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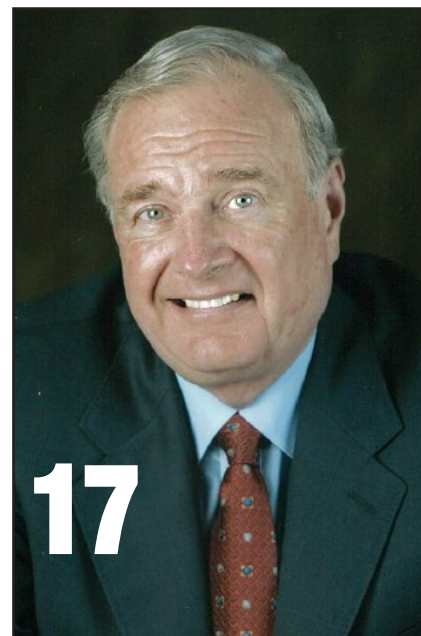
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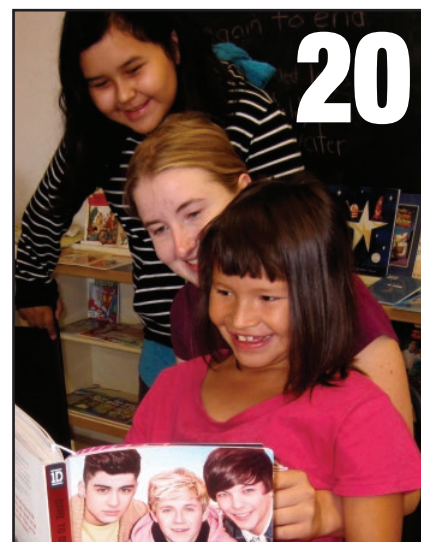
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JP GLADU
PRESIDENT AND CEO

In a new year there is always room for introspection and gratitude, while also contemplating the future. The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business is proud of what we have accomplished in 2015, and even more excited about our plans for the coming year. It is a future in which Aboriginal business continues to move forward, bolstered by our member companies and the guidance provided by the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program.

One example of this is Bruce Power, a company successfully implementing PAR guidelines within its own supply chain to increase Aboriginal business and procurement. As a patron member of CCAB, Bruce Power is one of our largest supporters. By making use of our PAR guidelines, the company is working hard to expand Aboriginal business in Canada.

The Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation Conference (AEDCC), hosted in Saskatoon on November 26, was a resounding success. The event gave members and Aboriginal economic development

corporations across the country a chance to see where they are at the moment, and what potential the future may hold.

Our opening keynote came from Chief Darcy Bear – now our 2016 Aboriginal Business of Hall of Fame (ABHF) Lifetime Achievement Award winner. Chief Bear's hard work and accomplishments have made Whitecap Dakota First Nation a model of Aboriginal economic development, and he touched on the challenges and successes of his 25-year leadership in his address. Chief Bear also set in motion a wonderful day of discussions, networking, and shared business insights. While this year's event is over, we look forward to seeing everyone at the conference we are organizing for October 2016.

Chief Bear will also be honoured at our annual Toronto Gala this February, as will our 2016 National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award recipient: Jacob Pratt, creative director of Wambdi Dance. Our galas are designed to

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

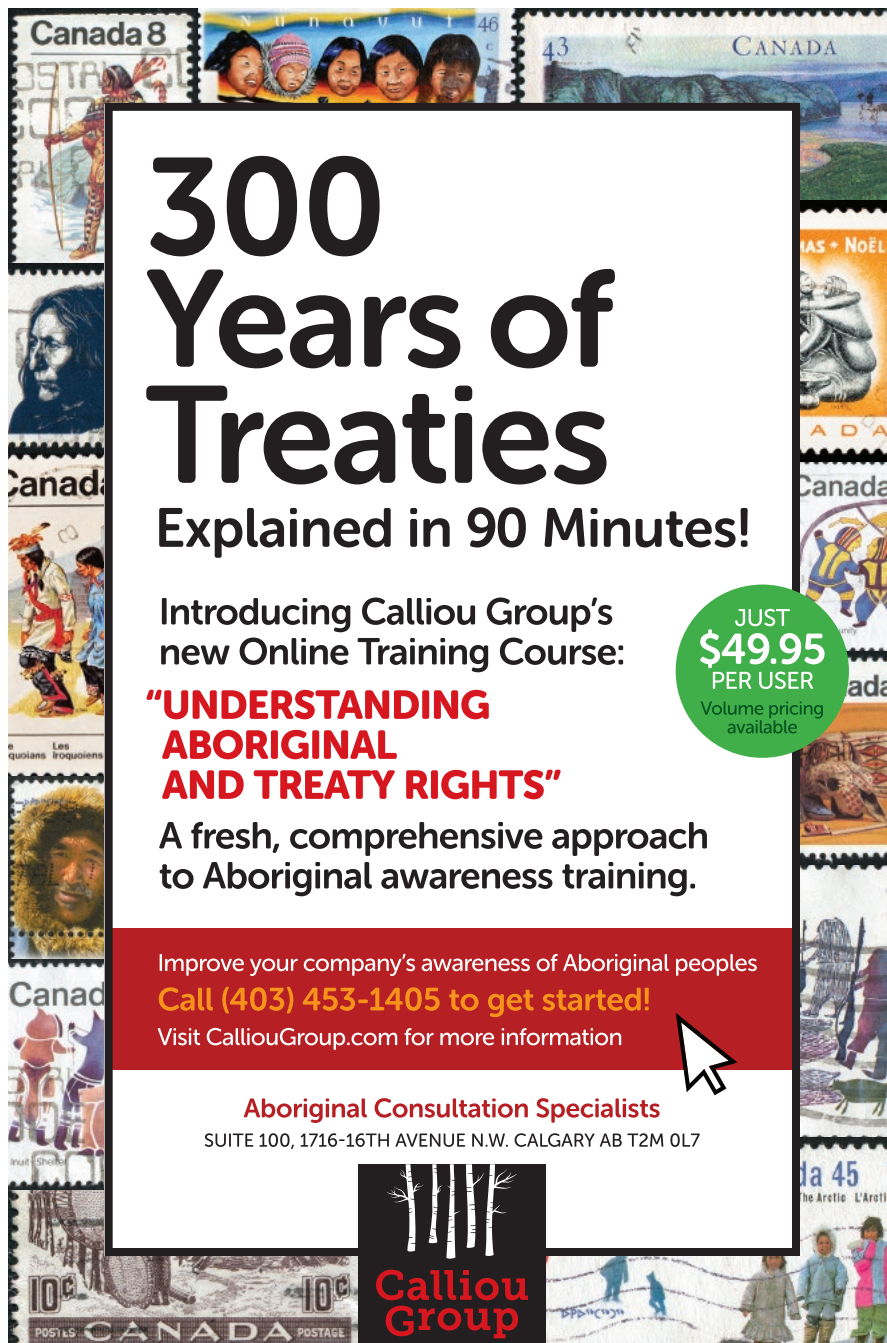
showcase the best that Aboriginal business in Canada has to offer, so stay tuned for further announcements. Information on the speakers at our Gala, as well as the celebrations planned to honour our two award recipients, will be forthcoming.

In this issue of *Aboriginal Business Report*, you will find an insightful interview I had with the Right Honourable Paul Martin. The former prime minister reflected on his work with CCAB, on the past and present state of Aboriginal business, and on

how we all – Indigenous peoples of Canada and Canadians – can learn from one another.

As some of you may recall, Paul Martin was a founding board member of CCAB more than 30 years ago, and the inaugural recipient of our Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations. He has made Aboriginal education a priority since leaving the Prime Minister's Office, and continues to support the growth of Aboriginal business in Canada. As he told me: "First Nations, Inuit and Métis people are going to have a huge advantage over a lot of us. I think what you're going to see is not just (their involvement) in resources. It's going to be in the development of new technological businesses. Twenty years from now, they will not only be our partners in terms of development of resources; they will be leaders in the new economy."

On a final note, I am excited to bring you our third issue of *Aboriginal Business Report*, an endeavour that has become an increasingly important communication tool for us, especially as Aboriginal business continues to evolve in 2016. The magazine is growing in leaps and bounds – much like Aboriginal business itself – and I am always excited to share what is happening within CCAB and the Aboriginal business community with our members, patrons, sponsors and readers. We hope you learn something new while reading this issue and continue to take an active interest in our work as we forge ahead into what promises to be a great year.



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JP Gladu, CCAB (at podium); Max Skudra, CCAB; Leanne Bellegarde, PotashCorp; Doug McCoy, ACDEN; Gary Merasty, Des Nedhe Development; James Thorbourne, Nunatsiavut Group of Companies

BY DR. KAREN TRAVERS

BUILDING AND BETTERING **AEDCS**

CCAB CELEBRATES ITS
FIRST CONFERENCE
DEDICATED TO
ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATIONS

The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business has long championed Aboriginal economic development corporations (AEDCs) as important vehicles for furthering economic development and skills training. This past fall, CCAB bolstered this effort with its first full-day conference dedicated to AEDCs, held in Saskatoon on November 26.

