




cando



CONNECT



MAY/JUN 2023 | Vol. 10 No. 1

magazine

Moving Indigenous Economies Forward



**National
Youth Panel**



**2023
Pre-Conference
Issue**



**Economic Developer
of the Year Awards**



**CIBC - NIEEF
Scholarship
Recipients**



**BAY
travel**





tansi/taanishi/taa haanach'e/do'h nih dih

Hello/Bonjour!



What Does CEDI Do?

CEDI supports First Nation-Municipal partnerships across Canada to build sustainable relationships and to engage in joint long-term land use and community economic development planning and initiatives.

8

Current
Partnerships

15

Graduated
Partnerships

36

First Nation
Partners

31

Municipal
Partners

Since 2013, CEDI has helped First Nations and municipalities develop partnerships that establish and support mutually beneficial community economic development. Over this time, CEDI has worked with fifteen formal partnerships, including twenty-four First Nations and twenty-two municipalities and economic development organizations.

These partnerships have successfully co-created respectful and sustainable government-to-government partnerships and joint-led community economic development initiatives and plans.

- ✓ **Engaging First Nations and neighbouring municipalities**
- ✓ **Community economic development initiatives and land use**
- ✓ **Develop capacity to implement long-term joint planning**
- ✓ **Building respectful and sustainable partnerships**

**Check out the all new cedi website:
www.cedipartnerships.ca**

The First Nations-Municipal Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI) is jointly delivered by the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

**cando**
Inspiring Success

FCM FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES / FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE DES MUNICIPALITÉS

CEDI is funded by the government of Canada through Indigenous Services Canada.



2023 Women in Business Panel 2023 National Youth Panel

2023 CIBC – NIEEF Scholarship Recipients - Profiles on pages 6–13.

Cover image:

The 2023 Cando Conference will feature six amazing youth in the National Youth Panel and six outstanding economic developer award nominees working to impact Indigenous communities!

Photo Illustration: Paul Macedo

Cando Connect Magazine is produced by Cando under the direction of Paul Macedo, Communications Officer.

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CANDO 6TH ANNUAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT YOUTH SUMMIT AUG 14-17, 2023 GREY EAGLE RESORT ON TSUUT'INA NATION

Who is Eligible?

Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) &
Non-Indigenous Youth Aged 18-30 from across Canada

Only 50 Delegates Selected

Delegates Receive Free Registration,
Travel, Accommodation, and Meals

Delegates will be placed into groups at the start of the summit and will compete throughout to earn prizes. They will also have an opportunity to participate in a cultural showcase



MC
Michelle Nieviadomy



**2022 EDYS Group
Presentation Winners**



Keynote Speaker
Kendal Netmaker

Event Features

- Cultural Showcase
- Workshops
- Mentorship/Networking
- Economic Development
- Land Management/Land Use
- Entrepreneurship

For more information, please contact Elsie Moar: elsie.moar@edo.ca or (780)990-0303 ext. 233
www.edo.ca/youth/economic-development-youth-summit-2023

See you in Membertou!

Cando welcomes everyone interested in Indigenous economic development to attend the **29th Annual Cando National Conference** that will be hosted at the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre in Membertou, Nova Scotia from **June 26 – 29, 2023**. Cando was last in Membertou in 2012 and so much has evolved and progressed for the community in the last 11 years.

For updated 2023 Conference information, including registrations, please visit: www.edo.ca/conference/2023

Cando has also confirmed that the 6th Annual cando Economic Development Youth Summit will be held at Grey Eagle Resort on TsuuT'ina First Nation near Calgary. The event will run August 13– 18, 2023.

For updated 2023 Youth Summit information, please visit: www.edo.ca/youth/2023

The **9th Annual BC Links to Learning Symposium** was delivered in-person at the Westin Bayshore Hotel in Vancouver from **January 31 to February 2, 2023** and was a tremendous success. More than 275 EDOs and Lands Managers from BC First Nation communities were supported to attend.

