The student housing crisis must be addressed.
- Try to make the college and Aboriginal student area culturally welcoming.
- Involve Elders for the delivery of support services and keep communities engaged and aware of college programs and support services.
- Peer tutoring is often not sufficient, more formal tutoring is needed and it should be funded as a service for Aboriginal students.
- Acknowledge the importance of spirituality for Aboriginal students, for example, CNSA developed a Sacred Medicine Protocol.
- Be responsive to Aboriginal learners' needs – for example, CNSA established an Aboriginal Students Food Bank.
- "Investing in building the leadership capacity of Aboriginal students will improve recruitment, retention, and success of all Aboriginal students in the post secondary system."

Ian Crow and Jon Hendle from **Confederation College** in Thunder Bay, Ontario presented the collaborative approach they adopted to student leadership between Oshki-Anishnawbeg Student Association (OASA) and the Student Union of Confederation College Inc. (SUCCI). A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available

on the ACCC website: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> Some of their joint accomplishments included that they:

- Contributed to an overhaul of the Confederation College Academic Plan Framework, along with two faculty members. After this was completed and approved, every program that goes through Program Renewal now must have Aboriginal content in the course curriculum.
- Promoted the importance of diversity & cultural awareness in Ontario Colleges through involvement in the College Student Alliance.
- Supported the development of the Respect Campaign to raise the awareness of students, faculty and staff about how people should treat one another.

Mr. Crow and Mr. Hendel confirmed that relationship building and communication remains the key to the great success of the OASA and SUCCI collaboration. OASA and SUCCI are also looking to the future. One goal is to more actively to serve Aboriginal students in rural and remote communities by promoting art and culturally inclusive activities and providing more inclusive environments. In addition, they are looking to change the mandate of OASA somewhat to also provide support and services geared towards inclusiveness while maintaining cultural understanding.

Kimberly Naveau, presented approaches used at **Northern College** to engage Aboriginal students. Some of the key messages from Ms. Naveau's presentation include:

- It is important to make the college feel welcoming for Aboriginal students. Northern College may be a small college but it can still feel like a big place for Aboriginal students coming from outside communities.
- Flexibility is important for the delivery of programs;
- The college needs to reflect Aboriginal culture and to provide support services that help Aboriginal students succeed.

7. Federal Government Perspectives

Alfred Linklater, Senior Policy Advisor, Aboriginal Affairs, **Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC)** provided an overview of current and future directions for HRSDC Aboriginal programming, including:

- The demographics, context and challenges with Aboriginal human resources development
- Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP) Program
- Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy, including feedback from the spring engagement with AHRDAs, and the post-2009 Successor Strategy

A copy of Mr. Linklater's PowerPoint presentation is available on the ACCC website <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> . Some of the themes and messages from Mr. Linklater's presentation include:

- There is a critical need to address the challenges and meet the needs of:
 - the high numbers of Aboriginal high school drop outs,
 - adult learners,

- learners with limited literacy and essential skills.
- Who's responsibility is it to address the needs of these learners? The K-12 system? Colleges? AHRDAs? HRSDC is planning to work with INAC with regards to the on-reserve system, and would also like to confirm with INAC where the responsibility for adult basic education lies.
- The key words from the current HRSDC Minister are "partnership" and "collaboration" with Aboriginal communities.
- There is also a need to recognize the importance of experiential learning for Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal learning models the Canadian Council on Learning has developed are interesting and worth looking at as there is strong recognition of the need adopt a holistic approach to learning for Aboriginal people that addresses the importance of experiential learning.

8. Industry Perspectives on Partnerships with Colleges and Institutes

- Trina Maher, Director, Skills and Learning Strategies, Aboriginal Human Resource Council
- Patrick Cunningham, Aboriginal Accounts Manager, Royal Bank of Canada
- Denise McBride, Community Affairs Representative, Shell Canada Energy

Trina Maher provided an overview of the role of the **Aboriginal Human Resource Council (AHRC)** including the AHRC inclusion model and the Guiding Circles approach to career planning and development and tips for recruitment and retention. A copy of the Ms. Maher's presentation is available on the ACCC website <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> . Some suggestions and key messages from Ms. Maher's presentation include:

- Reach out and seek feedback from communities and include students and parents in recruitment activities;
- Encourage student cohort training;
- Cross-cultural training is essential to enhance understanding among college staff;
- Hire Aboriginal staff not just for Aboriginal programs but in other areas as well such as math, science, business courses, etc.;
- Incidents of racism must be dealt with effectively and promptly;
- Identify ways for students to stay connected to family, by for example, teaching parents how to use e-mail or internet video conferencing sessions or having field trips to college campuses for families.