The inaugural Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation Conference brought together prominent community leaders, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business leaders, as well as academics and government representatives. The aim was to share knowledge, network, and discuss the fundamentals of AEDCs at a national level.

Conference panels focused on community goals and business fundamentals – two key pillars of successful AEDCs. Keynote speakers Chief Darcy Bear, Tim Gitzel and Keith Martell set the stage for all the discussions, and valuable support was provided by Scotiabank, Cameco, PotashCorp and many others who generously sponsored the event.

As community-owned businesses, AEDCs play a critical role in ensuring that the prosperity created by development projects benefits Aboriginal communities. Since 2010, CCAB has conducted research on



Joe Dion, Frog Lake Energy Resources Corporation



Tammy Charland-McLaughlin, Primco Dene



James Wilson, Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba; Andre Morriseau, CCAB; Alicia Dubois, Scotiabank; Boris Rassin, ATCO; Dr. Judith Sayers, Sayers Strategic Advice

AEDCs in an effort to understand how these innovative corporate models develop and promote best practices to support their growth. These *Community & Commerce* research reports help us understand the growing importance of these corporations.

CCAB's Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation of the Year Award recognizes excellence in the industry. Honoured at the conference for their outstanding contribution to economic growth in their regions were past recipients of the award, including enterprises owned by Membertou and the Penticton Indian Band.

INFLUENTIAL SPEAKERS

Alicia Dubois, national director of Aboriginal Financial Services for Scotiabank, introduced the conference's morning speaker, Chief Darcy Bear of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. Chief Bear spearheaded economic development by creating an AEDC, developing a land management act, and partnering with regional municipalities and companies that invested more than \$1 million in the community. He received national recognition for dramatically reducing the unemployment rate from more than 70 per cent to five per cent. Chief Bear's keynote address set the tone for the morning discussion

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AEDC CONFERENCE

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Community engagement is fundamental for the operational success of AEDCs, and there were a number of inspiring speakers on hand from corporate Canada, the Aboriginal business world, and academia to discuss this topic. They elaborated on best practices in community capacity-building, leadership and good governance. AEDC

strategic plans and choice of development projects, they said, must rest on a foundation of honesty and transparency, and reflect and represent community goals. Attention to these recurring themes is crucial if AEDCs are to receive support and find business success in Aboriginal communities.

Tim Gitzel, president and CEO of Cameco, took to the stage as the afternoon keynote, following an introduction by Sean Willy, director

of corporate responsibility at Cameco and CCAB co-chair. With Gitzel at the helm, Cameco has successfully pioneered Aboriginal community development and engagement. The company works tirelessly to promote Aboriginal business success in its procurement process and supply chain. By generating hundreds of millions of dollars in northern Saskatchewan, relationships between Cameco and the region's Aboriginal businesses are leading examples of business done right.

The afternoon's business fundamentals panel touched on the same themes raised in Gitzel's address. Panelists stressed the need for AEDCs and corporate Canada to work together to improve Aboriginal business success in the procurement process, to increase access to financing, and to increase local business capacity. AEDCs must be prepared to do business in a highly competitive market if they are to create sustainable revenue streams for their communities, they said. While community engagement ensures that businesses are supported by their local communities, AEDCs are for-profit corporations that live or die based on hard work, business acumen and a constant focus on fundamentals.

The final keynote presenter was Keith Martell, CEO of First Nations Bank. Martell spoke on the importance of developing corporate models and financing structures that support economic development on reserves. He noted that AEDCs can play a key role in business development, but stressed it should not come at the expense of independently-owned businesses. Balance is best achieved when both models work in tandem.

And with that, the first AEDC Conference came to an end. It was a tremendous success, bringing together influential Aboriginal business development leaders for a day of networking, knowledge sharing, and relationship-building – all of which will promote business growth well into the future.

In case you missed it, CCAB is already at work planning next year's event, anticipating an even bigger turnout in the years to come. ■



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CBDC founder Pamela Jeffery addresses attendees at the October Diversity 50 Reception in Toronto

BY MATTHEW BRADFORD

ABORIGINAL/INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAKE THE LIST

CBDC'S 2015 DIVERSITY 50 LIST CELEBRATES
ABORIGINAL LEADERSHIP



The Canadian Board Diversity Council (CBDC) released its 2015 Diversity 50 list in October – and on it were six notable Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples.

The CBDC initiative is part of a mission to help break down the “visibility barrier” and connect board-ready candidates with positions on the top Canadian corporate boards. Its annual list acts as a resource for organizations looking to enhance their board diversity and discover talent beyond traditional networks.

“The CBDC, along with our working committee and supporting organizations, (aims to) bring forth to corporate Canada a list of 50 diverse candidates that includes women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people, and people with disabilities,” says Paul-Emile McNab, manager of research with CBDC.

Of the eight men and 42 women on the 2015 list, there is an impressive selection of successful Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples. They include

Melanie Debassige, chief of staff with the BC Assembly of First Nations; Norman Fraser, leader of Aboriginal Initiatives with Teck Resources Limited; Nicolas Marcotte, president and CEO of Strategor Inc.; David Sharpe, president and COO with Bridging Finance Inc.; Jody Wilson-Raybould, Canada’s newly appointed minister of justice and attorney general; and two Métis from Fort Chipewyan and Quebec.

Also on the list is Mel Benson, recipient of CCAB’s 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award for his leadership at Mel E. Benson Management Services Inc. Benson’s company is an international consulting firm that specializes in First Nations / corporate negotiations around the globe. He is also part owner of Tenax Energy Inc., and sits as a director at Suncor Energy and the Fort McKay Group of Companies.

“Any time a peer group or an organization like CBDC recognizes you it’s an absolute honour and quite humbling,” says Benson. “If I can act as a role model or help someone

else get a clearer picture of their future, then I feel like I've done something for my peers and the Aboriginal community."

DIVERSE TALENT

CBDC's list represents a cross-section of the country's diverse talent pool. According to McNab, the winning candidates share a common trait: "Everyone on this list possesses good, strong leadership qualities. That's a must if you want to sit on a board, whether it's with an FP500

company or a non-profit board. That's what nomination chairs are looking for – not just experience, but leadership within the community as well."

Moreover, the CBDC list highlights the country's many leaders and their contributions. As outlined by award-winner Benson: "We as a society need to recognize that we're a bunch of different shades. What diversity often brings is a different way of looking at problems and coming up with solutions." ■



Aboriginal candidates Melanie Debassige, Diversity 50 2015, and JP Gladu, Diversity 50 2014, at the Toronto reception

ABOUT DIVERSITY 50

The Canadian Board Diversity Council (CBDC) launched its Diversity 50 initiative in 2012 to address the "visibility barrier" faced by candidates and supply directors.

The program searches out firms with boards with "diverse men and women from across Canada with strong competencies..." Nominations are then vetted by a council through a process endorsed by 11 participating CEOs. Since its inception, the CBDC has seen 24 appointments to FP500 or Fortune 500 corporate brands.

The next round of applications for the Diversity 50 list will open in February 2016 and continue through May 2016. For more information, visit www.boarddiversity.ca/diversity-50.



The Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) congratulates Board Member, Melanie Debassige, on her recent addition to the Canadian Board Diversity Council (CBDC) of 50. Ms. Debassige is one of 50 new board-ready diverse candidates identified this year by the CBDC, a leading Canadian organization advancing diversity on Canada's boards.

Ms. Debassige was appointed by the Lieutenant Governor to the Ontario Clean Water Agency Board of Directors in October 2013. In October 2015, she was named Chief of Staff with the BC Assembly of First Nations. OCWA is proud to have Ms. Debassige as a member of our Board – her depth of knowledge and experience will help OCWA continue to assist Ontario's First Nations communities with their water and wastewater needs.