Cando also delivered the **Alberta Links to Learning Symposium** as an in-person event at River Cree Resort in Enoch, Alberta from **March 27 – 29**. More than 48 Indigenous economic developers attended representing Alberta First Nation communities. The three days included accredited training, learning, sharing and networking.

Cando's **Wednesday Webinar Series** has been confirmed through the fall and winter 2023. Cando will continue to deliver skills development opportunities for its members via this weekly series until at least **December 31, 2023**.

Please visit the www.edo.ca/links-to-learning for a full schedule of upcoming webinars.

Cando is pleased to announce the recipients of the **2023 CIBC NIEEF Scholarships**. In this issue you will find the profiles and learning journeys of the eight (8) scholarship recipients.

Profiles of the CIBC NIEEF scholarship recipients begins are pages **06–13**.

Looking forward to seeing you at Membertou!

Message of scholarship win was perfect timing for Cree student



Amy Swan, a member of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation located in northern Saskatchewan is attending Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

A message in late February could not have come at a better time for Amy Swan.

Swan, a member of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation located in northern Saskatchewan, received an email that she would receive \$5,000 for being one of this year's recipients of the Indigenous Scholarship Program.

Just how important was that notification informing Swan that she was a scholarship winner?

"It meant everything to me," said Swan, who was expected to graduate in April with a diploma from her business management program from Saskatchewan Polytechnic. "I was literally down to my last \$8 when I got the email."

So yes, pretty much perfect timing to be told some much needed cash was heading her way.

Swan was one of eight recipients this year of the Indigenous Scholarship Program, which is annually delivered by Indspire.

The program is a partnership between CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF), which is Cando's charitable organization, which provides scholarships, training and research funding to students involved in Indigenous community economic development.

Swan was one of four recipients who were awarded \$5,000 each. A pair of \$2,000 recipients were also recognized.

Swan, who is 37 and has a 12-year-old son, said she utilized parts of her scholarship money to help pay off some of her bills, including car payments, car insurance and her cell phone.

Swan's final day in her business management program was scheduled for Apr. 20. She was feverishly pursuing opportunities in the weeks beforehand.

"I hope to find full-time employment right away," she said in a phone interview in late March. "I'm actively searching for jobs right now."

Swan had experience in both mining and construction industries before deciding that she could potentially better herself with a return to the education system.

Back in 2009 she had completed a one-year radiation monitoring and environmental technician certificate program from Northland College in Saskatchewan.

She did work in the mining sector for several years afterwards. And then she held down various construction jobs for a number of years.

But she was looking for something better.

"I came back (to school) so I could take the management program so I could be a manager," Swan said.

She has a vision of the type of company she would like to work for.

"I would like to get in with a company that is majority Indigenous owned," she said.

Swan added she is not simply hoping to further her own career. She said another reason she decided to pursue additional education was because she would also like to be viewed as a role model, especially for young Indigenous females.

"I'm doing it because I want all the little girls from First Nation communities to see me and say if she can do it I can do it too," Swan added.

2023 CIBC NIEEF SCHOLARSHIP

Goodwill on verge of obtaining business administration degree

The end is near.

After almost a decade of when she started her post-secondary studies, Jocelyn Goodwill is inching up to the finish line.

When the current school year ends, Goodwill, a member of Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation in Saskatchewan, will still be three credits shy from earning her business administration degree from the University of Regina.

Goodwill does plan to take those remaining courses. But she explained she is unable to take all three in the same semester and will thus have to wait until April of 2024 to graduate.

"It's been a super long process," said Goodwill, who began studying at the Regina university in 2014, taking some general arts courses with a focus on Indigenous studies.

After a couple of years of doing that, Goodwill moved to British Columbia, where she enrolled at Langara College, located in Vancouver, and continued to take some Indigenous studies classes.

Upon getting pregnant and giving birth to her daughter, who is now seven, Goodwill returned to Saskatchewan.

Shortly after that she once again became a student at the University of Regina. She started off by earning a certificate for completing the school's one-year business administration program.