Patrick Cunningham presented the perspectives and initiatives that the **Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)** is involved in to support Aboriginal learning. Some of the key messages from Mr. Cunningham's presentation include:

- Aboriginal community and economic development is critical for Canada.
- Learning and community-based approaches to learning are key for community and economic development.

- It is important to start support learning for Aboriginal and at-risk students early in school, and to offer community-based programs.
- As such, RBC is partnering with educational institutions to invest in Aboriginal learning, including for example:
 - After School Grant Programs for at-risk kids, including Aboriginal kids. This program has reached 14,000 kids and there are currently 18 new programs across the county.
 - Support for literacy centres, friendship centres and Aboriginal cultural centres.
 - Inner city program for kids offered during the summer in Winnipeg.
 - To support access to postsecondary education, RBC offers National Aboriginal Students Award: eight students per year receive scholarships of \$4,000 / year and are offered summer employment at RBC during their postsecondary studies.
 - Aboriginal Stay in School Program: offers training and summer employment for high school students.
 - Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards
 - Confederation College is developing a First Nations Financial Management Program and a RBC representative is helping to develop this program.
 - RBC is also working with Assiniboine Community College is developing a similar program for youth interested in working in finance related careers.

Denise McBride shared perspectives from **Shell Canada** and provided an overview of the approaches used to support Aboriginal learning, provide employment opportunities in Aboriginal communities and contribute to Aboriginal community development. A copy of Ms. McBride's presentation is provided on the ACCC website: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> Some of the key messages from Ms. McBride's presentation include:

- It is essential to consult and dialogue openly with Aboriginal communities and engage all community stakeholders in making decisions on developments that affect their community and region.
- Partnership is the key to success. Shell Canada partners for oil sands development include: Elders, community leaders and organizations; colleges; other industry; municipal, provincial and federal government departments, and organizations such as the Aboriginal Human Resource Council.
- Shell Canada also supports learning in Aboriginal communities by funding opportunities for:
 - e-learning and adult upgrading for employees;
 - promotion of apprenticeship delivered using community-based models;

- Aboriginal entrepreneurship in collaboration with Keyano College and Aboriginal apprenticeship; and
- Shell Canada also supports a Campus Ambassador Program and scholarships and bursaries.

9. Community Partnerships

- Rosie Mosquito, Executive Director, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute, Thunder Bay, Ontario
- Randell Morris, Senior Vice-President, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, Saskatchewan
- Réjean Richard, Director, Val-d'Or Campus, Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Quebec

Rosie Mosquito presented an overview of how the **Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute (OSHKI)** in Thunder Bay is engaged with Aboriginal communities and Confederation College to deliver relevant training for Aboriginal learners. A copy of Ms. Mosquito's presentation is available on the ACCC website at: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> Some of the key points and messages from Ms. Mosquito's presentation include:

- Education & Training can provide new beginnings for Aboriginal peoples' identity, well being, communities and future.
- OSHKI has a student success initiative that promotes a student centered learning focus and holistic student support services, including transition services provided through preparatory tutorials in areas such as time management and study skills, computer and technology basics, self-esteem & confidence building, stress and crisis management. A Student Support Worker offers workshops, career, personal, and academic counseling.
- Ms. Mosquito's presentation also identifies some interesting best practices adopted by OSHKI that promote student success and retention.
- The factors for success at this institute include:
 - OSHKI provides a sense of community;
 - Students appreciate the aboriginal friendly environment;
 - Staff commitment to student centred focus;
 - Student Recruitment Officer assists students through the registration process;
 - Students can earn post secondary credentials without relocating and experiencing disruptions and adjustments.

Randell Morris presented the Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program developed at **SIIT** in collaboration with community partners. A copy of Mr. Morris' PowerPoint presentation is available on the ACCC website:

<http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> . Some of the main points and messages from Mr. Morris' presentation include:

- There is strong industry demand for SIIT partnerships and training given a combination of two factors: the vast retirements across all sectors of the economy and the large cohort of First Nation youth in Saskatchewan. There are clearly significant opportunities for First Nation youth to access jobs and business development.
- SIIT developed the Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program based on the needs identified by First Nations reserves for small business development. This program includes Best Practices Training for Convenience Store and Gas Bar Operations, and is offered in several locations with an on-site component.