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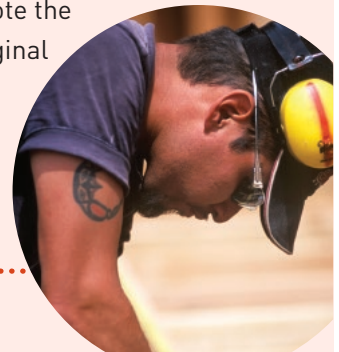
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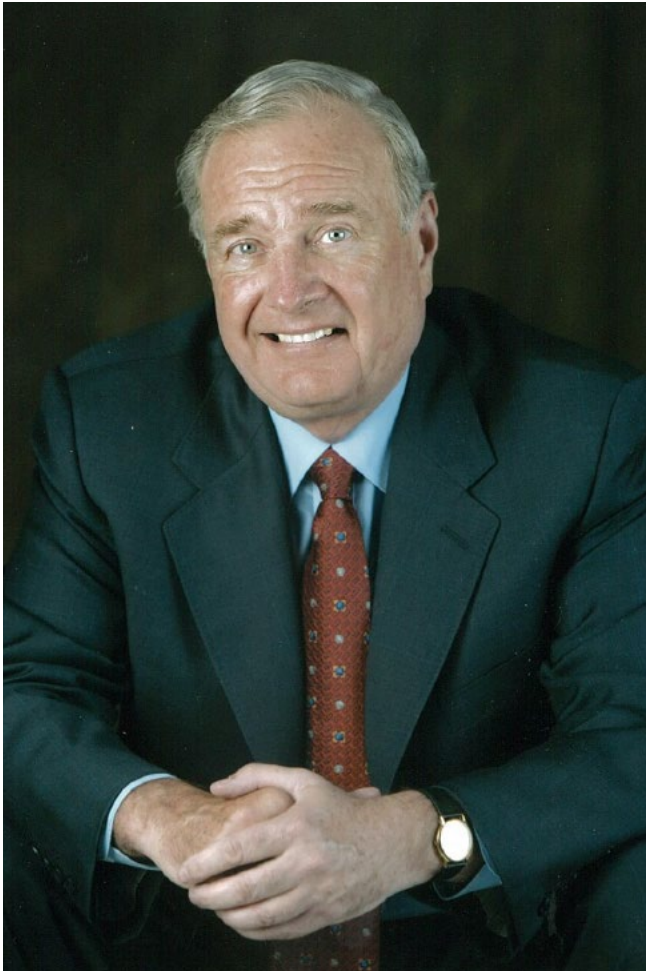
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ONE ON ONE WITH **PAUL MARTIN**

BY JP GLADU

THE VETERAN
POLITICIAN TALKS TO
CCAB PRESIDENT &
CEO JP GLADU ABOUT
THE EVOLUTION OF
INDIGENOUS BUSINESS
IN CANADA, AND WHAT
CANADIANS STAND TO
LEARN FROM IT

The Right Honourable Paul Martin is no stranger to the country's Aboriginal business community. In fact, he is a great friend. The former prime minister was a founding member of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) when it was first launched more than 30 years ago, and has remained a staunch supporter of the Indigenous business community ever since. Martin has dedicated much time and energy to projects aimed at improving educational opportunities for Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples, mainly through the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative (MAEI). CCAB president and CEO JP Gladu recently sat down with the esteemed veteran politician to reflect on his relationship with CCAB and the broader Indigenous business community.

JP: Can you reflect on your conversation with Murray Koffler over 30 years ago when the idea of the Canadian Council for Native Business (original name of CCAB) was first discussed?

PM: You have to remember that 30 years ago Murray Koffler was one of the most important business people in the country, and at the time I was a very young president of Canada Steamship Lines. The conversation was very much about my being prepared to listen to whatever Murray Koffler had to say. He knew of my involvement with Indigenous issues, and that I was favourably disposed to whatever could be done to help the situation. It struck me as an idea whose time had come. Effectively, there is no person who

PROFESSIONAL Q&A

could have inspired the business community the way that Murray Koffler did, and I was prepared to do whatever he wanted.

JP: A lot has changed over three decades. What are some of the pivotal moments that stand out for you?

PM: Apart from the founding of CCNB, most of the great issues have happened in the social area. There's

no doubt that when Phil Fontaine – long before he became head of the Assembly of First Nations – came out and described his own experience with abuse, it ultimately led to an understanding by Canadians of what had happened in residential schools. I think that was a very important event.

I believe the Kelowna Accord was the first time in the history of Canada that the prime minister sat down with

premiers and Indigenous leaders. I basically said to the Indigenous leaders: "Look, you've had 200 years of us telling you what your problems are. You tell us what you believe they are. What are the issues you want to discuss? What do you believe the solutions are? We will accept your issues. We may negotiate on the solutions, but this really has to be your show." I believe that the failure of Bill C-33 is proof positive that the Kelowna process – not necessarily the Kelowna Accord, but the Kelowna process – has changed the way in which governments deal with Canada's Indigenous peoples.

JP: Your compassion for Canada's Indigenous peoples goes back many years. What needs to happen for the average Canadian to have the same understanding?

PM: I was very lucky to have worked up north at a very young age alongside First Nations and Métis people, and this gave me a unique insight. I think the single most important thing is that we have to teach Indigenous history in school. We have to teach the current status of Indigenous peoples in Canada and the problems that they face as a result of the underfunding of education and healthcare. It should be taught in primary school and high school.

Recently, the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative joined with the Kielburger brothers in an organization called We Stand Together. For two weeks every year, for an hour, every morning, the schools that are interested, teach the history and current affairs of (Indigenous peoples in Canada). We started out with about 100 schools five years ago; we're now close to 1,000 schools. At the same time, province after province, as well as the territories, are now making Aboriginal or Indigenous history a part of the curriculum. I believe this is the answer to building that kind of understanding. It doesn't make much sense to go after people in their 50s and 60s. The time to explain it is when kids are in grade school or high school.



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**POINTS
ATHABASCA FHQ**



JP: Aboriginal businesses are becoming a significant force in Canada. Where do you think we will be 20 years from now?

PM: First of all, more and more Canadian businesses are beginning to understand that if you want to do business with Indigenous Canadians, you have to understand their worldview. If a Canadian business wants to do business in Korea, in China, or any other part of the world, they understand that they have to understand the people they're dealing with. They have to understand their worldview, they have to understand their concepts – the political context in which they (function). For far too long, Canadian businesses have not understood this in terms of dealing with Indigenous Canada, and yet Indigenous Canada has a very deep and profound worldview.

There's no doubt that because the traditional lands of so many First Nations are near major resource developments – and I'm very confident in the future of the resource industries in Canada – that the entire Aboriginal business world is going to be tied up with those resources. But I think that you're going to find, 20 years from now, that Indigenous businesses will (also) be involved in a multitude of start-ups involving new technologies.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis people are going to have a huge advantage over a lot of us. And I think what you're going to see is not just (their involvement) in resources. It's going to be in the development of new technological businesses. Twenty years from now, they will not only be our partners in terms of development of resources; they will be leaders in the new economy.

JP: How can we advance our Indigenous and mainstream government relationships to contribute to an empowered Indigenous community and a stronger, more competitive country?

PM: CCAB will play a tremendous role. I've been very proud of my involvement with CCAB over the years, and CCAB is going to continue

to lead this marriage of Indigenous and non-Indigenous business in the country. The implication in the question is that it is up to business to reach out to Indigenous business, and Indigenous business to reach out to government. Let me tell you, if government is going to succeed in this country, it's got to reach out to Indigenous business.

This is not a one-way street, and part of the problem we have had in this country is that government has found itself isolated in Ottawa and not needing to reach out. While I was in government, the great deputy ministers of industry, for example, the great deputy administrators of finance, reached out. It wasn't just the politicians. That's the only way it is going to work. This is a two-way street.

JP: In closing, are there any lessons that mainstream Canadian businesses can learn from our Indigenous business challenges and subsequent success stories?

PM: If the question is, "Is there anything that they can learn from Indigenous business people?" then the answer is overwhelmingly yes. The great advantage Indigenous business people have is that they understand the people they're dealing with: they understand the worldview, they understand the culture, they understand the problems that exist. The best advice you can give to any mainstream business is: long before you try to do business, learn about the people. Don't go into it blind. It goes back to what I said at the very beginning of this. When I first started in business, I was asked if I would go to Japan to learn a little bit, to spend about a week to learn about the Japanese financial industry. It became very clear to me when I was there that I had to understand the Japanese people.

The problem with so many Canadian businesses is that they don't think they have to understand Indigenous Canada. And they do, if they want to succeed. They should do it – even if all they want is to be better Canadians. ■

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BY JENNIFER SQUIBB

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Each summer, Aboriginal children in remote locations across Canada are provided with a wonderful opportunity: the chance to attend a literacy camp developed and managed by Frontier College. These day camps, known as Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camps, take place at various northern Indigenous communities and last for three or six weeks, depending on a community's needs.

For the children, the camps provide the usual mix of fun camp activities, but added to the mix are games and exercises that develop their reading, writing and numeracy skills. For the adults working at the camps, the experience is equally meaningful. I speak from personal experience, having worked at a number of Frontier College camps myself as a counselor.

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COMPANIES**

The children I've met have been wonderful, hilarious, and even brilliant. The camps give them the opportunity to socialize in a safe, protective space, where their contributions are valued and they can grow and take risks.

From a literacy perspective, I've witnessed how the camps help kids by promoting a love of reading and instilling confidence in their own abilities. I remember well how one camper announced, on the first day, "I'm not good at reading and I don't like it." In no time he was listening to books read by counselors, then reading every other page himself. By the end of the camp he was reading on his own and even bringing his favourite book home to read to his little sister.

Books were essentially liberated from the classroom: we read on the playground, at the baseball diamond, by the lake, or in a swarm of mosquitoes on a back porch. Books became a source of pleasure and fun, and were closely linked to the rich tradition of storytelling witnessed in these same communities.