Following another year of studies, she received her business administration diploma.

And since then she's been chipping away at the requirements needed to obtain her business administration degree.

Goodwill, who is 33, received some great recent news when she was informed that she is one of eight recipients for the 2023 Indigenous Scholarship Program.

The national program is delivered by Indspire. And it is a partnership between the CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF).

NIEEF is Cando's charitable organization, which provides scholarships, training and research funding to Indigenous students.

Goodwill was one of four individuals who received \$5,000 in funding each. Two other students received the maximum of \$10,000 each. And there were two \$2,000 recipients.

Goodwill, who is pregnant again and expecting her second child in June, said news of her scholarship funding came at an ideal time as money was tight for her, as it is for countless other post-secondary students.

"It means so much," she said. "I wasn't sure what I was going to do. It means the world to me and allows me to be stress free."

Goodwill added she has been unable to work lately because of her current pregnancy. So, she's hoping to stretch her scholarship funding as far as possible.

"I'm kind of sitting on it and just paying for some basic needs," she said.

As for her future, Goodwill is hoping to enter the workforce after earning her university degree.

"I don't have a specific job in mind," she said. "I just want to give back to them. They've supported me so much throughout my journey."



Jocelyn Goodwill, a member of Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation in Saskatchewan, is earning her business administration degree from the University of Regina.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

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Former hairstylist now aspiring for business career wins scholarship



Justice Heidsma is a member of Witset First Nation in British Columbia, and had worked for six years as a hairdresser upon graduating from her Vancouver high school.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Justice Heidsma has received some reassurance that giving up her previous career to return to school was a step in the right direction for her.

Heidsma, a member of Witset First Nation in British Columbia, had worked for six years as a hairdresser upon graduating from her Vancouver high school.

But Heidsma realized that her first career was not something she wanted to work at forever.

“With hairstyling you’re like standing on your feet for 10 hours a day,” she said. “It was ruining my body and I figured I wanted to do something else.”

That something else was return to school. So that’s exactly what Heidsma did in 2018 when she enrolled in Vancouver’s Langara College.

The pandemic put Heidsma’s education on hold for a bit. Thus, she is still in the college’s two-year associate of arts business and commerce program.

Heidsma, who is 28, has already made a commitment to continue on for two more years of studies at the school in order to obtain a degree.

Heidsma got a huge confidence boost recently as it was announced she is one of eight recipients this year of the Indigenous Scholarship Program.

The national program, delivered by Indspire, offered a total of \$44,000 in funding. Heidsma was one of two \$2,000 recipients.

“The scholarship means more than money to me,” Heidsma said. “It helps me to put all of my energy and focus on my studies.”

Plus, it was a bonus that she was able to cover some of her living expenses via the scholarship.

“It does help out a lot,” she said. “I was able to pay some of my bills with it.”

The Indigenous Scholarship Program is a partnership between the CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF). NIEEF is Cando’s charitable organization, which provides scholarships, training and research funding to Indigenous students.

Heidsma would have preferred to be further along in her post-secondary studies right now. But the pandemic hindered that.

“Online courses were not working out for me,” she said. “I took online classes for two semesters but it wasn’t for me.”

Even prior the pandemic Heidsma had to take a break from her schooling as she was involved in a car accident which left her with a bad concussion and the inability to concentrate on her classes.

Heidsma also took some time off from her schooling because of her dislike of online learning. She returned to in-person classes at Langara in September of 2022. She much prefers being in an actual classroom as opposed to remote learning.

“It’s just different being able to communicate with your teachers and peers,” she said. “I can’t focus as well online.”

Heidsma felt online classes were even more difficult because some of her teachers for business courses still insisted on having group projects completed. That group work often included four to five individuals.

Heidsma added that was often a chore in itself trying to remotely accommodate schedules with others during the pandemic.

2023 CIBC NIEEF SCHOLARSHIP

University degree within reach for mature student

Mercedes Moosewaypayo continues to work towards her university degree.