Réjean Richard provided an overview of the approaches used by **Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue** to partner with Aboriginal communities to deliver relevant education programs. A copy of Mr. Richard's presentation is available on the ACCC website at: <http://www.accc.ca/english/events/reports.htm> . The key points and messages from Mr. Richard's presentation include:

- The Cégep works with Aboriginal communities from Northern Quebec through contract training and receives students at the Val d'Or campus. The college offers assessment services, an Access to College Program to enable Aboriginal students to gain the prerequisites for postsecondary programs, and upgrade their science and language levels, and also offers Aboriginal student support services.
- The Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue is involved in a 5 year pilot project to establish the first Aboriginal postsecondary institution in Quebec. The project is being supported by the Quebec Ministry of Education, Sports and Leisure and led by the First Nation Education Council (FNEC). FNEC, Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Dawson College are part of the Steering Committee for the development of this Aboriginal institution. They will be beginning with one program – the Human and Social Science Program and they are currently in the program development process. The objective is for the program to build self-esteem and confidence and increase understanding of Aboriginal culture. The new institution is expected to be established by Fall 2008 and will likely be located in an urban centre.

10. Closing Keynote Address

Leslie Lounsbury, Publisher, SAY Magazine closed the symposium with some perspectives on the challenges Aboriginal youth and communities are facing and how colleges and institutes can more effectively reach out to Aboriginal youth. Some key points and messages from Ms. Lounsbury's presentation include:

- When communicating with young people, it is important to use approaches that get their attention and channels they are using such as Ipods, Utube and Facebook. Research done by a youth research

organization found that television use is actually going down, whereas internet use is on the rise among young people. This study found that many young people are feeling isolated and want to feel connected, in particular with their peers. Internet based communications tools and text messaging is seen as a way of staying connected. It is important for postsecondary institutions and community and government organizations aiming to work with young people to keep this in mind when deciding how to message with this age group.

- It must be acknowledged that one of the key barriers to postsecondary participation is that high school graduation rates are extremely low for the Aboriginal population, in particular for those living on reserves.
- Poverty is also an issue that must be acknowledged and addressed:
 - 52 percent of Aboriginal youth are poor and that often results in addictions problems;
 - 26 percent of Aboriginal families are headed by single moms and 40 percent of these have an annual salary of \$12,000
 - 12 percent of Aboriginal families are headed by those younger than 25 years of age.
- First Nations bands have limited funds for postsecondary education provided through INAC, as such Aboriginal learners are also faced with limited funding opportunities that pose a barrier to pursuing postsecondary education. Non-status Indians and Métis are even more limited in their funding sources for postsecondary education as INAC funding is not available to them.
- Institutions and organizations who work in the area of Aboriginal education face serious funding limitations for the development and delivery of effective programs and services.
- Aboriginal people would benefit from cross-cultural training to increase their understanding of corporate culture and the language used in the business world, as well as to learn how to deal with racism issues.
- Education and training programs aimed at Aboriginal young people should also teach job behaviour and provide career information and awareness.

11. Symposium Wrap Up

Closing remarks were provided by Terry Anne Boyles, Vice-President, Member Services and Public Policy at ACCC, Michael Hill, President of Northern College and Chief Walter Naveau of the Mattagami First Nation. Terry Anne Boyles thanked all speakers and participants and confirmed some of the key messages heard throughout the symposium, including the need to enhance Aboriginal people's capacity to work with business and industry and understand corporate culture. A theme that came out much more strongly during this symposium, compared to the 2006 symposium, is the importance of addressing the health and wellness needs of Aboriginal peoples and communities. ACCC will be examining the timeframe for a third symposium, which may not occur next

year, however, offers for hosting another symposium of this kind will certainly be followed up on.

Mr. Hill thanked all participants and speakers for their contributions and affirmed the commitment of Northern College to continuing with their work with Aboriginal communities in the region. The learning from the symposium will be shared internally and applied as they move forward. The symposium was also instrumental in fostering partnerships among participants and speakers that will be continued so that useful approaches can be shared, adapted and applied.

Chief Walter Naveau emphasized the importance of all that was discussed during the symposium and the key place of education in supporting the healing, wellness and economic and social development of Aboriginal communities. Chief Naveau also invited the Northern College Elder, Hattie Luke-Maher to do the closing prayer.

ACCC would like to once again thank Chief Walter Naveau, as well as Elder Hattie Luke-Maher for sharing her wisdom during the two day symposium. Sincere thanks are also extended to George Mathews and David Faries for the drumming ceremony and helping us to close the symposium with farewell drumming to send off participants.