BROADER IMPACT

The camps also had a positive economic impact on the communities. Frontier College aims to hire counselors from the community, providing them with a summer income, as well as valuable work experience they can build on in the future. As well, community residents invited to speak at the camp are often given an honorarium for their participation.

Snacks and some supplies are purchased from local stores, and all the books brought in for the camp remain with the community – going directly to the children or the local school. These books number in the hundreds each year.

There have also been other long-term benefits, especially in terms of relationship building. As camp counselors, we celebrated Canada Day in these communities, we drank

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ABORIGINAL SUMMER LITERACY CAMPS

tea with community members, and we laughed together at all the crazy things the kids would say or do. In one community, we were welcomed into the powwow circle where we danced with children, community members and their families. In another, we were befriended by two elders who took us out fishing and taught us how to gut the fish and fry them up. It was one of the most delicious meals I've ever had. Some of these relationships continue to this day.

Importantly, the experience of working in northern communities instills in many camp alumni an abiding interest in Indigenous issues. My experience fundamentally changed my career path and led me to pursue social work. Another camp counselor I know is working at the Native Canadian Centre in Toronto, and another is the editor of the *Indigenous Law Journal* at the University of Toronto. I also know a former camp counselor now training to work as a teacher in a northern community. In addition, we educate our family and friends on Indigenous issues, helping people to understand the complex realities of life in these communities.

It's been an extraordinary experience, and I will forever remember the warmth, generosity and resilience of the communities and people I met during my summers working for Frontier College. The impact of these camps is tremendous. They are important educational and social investments for the children, and

provide a powerful relationship-building component for all participants. It is my hope that Canadian businesses and private individuals continue to support the camps. Improved community literacy rates, educational attainment, and overall reconciliation require this long-term investment. ■

Jennifer Squibb is completing her master's degree in social work at the University of Toronto. She has spent three summers working at Frontier College's Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camps in communities that include Moose Factory, Taykwa Tagamou, Mishkeegogamang, Wabaseemoong and White Sand.

Right and bottom: Frontier College's Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camps combine outdoor fun with games and exercises that develop reading and numeracy skills



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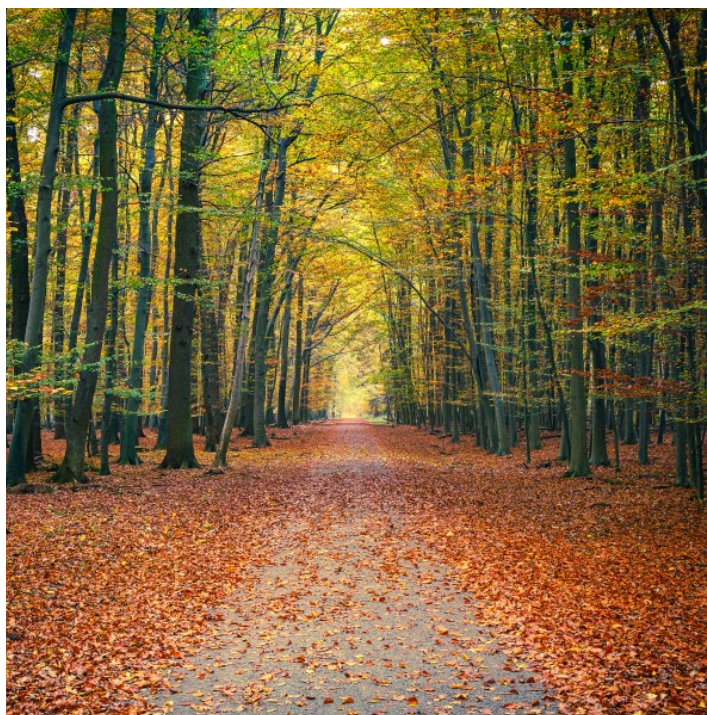
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THE PAR PATH TO SUCCESS

BY KELLY PARKER

CCAB'S PAR PROGRAM HELPS BUSINESSES
BUILD BETTER RELATIONS WITH CANADA'S
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In 2001, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business launched the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program – a certification for businesses meeting various levels of best practices in Aboriginal relations. In doing so, CCAB paved the way for Canadian companies to gain recognition for socially responsible relations with Aboriginal communities, while also providing them with the tools needed to improve in this area.

The PAR program has been highly successful to date with IBM, Carillion and Suncor among its list of certified companies. Once certified at a gold, silver or bronze level, companies

can display the PAR logo to show they are good business partners, offer positive work environments, and are committed to prosperity in Aboriginal communities. The overriding aim is to raise the bar in the area of Aboriginal relations for all companies operating in, around, and with the Aboriginal community.

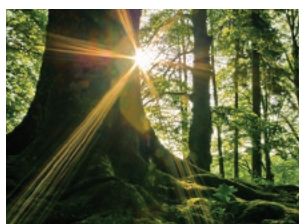
ASSESSMENT

Exactly how are companies assessed? The certification process is an extensive, comprehensive undertaking, starting with a team of verifiers conducting the first stage. They examine a company's activities in four areas: employment, business

development, community investment and community engagement. "My approach is a thorough first-pass review and read of the submission, listing key strengths as well as any gaps, followed with a detailed core-question analysis and preparation process based on those strengths and any key gaps I've noticed," says verifier Ellen Perry.

An agenda and a set of core questions are then prepared prior to an on-site visit. Following this, a jury comprised of representatives from the Canadian Aboriginal business community determines the final company level. "The information comes to us and we go through submissions one-by-one with the verifiers, who outline what they saw, how they came to their conclusions, and what the company itself said," explains juror Terry Goodtrack.

The jurors look for everything from stability and consistency to solid engagement with First Nations communities, among other things. "It's really important that the company is stable (and) that they're not changing their diversity program from one year to the next or reducing it," says juror Ernie



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PAR PROGRAM

Daniels. "A good track record is also important. Companies must show the verifiers and jury that they address any environmental concerns or issues from the community they operate in that would affect culture or anything else, and also that they're making real inroads into their engagement with First Nations."

The companies on the PAR path to success are a varied mix, but they do

share some common traits. Gold-designated companies have a solid committed strategy to Aboriginal relations that is supported by their senior executive team. Explains Perry, "The most important (trait) is a clear strategic approach to Aboriginal relations across their organization, reinforced by senior management who lead the overall charge on the subject."

PAR JURORS

Juror: Panel Co-chair Terry Goodtrack, CPA, is president and CEO of AFOA Canada. He has a graduate degree in public administration and a business degree in accounting and finance. AFOA Canada also has its own designations, and Goodtrack's include Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager and Certified Aboriginal Professional Administrator.

Juror: Panel Co-chair Ernie Daniels is president and CEO of First Nations Finance Authority. A Certified General Accountant and a Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager, Daniels has served as chair of the Northwest Territory (NWT) Legislative Assembly Society, chair of the NWT Development Corporation, and is a former board member of the First Nations Financial Management Board (FNFB).

Juror: Brenda LaRose is an HR professional who has also been in the executive search field for over 20 years. Originally from Manitoba, she has also served on the board of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB), giving her a deep understanding of the PAR program.

Juror: Stephen Scott is an account manager with TD Commercial Banking. Scott worked for CCAB for several years before heading back to school to do his MBA. At that time, he was asked to serve on the PAR jury to, as he puts it, "get an Aboriginal student voice on there."



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ENRICHING EXPERIENCE

The PAR experience is rewarding not only for the designated companies, but also for the jurors and verifiers participating in the selection process. In addition to working closely with some of the country's most successful businesses, verifiers get to hear directly from the Aboriginal community about their positive experiences with companies making a genuine culture shift. "One of the really fabulous things for me is to see how the company grows through the PAR process, from the outset with maybe one or two people really involved, to coming together as teams with all levels engaged and making it happen," says Perry.

Brenda LaRose, another juror, has been involved with PAR from the very beginning, watching it evolve into a highly respected certification program. "It's really nice to see this program become the standard – like the ISO certification of quality," she says. "It's not a slam-dunk – it's a tough process. We look at everything. We're all professionals, everybody is highly qualified, and we're all very committed to being careful about who gets certified."

In the end, the PAR program is more than just handing out certificates. As juror Stephen Scott explains, PAR provides a roadmap for companies to follow to improve their relations with the country's Indigenous communities. "A lot of companies are realizing that while it's not a public rating, it's not necessarily a branding exercise (either), but rather more of a company development exercise. The PAR program provides the map to improve on Indigenous relations. This has to be one of its biggest successes."

Perry agrees, noting that the certification process opens up channels of discussion, which in turn help companies learn about, develop and improve their relations with Indigenous communities. "The verification site visit exercise itself is a good learning experience for the company," she notes, "both in helping stimulate discussion, celebrate achievements and directly helping to sustain their strategic focus on Aboriginal relations." ■

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Portrait of William Kennedy, courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery

BY DAVID T. MCNAB

THE ARCTIC PRESCRIPTION

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND THE ROLE IT PLAYED IN THE SEARCH FOR SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S EREBUS

In the summer of 2014, one of Sir John Franklin's ships, the *Erebus*, was discovered in the Arctic. The event was hailed by the federal government as a great achievement in Canadian history, but was it?