If all goes as planned, Moosewaypayo, a 29-year-old member from Kinistin Saulteaux Nation in Saskatchewan, will graduate from Calgary's Mount Royal University with a business administration degree in the spring of 2024.

Moosewaypayo is surprising even herself with just how close she is to becoming a university graduate. That's because she never went to high school, originally leaving the education system after her Grade 9 studies.

Moosewaypayo said it would be a tremendous accomplishment to earn a post-secondary degree.

"I think it would be really powerful and inspiring for my kids," she said.

Moosewaypayo, a single mother, has two sons, aged 10 and six.

"It's hard but I manage," she said of her juggling of her family and educational commitments. "It takes a lot of discipline and patience."

Moosewaypayo also finds the time to hold down a part-time job, working as an administrative assistant at her university's Indigenous resource centre.

Moosewaypayo also recently discovered that she would receive a bit of a financial boost towards her educational career.

That's because it was announced that she is one of the eight Indigenous Scholarship Program recipients this year.

The program, delivered by Indspire, is a partnership between the CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF), Cando's charitable organization which provides

scholarships, training and research funding to students involved in Indigenous community economic development.

"I think it's important, especially for a single mom, to help cover the costs of daycare and the cost of living," said of the scholarship funding she received.

Moosewaypayo said this marked the third time in her university career that she has received a scholarship worth \$5,000. And no doubt every little bit of financial assistance helps and is appreciated.

"I'm able to be with my kids more and focus on my studies," Moosewaypayo added.

Since she didn't attend high school, Moosewaypayo had to upgrade her education before she could be considered as a mature student university applicant.

For starters, she took a six-month Indigenous life skills program. She then enrolled in a Mount Royal University program, which has since been renamed and is now called the Indigenous University Bridging Program.

Moosewaypayo focused on Math and English courses required in order to apply for a university program.

As it turned out, she applied to Mount Royal's business administration and sociology programs. She was accepted into both and opted to enroll in business administration classes, starting in 2018.

"I don't think there's enough Indigenous people in business and I want to create opportunities for other Indigenous people, especially males," she said.

Like countless other students, Moosewaypayo encountered her share



Mercedes Moosewaypayo is a member of Kinistin Saulteaux Nation in Saskatchewan, and will soon graduate from Calgary's Mount Royal University.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

of challenges during the pandemic when she was forced to take her classes online.

"Online learning was hard for me," she said adding she was unable to successfully complete some of her remote courses. "I prefer being in-person for classes as you have more dialogue and you're able to ask more questions."

One question that Moosewaypayo, however, is unable to answer at this point is what she hopes to do after earning her degree.

"I'm not even sure yet," she said. "I'm just going with whatever opportunities come up."

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Cyr overcomes barriers to excel in university studies



Robert Cyr a member of Pasqua First Nation in Saskatchewan, is thriving as a first-year student at First Nation University of Canada.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Robert Cyr is certainly overcoming some obstacles.

Though he is dyslexic, Cyr, a 45-year-old member of Pasqua First Nation in Saskatchewan, is thriving as a first-year student at First Nation University of Canada, located in Regina.

He is maintaining an average of more than 80 per cent, with academic accommodations for dyslexia in his studies. Cyr is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree, with a major in Indigenous studies.

“My first year has gone great and I have realized things about myself as a student I never thought possible especially finding success in my academic writings,” Cyr said. “Because, as a student with dyslexia, reading, writing, and taking notes can be a barrier. However, I persevered by giving my professors my undivided attention during lectures, asking the appropriate questions and not being afraid to ask for help when needed.”

Cyr has also received a significant financial boost for his studies. He is one of eight recipients this year of the Indigenous Scholarship Program, delivered by Indspire.

The program is a partnership between the CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF), Cando’s charitable organization, which provides scholarships, training and research funding to students.

Cyr was one of two recipients that received the maximum of \$10,000 in funding each.