**Strategies for Meeting the Educational Needs of
Aboriginal Learners in Rural and Remote Communities**

**October 24 - 26, 2007
Hosted by Mattagami First Nation and Northern College
Timmins, Ontario**

Program

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. ***Meet and Greet at the Shania Twain Centre***

Shuttle Schedule: ***Depart from Days Inn at 6:45 p.m.
Return to Days Inn at 8:30 p.m.***

**Thursday, October 25, 2007
Northern College – Bleachers' Lounge**

Shuttle Schedule: ***Depart from Days Inn at 7:30 a.m.
Return to Days Inn after dinner***

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. ***Continental Breakfast***

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. ***Opening Prayer and Welcome from Co-Hosts and ACCC***
Chief Walter Naveau, Mattagami First Nations
Michael Hill, President, Northern College
Terry Anne Boyles, Vice-President, Member Services and Public
Policy, Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)

Opening Keynote Address
Anne Noonan, Co-Chair, Aboriginal Human Resource Council

10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. ***Perspectives from College and Institute Leadership***
Michael Hill, President, Northern College, Ontario
Casey Sheridan, President, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology,
British Columbia
Maurice Evans, President, Aurora College, Northwest Territories

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. ***Break***

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. ***Exemplary Practices in Program Development: The
Integration of Aboriginal History, Culture and Ways of
Knowing into College/Institute Programs***
Marti Ford, Dean, Aboriginal Education and Mike Stuhldreier,
Curriculum Consultant, Red River College, Manitoba

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. ***Lunch***

- 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. ***The Pivotal Role of Aboriginal Student Services***
 Doug Dokis, Manager, Chinook Lodge Aboriginal Resource Centre at SAIT Polytechnic, Alberta
 Mary Wabano, Director, Aboriginal Learning Unit, Canadore College, Ontario
 Roberta Oshkawbewisens Martin, Native Student Advisor and Willard Small, Student Advisor, Northern College, Ontario
- 2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ***Break***
- 3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. ***Retention Strategies for Aboriginal Students – Residential School Impacts and Healing***
 Arlene Herman, Dean of Student Services, Human Services & Literacy and Kaarlene Lindsay, First Nations Access Coordinator/Instructional Assistant, Northwest Community College, British Columbia
- 4:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. ***Perspectives from Aboriginal Students***
 Cherie Corbière, President, Cambrian Native Students' Association, Cambrian College, Ontario
 Ian Crow, President of the Ontario Aboriginal Student Association, Confederation College, Ontario
 Jon Hendle, President, Student Union of Confederation College Inc., Ontario
 Kimberly Naveau, Student, Northern College, Ontario
- 5:30 p.m. ***Reception and Dinner***
 Northern College

Friday, October 26, 2007
Northern College – Bleachers' Lounge

- Shuttle Schedule:*** ***Depart from Days Inn at 7:30 a.m.***
 Return to Days Inn at 3:00 p.m.
- 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. ***Continental Breakfast***
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. ***Federal Government Perspectives***
 Alfred Linklater, Senior Policy Advisor, Aboriginal Affairs, Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC)
- 9:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. ***Industry Perspectives on Partnerships with Colleges and Institutes***
 Trina Maher, Director, Skills and Learning Strategies, Aboriginal Human Resource Council
 Patrick Cunningham, Aboriginal Accounts Manager, Royal Bank of Canada
 Denise McBride, Community Affairs Representative, Shell Canada Energy

- 11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. **Break**
- 11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Community Partnerships**
Rosie Mosquito, Executive Director, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win
Education and Training Institute, Thunder Bay, Ontario
Randell Morris, Senior Vice-President, Saskatchewan Indian
Institute of Technologies, Saskatchewan
Réjean Richard, Director, Val-d'Or Campus, Cégep de l'Abitibi-
Témiscamingue, Quebec
- 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **Closing Keynote Address**
Leslie Lounsbury, Publisher, SAY Magazine
- 2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. **Symposium Wrap-Up**

Strategies for Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Learners in Rural and Remote Communities
Stratégies pour répondre aux besoins d'éducation des apprenants autochtones dans les collectivités rurales et éloignées
Timmins, ON - October 24-26, 2007