The *Erebus* is still owned by the British government, and has been since it was

lost in 1848 or thereabouts. Canada was a colony at the time and not a nation, so it did not "own" Franklin's ships or the Arctic – not in 1848, and perhaps not even in 1880.

Only one Canadian-born individual searched for Franklin during the years immediately following his

disappearance: William Kennedy, a Métis. While Kennedy went on to write a narrative about his search – his 1853 *A Short Narrative of the Second Voyage of the Prince Albert, in Search of Sir John Franklin* – it has never been republished nor has a scholarly edition been published. Some commentators have even questioned whether

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Kennedy was literate or educated, since he was a Métis.

Yet from 1851 to 1852, Kennedy and his crew wintered over and survived without any loss of life while searching for Franklin – in stark contrast to Franklin's own tragic expedition. The reason for Kennedy's successful search (despite not having actually found Franklin or his ships) was Indigenous knowledge, or as Kennedy himself called it in his narrative, "Arctic Prescription."

Kennedy led a successful expedition, an "Arctic College," to search for Franklin in 1851 to 1852. Yet this event and its written narrative have regularly been overlooked in Canada's history. Why? Perhaps the answer can be found in the "borders of knowledge" – the intersection of Indigenous knowledge, oral traditions and the written record.

While attempting to write this article (as part of a longstanding project writing a scholarly edition of Kennedy's *Short Narrative* with Paul-Emile McNab), I was reading Sheila Watt-Cloutier's new memoir entitled *The Right to be Cold, One Woman's Story of Protecting her Culture, the Arctic and the Whole Planet*.

Watt-Cloutier's incredible story of going up to Old Fort Chimo (now part of Nunavik) in the Ungava Peninsula in the 1950s is significant for my study of Kennedy, who was there as a Hudson's Bay Company trader from 1838 to 1846. It was there that Kennedy added to his Indigenous knowledge – knowledge gained as a Métis Cree growing up in Cumberland House from 1814 to 1832, in the care of his Cree mother, Mary Bear (c. 1780-1865).

Indigenous knowledge (as known by the Inuit) has been defined by Watt-Cloutier fittingly as "Silatuniqu," the Inuktitut word for wisdom. To quote her memoir, on the topic of wisdom: "... much of it is taught through the experiential observation of the hunt. The Arctic is not an easy place to stay alive if one has not mastered the life skills passed down from generation to generation. Mistakes can be fatal. But every challenge teaches a lesson,

not only about the techniques of thriving in a cold world but also about developing the character that can be counted upon to stand up to those challenges. It is the wisdom of our hunters and elders that allowed us not only to live but also to thrive."

It is this wisdom that is passed on from generation to generation as a practical everyday reality. Kennedy learned about the wisdom of the Inuit and

staying alive and thriving in Nunavik, likely something he learned from his Inuit female partners at Old Fort Chimo. He also learned to thrive when searching for Franklin – a search that resulted in no loss of life in the *Prince Albert's* 18-man crew.

INUIT WISDOM

The real story to date, however, is not about Franklin, his men or his ships. The discovery of the *Erebus* is

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HISTORY

about Inuit wisdom and knowledge, as well as Inuit sovereignty. It is also fascinating to note that the former head of RIM, James Balsillie, a Métis, used both Indigenous knowledge and scientific equipment from his Canadian Arctic Foundation to find the *Erebus* last summer.

While I may be naïve, I find it highly disturbing that a former Canadian prime minister could reduce the

Erebus search to political grubbing for votes in the name of “Canadian sovereignty” while ignoring the significant role played by Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous sovereignty. The search for the Northwest Passage was not a Canadian event, but rather a British Imperial story interacting with Indigenous knowledge. Kennedy was not a European “explorer” – for him there was “nothing” to explore. The Inuit knew their land, and they

shared that Indigenous knowledge with Kennedy.

Until the early 21st century, Inuit knowledge had been all but denied in the search for Franklin. There were just two people who showed exception to this thinking, and they were John Rae, an Orkneyman, and William Kennedy, a Canadian-born Métis Cree. Rae, for his efforts in believing the Inuit, was vilified in a highly racist fashion by the British press after returning from his search, as noted in Ken McGoogan’s *Fatal Passage: The Untold Story of John Rae*. Kennedy was simply ignored, and so was his *Short Narrative*. There has never been a scholarly first edition of his *Narrative*, nor even a reprint in Canada. Yet his portrait hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in London, England.

As mentioned earlier, some commentators have even questioned how Kennedy could have written his *Short Narrative*, given that he was an Indigenous person. But Kennedy was schooled at St. Margaret’s Hope School on the Orkney Islands and would have qualified for a university degree like his brothers, John and Roderick, both of whom held medical degrees from the University of Edinburgh. Far from being deficient in education, someone like Kennedy could certainly “see with two eyes.”

Indigenous knowledge, in the form of Kennedy’s “Arctic Prescription,” was the primary reason why his search for Franklin experienced no loss of life, in contradistinction to the disastrous Franklin expedition. ■

David T. McNab is an associate professor of Indigenous thought and Canadian studies at York University. He is currently working on writing a scholarly edition of Kennedy’s *Short Narrative* of the Second Voyage of the Prince Albert in Search of Sir John Franklin (London, 1853), together with Paul-Emile McNab.



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FISHING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

BY SARAH B. HOOD

AT KESAGAMI WILDERNESS LODGE, GUESTS COME FOR THE PIKE, BUT RETURN FOR THE SERVICE

For many anglers, the fierce and feisty northern pike is a prized catch. In the cold waters of northern Ontario, where pike can live for many decades, it's not unheard of to haul in a four-foot specimen – especially in lakes managed with strict catch-and-release policies. This is especially the case in beautiful and pristine Kesagami Lake, which lies inside Kesagami Provincial Park, north of Cochrane, Ontario.

Kesagami Wilderness Lodge, a fly-in fishing destination on the lake, capitalizes on the lure of the giant pike. It has become an internationally known destination, and was named Canada's number-one pike fishing destination by *Outdoor Canada* magazine. With its partner company, Cochrane Air Services Ltd., it is the largest outfitter in North America.

Both Kesagami Wilderness Lodge and Cochrane Air Services Ltd. are



The Kesagami Wilderness Lodge can accommodate 45 guests at a time.



There is ample northern pike in the local lakes thanks to a strict catch-and-release policy

owned by the Moose Cree Group of Companies, whose holdings also include logging, construction and property management concerns. In addition to the lodge, which can accommodate 45 guests at a time, Moose Cree First Nation manages outpost camps where guests can stay on their own, and all are served by Cochrane Air's fleet of float planes.

FULL CIRCLE

Kesagami Wilderness Lodge has come full circle, points out manager Charlie McDonald, who has been with the property for 22 years. "In 1960, Sinclair Cheechoo from the Moose Band established the first tourist or commercial fishing operation on Kesagami Lake, with an LUP (land use permit)," he says. Cheechoo sold the business to Swiss businessman Jerry Krahenbuhl, who built the main lodge and motel in the early 1980s.

In 1992, Florida-based restaurateurs Marsha Gibbs and Robert Mattson took over, reselling it back to the Moose Cree about 10 years ago. As explained by Derek Chum, president

of the Board of Kesagami Wilderness Lodge, "The reason Moose Cree bought this business is that the Kesagami Lake falls within the traditional territory of the Moose Cree, and the thought was for Moose Cree to have a presence in their traditional lands."

Previous owner Robert Mattson also felt that Moose Cree should be the rightful owner of the lodge. "He's still very much an ambassador for the company and he still brings us business to this day," Chum notes.

Chum was appointed a little over three years ago to the board of what was then known as the Moose Band Development Corporation, the business arm for Moose Cree First Nation. "I was brought in to basically turn the business around," he says. "We ended up restructuring the company into a limited partnership and rationalizing our administrative functions. The key thing really was that the administrative side of the company hadn't grown or developed to keep up with the growth. The administration there was swamped."



The fly-in fishing lodge attracts outdoor enthusiasts from across the continent



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"Priorities were hiring a new general manager and a properly qualified person in our finance department so we could get a grip on our books. Now we're in a position where we're really beginning to invest more in the company and realize more of its potential," says Chum.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

According to McDonald, the biggest key to the success of the Lodge has been excellence in customer service. "We have a lot of staff, a very high staff-to-guest ratio," he explains. "Guests always comment, 'Our needs are met; in fact, staff even anticipate our needs!'"

This top-notch service translates directly into business: 75 per cent of guests represent repeat business, and half come every year. "One guest in particular, he's done 50 trips to Kesagami," boasts McDonald.