“It meant a lot to me winning this scholarship,” he said. “It was unexpected and a pleasant surprise. It relieved a lot of financial stress that had been interfering with my studies. The scholarship gave me

peace of mind, knowing that I no longer had to worry about living cheque to living cheque and that I was able to put some money away for living expenses, school expenses, and any unforeseen circumstances.”

Cyr believes his scholarship application was singled out because of his dedication to education.

“I believe my application stood out because of my work ethic as a student,” he said. “I started university with great appreciation and respect for academia. I knew I had to represent myself, my reserve, and other students who are attending school with academic accommodations. I believe, inspire and myself share similar philosophies and belief systems towards academia and community.”

Besides discovering he can handle a post-secondary school workload, Cyr also found out something else about himself after taking a 3D art course during his first term.

Before enrolling at First Nations University of Canada, Cyr had completed his high school equivalency tests in 2019 through the Regina campus of Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

Prior to that he had attended a residential school in Lebret, Sask., from 1990-93, where he finished off with a Grade 9 education.

“My first long-term goal is to start a teepee and industrial sewing company and I am dedicated to making this happen,” he said. “Teepees are traditional and multi-purpose structures that are used for a variety of activities, including camping and special gatherings and have been used as permanent housing.”

2023 CIBC NIEEF SCHOLARSHIP

Lounsbury returns to university two decades after first starting studies

Terrance Lounsbury is taking care of some unfinished business.

Lounsbury, a member of Bunibonibee Cree Nation (formerly Oxford House First Nation) in Manitoba, began his university studies 20 years ago.

After just one semester of taking some business courses, however, at the University College of the North, Lounsbury returned to his First Nation.

“We had a family business and my dad asked me to help run the business for a while,” Lounsbury said.

With his father’s health in decline, Lounsbury ended up handling a bulk of the work at the general store in his First Nation, a fly-in only community, for 15 years before selling the business.

In recent years Lounsbury worked at a couple of different jobs for the Manitoba city of Thompson. He was a senior finance clerk for a few years. And then he was a by-law officer for a couple more years.

Lounsbury, who is now married and a father of three, has decided to return to school. He’s once again a first-year business management student at the University College of the North.

“It was a perfect time to go back,” he said.

Though he had returned to his First Nation a couple of decades earlier to help with the family business, Lounsbury said he did regret leaving his post-secondary schooling behind.

“It kind of hit me a couple of years later,” he said. “I really wish I had my degree.”

Better late than never, however, is the approach he’s taking now. Plus, he gets to be a student at the same time as his two youngest children, aged 11 and 15.

“It’s been interesting,” said Lounsbury, who also has a 22-year-old son. “We all get up for school together.”

Lounsbury added his children are ribbing him a bit about his educational pursuits.

“They’ve been bugging me because I’ve been getting some pretty high marks lately,” he said.

Besides getting some good grades, Lounsbury can also take pride in the fact he is one of eight recipients this year of the Indigenous Scholarship Program.

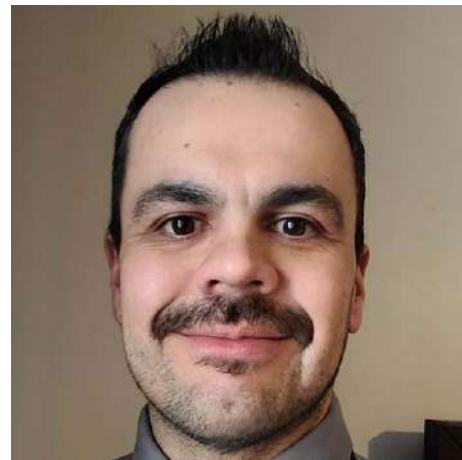
A total of \$44,000 in funding was available through the program this year. Lounsbury was one of two individuals who received \$10,000 each.

“It meant absolutely everything to me,” Lounsbury said of his scholarship. “With the inflation going on in the world today, bills were stacking up. It definitely came in handy and I didn’t have to worry about bills. It brought a tear to my eye.”