Name	Title	Institution/Organization
Anderson, Mr. Gerald	Manager, Marketing & Business Development	The Fisheries and Marine Institute of MUN
Bartel, Ms. Judy	Director, Student Services	Assiniboine Community College
Beck, Mr. John	Director of Education	O mushkego Education
Benning, Mrs. Kelly	Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator	Grande Prairie Regional College
Boyles, Ms. Terry Anne	Vice-President, Member Services & Public Policy	Association of Canadian Community Colleges
Bryce, Mme Louise	Conseillère à la vie étudiante	Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue
Charbonneau, Ms. Lorán	Executive Director, College Operations & Services	Northern College
Corbiere, Ms. Cheri	Cambrian Native Students' Association, President	Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology
Crow, Mr. Ian	Vice President	Oshki Anishnawbeg Student Association (OASA)
Cunningham, Mr. Patrick	Senior Account Manager, Northeastern Ontario BBC	RBC Royal Bank
Deutscher, Mr. Norman	Board Vice Chairperson	North West Regional College
Dokis, Mr. Doug	Manager, Chinook Lodge	SAIT Polytechnic
Evans, Mr. Maurice	President	Aurora College
Ford, Ms. Marti	Dean, Indigenous Education	Red River College
Fortier, Mrs. Evlyn	Analyst	Human Resources and Social Development Canada
Googoo, Mr. Dodd	Coordinator, Aboriginal Student Success	Nova Scotia Community College
Gunn, Mr. Tom	Academic Chair	Nova Scotia Community College
Hagger-Perritt, Mrs. Joanne	Faculty	Northern College
Hendel, Mr. Jon	President	Student Union of Confederation College Inc.
Hepburn, Ms. Carolyn	Director, Native Education and Training	Sault College
Herman, Ms. Arlene	Dean, Student & Human Services	Northwest Community College - Main Campus
Hill, Mr. Michael	President	Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology
Larouche, Mrs. Pascale	Program Officer	Association of Canadian Community Colleges
Lavoie, Ms. Rosa	Manager, Admissions & Recruitment	Northern College
Leblond, Mrs. Diane	Apprenticeship Programs Assitant	Northern College
Ledger, Ms. Betsy	Student Support Worker	Oshki Pimache-O-Win Education and Training
Lindsay, Ms. Kaarlene	First Nations Access Coordinator & Instructional	Northwest Community College
Linklater, Mr. Alfred	Senior Policy Advisor, Aboriginal Affairs	Human Resources and Social Development Canada
Lounsbury, Ms. Leslie	Publisher	Say Magazine
Mack, Mr. Bob	Associate Regional Director	Northern College
Maher-Bucko, Mrs. Trina	Director, Skill & Learning Strategies	Aboriginal Human Resources Council
Mavrinac, Mrs. Jean	Employee Information & Staff Development Officer	Northern College
McBride, Ms. Denise	Community Affairs Representative	Shell Canada Energy
McDougall, Mr. Brian	Senior Policy Analyst	Human Resources and Social Development Canada

Strategies for Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Learners in Rural and Remote Communities
Stratégies pour répondre aux besoins d'éducation des apprenants autochtones dans les collectivités rurales et éloignées

Timmins, ON - October 24-26, 2007

Name	Title	Institution/Organization
McIntyre, Mr. Wayne	Director, Student Services	Algonquin College
Merrell, Mr. Wayne	Provost	Rainy River Community College
Miller, Mr. Micheal	Employment and Training Coordinator	Mamo-Nuskomitowin
Mitchell, Mrs. Nellie	Acting Education Councillor	Brunswick House First Nation
Montague, Ms. Winnifred	Campus Administrator	College of the North Atlantic
Morgan, Mrs. Brenda	Employment Counsellor	Ininew Friendship Centre
Morris, Mr. Randell	Senior Vice President & CEO	Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies
Mosquito, Ms. Rosie	Executive Director	Oshki Pimache-O-Win Education and Training
Naveau, Ms. Kimberly	NSA - President	Northern College
Naveau, Mr. Walter	Chief	Mattagami First Nation
Noonan, Ms. Anne	Co-Chair	Aboriginal Human Resources Council
Oshkawbewisens Martin, Ms. Roberta	Native Student Advisor	Northern College
Piotrowski, Mrs. Lisa	Coordinator & Faculty, Social Services Worker - Native	Sault College
Richard, M. Réjean	Directeur, Campus de Val-d'Or	Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue
Robinson, Mr. Kerry	Manager, Program Development	Aurora College
Ryder, Ms. Diane	Manager	Northern College
Sheridan, Mr. Casey	President	Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
Small, Mr. Willard	Student Advisor	Northern College
Stuhldreier, Mr. Michael	Manager, Program & Curriculum Development	Red River College
Sutherland, Ms. Harriet	Aboriginal Student Support Officer	Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology
Toneguzzo, Mrs. Anna	Senior Research Officer, Member Services & Public	Association of Canadian Community Colleges
Tzountzouris, Mr. John	Manager, CCPE & Student Success Network	The Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences
Venier, Ms. Shanda	Aboriginal Academic Advisor	Lethbridge College
Wabano, Ms. Mary	Director, Aboriginal Learning Unit	Canadore College
Total	58	