The second key is absolute commitment to the preservation of the fishery. "Twenty-three years ago, the American owners introduced the concept of mandatory catch-and-release," explains McDonald. "It's a pristine wilderness setting. Other than Aboriginal harvesting, nobody's shooting the animals in the park, so the opportunities for wildlife sighting are outstanding."

The last few years have been about cleaning up the organization, and its owners are now in a situation where they can sit back and plan, rather than react. They are building new cabins, and last year they installed a new dock. They are also tapping into social media – they have a Facebook page – and are making use of other online sites like TripAdvisor.

Overall, the business provides a tremendous opportunity for the Moose Cree community and for their future business leaders. "What's great for the Moose Cree is that they're running this famous operation, and it provides employment for mostly Native youth and allows them to learn tourism and customer-service skills," says McDonald. "Kids' lives are transformed by working at Kesagami." ■



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BUILDING ON A LEGACY

BY CALVIN BROOK



Award-winning Prince Arthur's Landing in Thunder Bay incorporates the waterfront's Indigenous cultural roots

ARCHITECT CALVIN BROOK COMMENTS ON HIS FIRM'S AWARD-WINNING PROJECTS THAT GIVE EXPRESSION TO INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

In November of last year, the International Olympic Committee and its affiliated organization IAKS bestowed a Silver Medal in architecture to Prince Arthur's Landing (PAL), an ambitious waterfront revitalization project recently built in Thunder Bay, Ontario. This represents the 19th award that the PAL project, designed by my firm Brook McIlroy, has received to date.

While we were somewhat surprised that the IOC gave awards for architecture, we learned that it is part of its mandate to promote a healthy, active lifestyle. The organization honours projects that promote healthy communities in both the physical and cultural sense. In this case, the jury recognized the significant contribution that Prince Arthur's Landing made to Aboriginal place-making along the waterfront.

Prince Arthur's Landing incorporates a range of buildings, landscapes and integrated public art that together embody the deep cultural roots of the Thunder Bay waterfront. They successfully give expression to the legacy of 10,000 years of Indigenous settlement on the Lake Superior shoreline.

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EVOLUTION

The architecture and landscapes that shape the waterfront evolved from a series of workshops hosted by the City of Thunder Bay. These workshops drew together representatives from Fort William First Nation, communities of the Robinson-Superior Treaty and the Red Sky Métis.

In the course of this work, my firm had the privilege of working with CCAB President & CEO JP Gladu. (Prior to joining CCAB, Gladu facilitated Aboriginal engagement processes across Canada.) We were the lead architects and landscape architects on the project, but thanks to Gladu's efforts we were able to form a collaborative team with Aboriginal designer Ryan Gorrie, freshly graduated from architecture school.

For the design of the Spirit Garden, Gorrie took the collective vision that emerged from the workshops and turned it into an iconic gathering place for the community. The Garden's design reflects an adaptation of a traditional Aboriginal bentwood building technique and sustainable building practices. George Price of the First William First Nation built the bentwood supports by hand.

Successfully woven throughout the Prince Arthur project is the ambition to celebrate Indigenous culture and sustainable practices. Two principal buildings, the Water Garden Pavilion and the Baggage Building Arts Centre, are certified as LEED Gold buildings. A café/restaurant, splash pad/skating rink, skateboard park, trails, Aboriginal gardens, public art installations and outdoor amphitheatre support year-round public activities.

Two 21-metre tall beacons located on the ends of Piers 1 and 3 overlook Lake Superior. These beacons integrate a 'light waterfall' of scrolling LED lights that transcribe an Anishinaabe poem-story using Morse code. As one approaches the structure, an audio track recites the poem in both Ojibwe and English dialects.

FURTHER WORK

Since designing Prince Arthur's Landing, Brook McIlroy has gone on to work with additional Indigenous communities on other projects. In Milton, Ontario, we designed the Deer Clan Longhouse, now the centrepiece within a reconstructed 15th century longhouse village at Crawford Lake. The building hosts 70,000 visitors a year and provides a centre for learning Wendat and Haudenosaunee history and contemporary culture.

At Hamilton's Mohawk College, we designed a new Aboriginal Gathering Place within the main quad. This special Gathering Place will draw the entire campus community together in a place for teaching and celebration. Our design process on this project hinged on a collective vision that emerged from intensive workshops with representatives from Six Nations, Mohawk students and staff.



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Renderings of Mohawk College's Aboriginal Gathering Place, where the campus community can gather for teaching and celebration



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EARTH MATTERS



Bentwood supports for the Spirit Garden at the Prince Arthur Landing were built by hand

This body of work has been greatly enhanced by our participation in CCAB's Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program. Since gaining PAR certification, we have hired Aboriginal architects, established an Aboriginal student scholarship at Laurentian University's new School of Architecture and are now working with universities, colleges and other institutions across Canada to encourage Indigenous place-making within the fabric of their campuses. This architecture is highly valuable in promoting and celebrating Indigenous identity in the physical fabric of our communities.

What does belonging look like? If nothing of your culture, history, language or art is visible within the public spaces of your town or city, how can you ever feel welcome there? There is a deep history of Indigenous building practice in communities, buildings and entire landscapes that we can draw on for inspiration. That, in turn, will help us better express who we are as Canadians. ■

Calvin Brook is an architect, planner and co-founder of Brook McIlroy Inc., a PAR certified architectural, urban design and planning firm.



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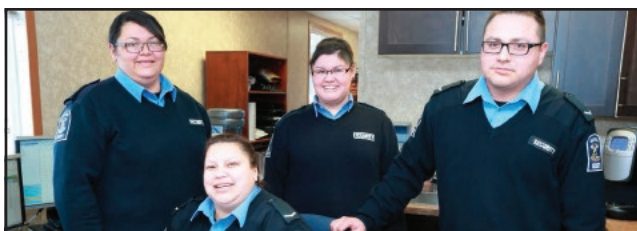
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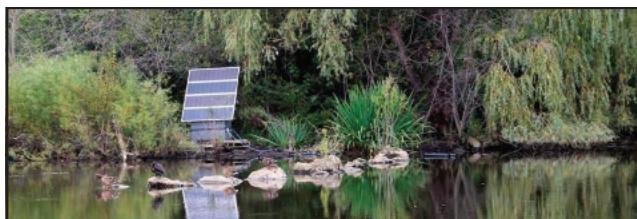


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BY ANDREW BROOKS

A STRONGER SIGNAL

CANADA'S ABORIGINAL MEDIA HAVE COME A LONG WAY IN JUST A FEW DECADES

"It all started in a 5,000-watt radio station in Fresno, California..."

Spoken by egocentric anchorman Ted Baxter on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, that rags-to-riches phrase was played for laughs. But it's actually not a bad shorthand history of Aboriginal media in this country, the California reference aside.

Almost nonexistent a few decades ago, Canada's Aboriginal radio stations, television stations and print media are now thriving, confident and punching above their weight.

The *Eastern Door* newspaper is a good example. Founded in 1992, *Eastern Door* covers the Montreal-area communities of Kahnawake, Akwesasne and Kanewasake – the home turf of editor Steve Bonspiel – as well as Chateauguay. "We have only two full-time reporters, and our circulation is under 2,000. But for the last six years we've made the Quebec Community Newspaper Association's Top Three list, and we've finished second the last two years behind a paper that has 140,000 readers. We're doing something right," Bonspiel says proudly.

That includes taking strong positions in one of the hotspots of Aboriginal activism in Canada. "There are people here with strong opinions and some end up being ticked off at us,"

Bonspiel says. "Such is our community – it's very active, very vocal, and very political. If you point something out that's wrong, you know some people won't like to hear it."

While the Aboriginal media cannot ignore the troubling issues, another task is to counteract the negative impression generated by non-Aboriginal media. "The mainstream media does not cover positive Aboriginal stories," says Rick Littlechild, general manager and executive director of *First Nations Drum* newspaper. "Their coverage usually deals with protests and altercations between native and non-native police. To be able to tell the story with all the details from an Aboriginal perspective, and give readers a complete picture before mainstream media, is pivotal to our newspaper."

The formula has worked well for *First Nations Drum*, which was founded in 1990 in British Columbia and is now national in scope. The paper covers politics, arts and culture, sports, education, personal profiles of leaders, business people, educators, and much more. In addition, it hosts one of the most popular native websites in the country and has over 5,000 Twitter followers.

DIFFERENT PLAYERS

In terms of visibility, the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) is probably the crown jewel of Aboriginal media in Canada. APTN's lineup includes a number of award-winning shows, such as the drama series *Blackstone*,



LEFT: APTN CEO Jean LaRose has helped put Aboriginal shows and actors in the national spotlight

RIGHT: First Nations Drum succeeds in telling the story from an Aboriginal perspective



which was picked up by the CBC and has put Aboriginal actors, like Gemini Award winner Michelle Thrush, firmly in the spotlight.