Lounsbury added a portion of the funding he received will help cover some of the expenses his wife and himself will incur this summer. They will travel to Nova Scotia in July to watch their two youngest children represent Manitoba in track and field events at the North American Indigenous Games.

As for the Indigenous Scholarship Program, delivered by Indspire, it is a partnership between the CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF).

NIEEF is Cando’s charitable organization which provides scholarships, training and research funding to students involved in Indigenous community economic development.



Terrance Lounsbury is a member of Bunibonibee Cree Nation in Manitoba, and attends the University College of the North.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

2023 CIBC NIEEF SCHOLARSHIP

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Mature student wins scholarship during up-and-down year of return to school



Pamela Bohpa is a member of Dakota Plains First Nation in Manitoba and in her first year of studies at Red River College Polytech.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Pamela Bohpa has certainly had her share of challenges in her first year back into the education system.

But there has also been one pleasant surprise as well.

Bohpa, a 42-year-old member of Dakota Plains First Nation in Manitoba, is in her first year of studies at Red River College Polytech.

Bohpa, who is also a mother of six, is working towards a two-year business administration diploma from the college.

Bohpa explained that her decision to return to the classroom popped into her mind when her family's dynamics started to change.

"I wanted my husband to be home more," Bohpa said. "He's a long-haul driver and I got sick of being home alone a fair bit."

When Bohpa's husband lost his job last April, a plan was formed for her to return to school while he stayed home to help raise their children.

Besides having to rush to apply for college last year, Bohpa had another priority last summer – planning her wedding, which was held in July of 2022.

A few short months later, Bohpa found herself in the classroom taking her college courses. Her first year of studies were interrupted fairly early on when COVID hit various family members including herself.

A nasty stomach bug also forced her to miss classes in her first year. Bohpa has also had to deal with some challenging math and accounting courses.

On the plus side, however, Bohpa recently found out that she would be receiving a \$5,000 scholarship.

She discovered that she is one of eight winners across Canada this year for the Indigenous Scholarship Program.

The national program is delivered by Indspire. And it is also a partnership between the CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF).

NIEEF is Cando's charitable organization, which provides scholarships, training and research funding to students involved in Indigenous community economic development.

Bohpa was obviously thrilled she received word that she was a scholarship winner, especially since she's had her share of obstacles in her academic year.

"It has been really hard," she said. "My favourite part was recently being involved in the project management parts."

Bohpa admits segments of her course she is not overly fond of. "Not so much the math parts," she said of course segments she does not like.

Though she still has another year to complete before obtaining her diploma, Bohpa said she is hoping to find work rather quickly upon graduating.

"My reserve wants me to work for them," she said, adding officials from a school in her First Nation have also expressed an interest in adding her to the staff once she has completed her college studies.

O'Laney now pursuing economics degree after transferring universities

His post-secondary career has taken various twists and turns.

But Vincent O'Laney, a 28-year-old member of Sagkeeng First Nation in Manitoba, is forging ahead with plans to graduate with his university degree by April of 2024.

O'Laney had begun his post-secondary schooling in 2018 at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg.

After a year and a half at the school, taking business administration classes, he moved to Brandon in part to be closer to his partner.

A lot has changed in his life since then. O'Laney is now a father of two - son Cameron is four and daughter Callie turns two in April.

And he's now a third-year economics student at Brandon University.

O'Laney said he much prefers Brandon University since it is a smaller school. Instead of having about 120 students like he had at some of his University of Manitoba classes, he is one of six students in an economics course. And there are about 20 students in each of his other classes.

"You can hear better and if you have a question, you don't feel bad stopping the instructor," O'Laney said of his current classes.

O'Laney is also thrilled he is one of eight recipients this year of the Indigenous Scholarship Program, delivered by Indspire.

The program, which offered \$44,000 in funding this year, is a partnership between the CIBC and the National Indigenous Economic Education Foundation (NIEEF), Cando's charitable organization, which provides

scholarships, training and research funding to students involved in Indigenous community economic development.