"There were very few Aboriginal people in the media when APTN was launched, behind the scenes or on screen," says APTN's CEO Jean LaRose. The station now has over 100 Aboriginal producers working the full gamut of content – from news, sports, drama and humour to children's shows, cooking and lifestyle programming, arts, music, live features, and more.

Another measure of success is how often audience members request coverage of topics and issues, or ask to tell their own stories. By that measure, Wawatay Radio is a huge success, says broadcaster Jules Spence. Wawatay broadcasts out of Sioux Lookout and Timmins, Ontario in Cree (Timmins) and Oji-Cree (Sioux Lookout) as well as English. Founded in 1974, the station is considered one of the veterans of Aboriginal media, and Spence himself has been with the station for three decades.

"Enhancing Aboriginal awareness of our own culture is always in the forefront of what we do," Spence says. "We keep the issues on the table." Spence believes that the coverage of Aboriginal issues in Canadian media has increased significantly, though he modestly suggests that with its focus on native language broadcasting, Wawatay may not have as large an influence on non-native media as others.


Another Aboriginal media outlet that has seen big changes is Native Communications Inc. (NCI). NCI is a non-profit radio broadcaster established in 1971 in Thompson, Manitoba to deliver programming across the province. CEO Dave McLeod says that NCI has 59 transmitters from Winnipeg to Churchill, and serves many remote communities that the mainstream media does not reach.


"Indigenous radio plays a key role in giving people a greater voice," says McLeod, a member of the Pine Creek First Nation. "Often in the mainstream you just get sound bites, but with Indigenous media people have an opportunity to tell their story. That goes for good news and bad news. There's a shift now where a lot of young people are leading the way with positive change. The mainstream is slow to recognize that."

HIGHLIGHTING ISSUES

Though they may have been slow to pick up Aboriginal content, mainstream media are increasingly getting on board, says Paul Macedo, director of publishing for Winnipeg-based *Windspeaker* magazine, which was founded in 1983.

"Increasingly in the last 10 years, more and more Indigenous news and issues are being covered by the mainstream," Macedo says. "When we started that was unheard of. No one outside the Indigenous community was covering anything. Though there is now mainstream coverage, we think we provide a perspective that mainstream does not."





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APTN has over 100 Aboriginal producers working the full gamut of content, from news, sports and drama to children's shows and lifestyle programming

The issue of murdered and missing Indigenous women is one example where a different perspective was critical. While it's heartening to see that the new federal government has finally launched an inquiry, Macedo notes that *Windspeaker*, like other Aboriginal outlets, has been calling for the inquiry and providing valuable context for years. "The mainstream (media) doesn't have the time – and inclination, in many cases – to get that context. That's what we bring to the table."

One obvious challenge for Aboriginal media is the ongoing decline in language skills as the cohort of older speakers shrinks and youth turn to social media and other information technology, which are overwhelmingly in English and French.

Language is an issue that hits close to home for Dallas Hicks, director of operations for MBC Network Radio. MBC broadcasts in Cree, Dene, Michif and English throughout Manitoba and to communities in neighbouring Saskatchewan. "It's been a real challenge for us," Hicks says, noting that audience surveys and Statistics Canada figures

on native speakers are not good. "The figure for how many people speak or understand Cree is around 24,000, and obviously that number is declining. We know we won't be able to sustain programming in that language."

MBC also faces the same funding challenges that confront many Aboriginal media organizations. "A lot of our funding from Canadian Heritage is dependent on quantity of language rather than quality," Hicks says, "but that's going to change. We had the opportunity to do a case study with them this summer, and we're hoping they can focus more on the quality."

The history of Aboriginal media in Canada proves that quality wins in the long run, adding weight to the words of Steve Bonspiel of *Eastern Door*. As he explains, "Some other community papers have closed, but in my view that's because they forgot about who they were serving. They lost the local content, or they let the quality of the work slip. When you do that, it doesn't matter what product it is, it'll fail. As long as we keep doing what we're doing, we'll be fine." ■



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A WINNING STREAK

CCAB'S 2016 AWARD WINNERS EXEMPLIFY COMMUNITY SPIRIT AND BUSINESS FLAIR

BY MATTHEW BRADFORD

Every year, CCAB shines a spotlight on two persons worthy of special recognition. One is honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award, while the other receives the National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award. Both awards were founded and are exclusively sponsored by ESS, a member of Compass Group Canada.

The 2016 award winners are Chief Darcy Bear of Whitecap Dakota First Nation, and Jacob Pratt of Wambdi Dance, respectively. Both will be presented with their awards at the 18th Annual CCAB Awards Gala in February.

Below we offer a glimpse into their special achievements and unique contributions to Aboriginal business.

Chief Darcy Bear is recognized with a Lifetime Achievement Award for spearheading growth at Whitecap Dakota First Nation



Lifetime Achievement Award

Chief Darcy Bear
Whitecap Dakota First Nation

Chief Darcy Bear has been a force of change and growth in the Whitecap Dakota First Nation community for over 25 years. Beginning in the early 1990s, he was key in developing financial management plans that cleared the way for a self-governing land code; the creation of key community infrastructure; and partnerships with the Dakota Dunes Casino and Dakota Dunes Golf Links. Altogether, these efforts helped reduce unemployment from 70 per cent down to five per cent.

"The fact that we're finally taking our rightful place in the economy is very important to us as a nation," says

Chief Bear. "It shows the government that if you give First Nation communities the legislative requirements and the infrastructure capacity, we can actually add to Canada's GDP and become contributing citizens."

CCAB's Lifetime Achievement Award honours a First Nations (status or non-status), Inuit or Métis business leader who has made a significant contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of Canada's Aboriginal people.

Chief Bear is humbled to receive the award, but says he owes his success as a leader to the many who have contributed to Whitecap's growth. "When you're building a community, it's not about one individual," he explains. "Certainly, having a vision is important, but you need the support of your community, council, staff and partners."



The success of his Wambdi Dance company helped earn Jacob Pratt the National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award

National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award

Jacob Pratt

Wambdi Dance

Jacob Pratt's passion for Aboriginal culture and youth mentorship inspired the creation of his Wambdi Dance performance company in 2012. This same passion earned him CCAB's 2016 National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award, and its gift of \$10,000 in support of his business.

Headquartered in Saskatchewan, Wambdi provides First Nations music, dance and event services for corporate functions and First Nations communities, as well as training and mentorship for up-and-coming talent. As the company's creative director, Pratt leads a team of experienced and youth musicians in presenting modern and traditional performances for audiences across the country. They also perform at high-profile events, like the 2013 Indspire Awards ceremony.

"The goal and vision of Wambdi is to support young First Nations performers and provide professional services to all of our clients," says Pratt. "Additionally, we want to represent our First Nations culture and tradition in a respectful and proud manner that will demonstrate how we can succeed and all work together."

With plans to expand the company, Pratt will soon be training some performers to manage the company and bring Wambdi Dance to others. "That will allow us to take what we do further and have a larger effect on communities around us and Canada," he says. "Furthermore, we would like to start taking what we do internationally to show the world that our First Nations people are proud and strong."

"It's really an honour to be given something like this," continues Pratt. "I wasn't expecting it and I don't think it has quite set in completely. I don't fully understand how this award will affect me and my career, but I'm very excited to find out." ■



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ABORIGINAL BUSINESS LUNCHEON

On September 10, 2015, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) hosted an Aboriginal Business Luncheon: The evolving faces of Aboriginal Business. This luncheon featured keynote speakers Nicole Bourque-Bouchier, chief executive officer of the Bouchier Group, and David Bouchier, the company's president.

Since the recession of 2008-2009, Aboriginal businesses in the resource sector have felt a significant decline in the number of available contract opportunities. Despite these challenges, the Bouchier Group is a recognized leader among a number of Aboriginal businesses that have been able to create significant wealth and employment growth. Much of the Bouchier Group's success came about as a result of key changes made in the company and from the formation of strategic partnerships with corporate Canada.

This keynote presentation discussed:

- How the Bouchier Group rapidly grew and confronted the challenges it faced;
- Recruiting, hiring and training Aboriginal peoples to enter the evolving resources sector; and
- How the Bouchier Group maintains a sense of community in the company.



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Deborah Baker, Squamish Nation - Member of Chiefs & Council; Elder Audrey Rivers, Squamish Nation; JP Gladu, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

On September 24, 2015, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) hosted the 13th Annual Vancouver Gala, celebrating and recognizing our Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) certified companies. PAR is a certification program that confirms corporate performance in Aboriginal relations at the bronze, silver, gold or committed level.

We also honoured our 2015 recipient of the Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations, Willa Black, vice-president,

Corporate Affairs-Canada, Cisco. The Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations recognizes a Canadian who has contributed, through professional and voluntary commitments, to building bridges between Aboriginal people and Canadian society. **The award was founded and sponsored by Sodexo Canada.**

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The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) hosted a keynote presentation and networking reception in Fort McMurray on November 19, 2015. Ken Coates, Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation at the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan, joined us as keynote speaker.

Aboriginal partnerships are fundamental to the advancement of resource development and a healthy economy that creates equitable prosperity for all Canadians. Over \$650 billion will be invested in Canada over the next decade, so how can the alignment of Aboriginal partnerships take advantage of current geographic, demographic and legal realities?

Keynote Speaker: Ken Coates, Canadian Research Chair in Regional Innovation at the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan



There is an opportunity for Canada to rethink its current relationship model and approach towards Aboriginal communities. If Canada wants to be a strong global competitor, changes to policy regarding access to financing and capital as well as procurement opportunities are needed. Additionally, empowering and advancing Aboriginal organizations remains critical to growth.

This keynote presentation discussed how partnerships:

- Facilitate access to networking, financing and capital;
- Foster relationships between Aboriginal Economic Development Corporations (AEDCs) and corporate Canada;
- Build capacity by increasing procurement opportunities for Aboriginal people; and
- Identify future trends and change in human resources, environmental science and the global economy.

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KEYNOTE PRESENTATION AND NETWORKING RECEPTION

UPCOMING EVENTS

GALAS, LUNCHEONS & HOT TOPIC SERIES

18TH ANNUAL TORONTO GALA

February 2, 2016 | 5:30 pm - 9:00 pm
Ritz Carlton | Toronto, ON

CCAB will be honouring and celebrating the 2016 Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame (ABHF) recipient, Chief Darcy Bear, and the recipient of the National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Jacob Pratt. Both awards were founded and are exclusively sponsored by ESS, a member of Compass Group Canada.

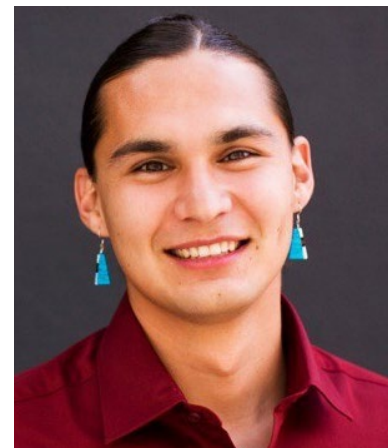


Photo courtesy of Nadya Kwandibens



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TORONTO HOT TOPIC SERIES

Indigenous Education

April 28, 2016

Sheraton Centre | Toronto, ON

Indigenous peoples represent Canada's youngest and fastest growing demographic. With over half the population under the age of 27, this represents an enormous opportunity to spur business growth from coast to coast to coast. Join us in Toronto as we learn about the opportunities and challenges facing Aboriginal youth as they become a new and empowered force in Canadian business in the 21st century.

Our speakers are Roberta Jamieson, president and CEO, Indspire; Wab Kinew, writer, journalist, and Anishinaabemowin advocate; and the Right Honourable Paul Martin.



PAR INFORMATION SESSION

May 11, 2016

The Hyatt Regency | Calgary, AB

The 2016 Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) Program Information Session in Calgary will bring together Canadian companies committed to promoting and developing partnerships and opportunities with Aboriginal businesses and communities.

ANNUAL CALGARY GALA

May 11, 2016

The Hyatt Regency | Calgary, AB

The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) will host our Annual Calgary Gala to honour and celebrate the achievements of the third CCAB Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) Award recipient. The Award was founded and is sponsored by Sodexo.



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EDMONTON HOT TOPIC SERIES

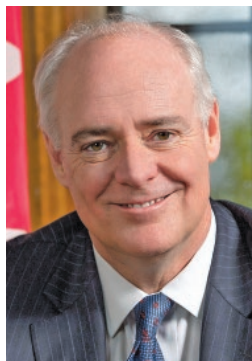
Canada's Global Competitiveness and the role of Aboriginal people and business

September 13, 2016

The Westin Edmonton | Edmonton, AB

As net contributors to Canada's bottom line, Indigenous businesses continue to grow across the country representing one of the few market segments experiencing widespread growth. The Indigenous population is capable of meeting the needs of a skilled and trained workforce, provided that steps are taken to empower such an important resource.

Our keynote speakers are Perrin Beatty, president and CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce; Dr. Herb Belcourt, Métis entrepreneur, philanthropist and activist; and Dr. Marie Delorme, CEO, The Imagination Group.



TO REGISTER FOR UPCOMING EVENTS OR IF INTERESTED IN SPONSORING AN EVENT, PLEASE GO TO CCAB.COM/EVENTS OR CONTACT GLORIA TRUONG, SPECIAL EVENTS, GTRUONG@CCAB.COM



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PAR LUNCHEON

September 22, 2016

Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre | Vancouver, BC

The 2016 Progressive Aboriginal Relations Luncheon in Vancouver will bring together Canadian companies committed to promoting and developing partnerships with Aboriginal communities and investing in Aboriginal businesses.

14TH ANNUAL VANCOUVER GALA
Sept. 22, 2016

Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre | Vancouver, BC

The 14th Annual Vancouver Gala will celebrate and recognize our Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) certified companies and honour the recipient of the Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations.

2ND ANNUAL ABORIGINAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION CONFERENCE
October 19 - 20, 2016

Fairmont Banff Springs | Banff, AB

CCAB will host its second annual Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation Conference (AEDCC). This exciting event recognizes the efforts of AEDCs to grow economies on First Nations, promote prosperity for Aboriginal peoples, and contribute to the Canadian economy. AEDCs are a growing force in Aboriginal commerce, and this event will support networking and knowledge sharing among AEDC executives, community leaders, and corporate Canada.

Lead sponsor: **Sodexo.**



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PEACE PATRON DINNER

With a Special Tribute to

The Hon. Justice Murray Sinclair
2016 Honorary Peace Patron

Wednesday, May 18, 2016, 6:00 PM The Carlu, Toronto

Dinner Host/MC: **Wab Kinew**

Tribute Committee Members:

Perry Bellegarde, National Chief, Assembly of First Nations
Dr. Cindy Blackstock
Dr. Michael Dan, OO
Larry Phillip Fontaine, OC OM
JP Gladu, President & CEO Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB)
The Hon. Frank Iacobucci, CC
Elder Fred Kelly
Roberta Jamieson, CM
Professor Kathleen Mahoney, QC FRSC
The Rt. Hon. Paul Martin, PC CC
The Hon. David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (ON)



For Information:

The Mosaic Institute
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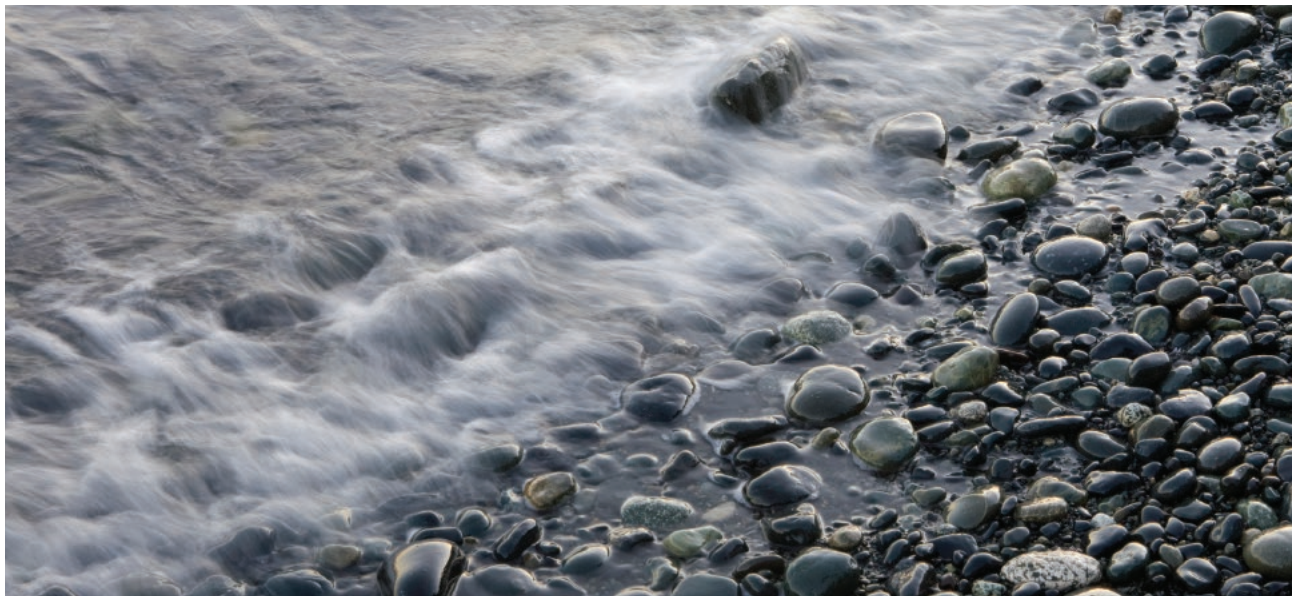
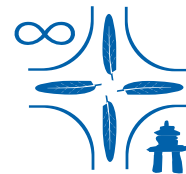
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