"I used it to pay most of my credit card off," he said. "And I took my family out. We went to a hotel with a swimming pool."

O'Laney added receiving any type of scholarship involving cash is welcome.

"Everybody is struggling financially these days," he said. "It makes you feel good and that you're doing something right."

Besides his national scholarship, O'Laney is also receiving a bit of other financial support.

"Our First Nation pays for us to go to school," he said, adding Sagkeeng provides him with \$1,000 every two weeks to help cover some of his expenses.

O'Laney is not quite sure how he will put his economics degree to good use upon graduation.

"I have a friend who is working for the Treaty One Development Corporation who is helping to build urban reserves in Winnipeg," he said. "I'm hoping to do something along those lines, maybe even in my community."

Though he is hoping to work for a bit after finishing off his current degree, O'Laney believes there's a good chance he will return to school one day.

"I also have a dream of being a teacher," he said, adding he just might follow in the footsteps of his mother, who has been a social studies teacher for about three decades at a school in his First Nation.



Vincent O'Laney, a 28-year-old member of Sagkeeng First Nation in Manitoba, is forging ahead with plans to graduate with his university degree by April of 2024.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

building brighter futures

Bursaries, Scholarships, and Awards



CIBC NIEEF Scholarships

This award will be distributed annually to a first-year Indigenous student who is studying in a four-year degree program studying in the fields of: Business Administration/Economics, Business Finance, Business Management, Natural Resources or Community Economic Development.

CIBC NIEEF Scholarships

This award will be distributed annually to Indigenous students who are studying in a two-year diploma program studying in the fields of: Business Administration/Economics, Business Finance, Business Management, Natural Resources or CED.

CIBC NIEEF Scholarships

This award will be distributed annually to an Indigenous student who is studying in any year of a two-year diploma or four-year degree program studying in the fields of: Business Administration/Economics, Business Finance, Business Management, Natural Resources or CED. This student will receive the CANDO funds and the matched funds and the successful candidate will only be eligible for this specific award once.



Program of Study: Business Administration/Economics, Business Finance, Business Management, Natural Resources or Community Economic Development
Level of Study: Entering first year of a four-year degree program

Two Awards: \$10,000 per year for up to 4 years per student

Program of Study: Business Administration/Economics, Business Finance, Business Management, Natural Resources or CED

Level of Study: Two-year or four-year program.

Four Awards: \$5,000 per year for up to 2 years per student

Program of Study: Business Administration/Economics, Business Finance, Business Management, Natural Resources or CED

Level of Study: Any year of a two-year or four-year program.

One Award: \$4,000 for one year

Application Deadlines: February 1
August 1
November 1

**NEXT:
NOVEMBER 1**

indspirefunding.ca/cando



RELEVANT CERTIFIED

PROFESSIONAL AFFORDABLE
INDIGENOUS
INNOVATIVE ACCESSIBLE
TECHNICIAN FLEXIBLE

Who are certified Indigenous Economic Development Officers?

Cando's Certified Indigenous EDOs are key agents of change in their communities, they are working professionals who are committed to demonstrating best practices in Indigenous economic development that result in wealth creation, employment and other beneficial opportunities for their communities.

How do I start?

At Cando, we recognize and value education in its forms, the best way to begin is to contact a Certification Coordinator.

If you are living in or west of Manitoba, please contact Geraldine Potts – geraldine.potts@edo.ca

If you are living in or east of Ontario, please contact Anita Boyle – anita.boyle@edo.ca

What is the cost?

It depends on an applicant's education background, however there is no cost to apply, and Cando will not charge any fees until your application is approved for certification.

What if I don't have any prior education?

We recommend you apply to one of our accredited programs, provided by institutions across the country, where you could graduate with a TAED certification and a university/college degree/diploma.

If you're unsure how to apply to an accredited program, a Certification Coordinator can help you with that process as well.

More information: www.edo.ca/certification

Procurement Mentorship for EDOs

Exciting news: Procurement Assistance Canada (PAC), in partnership with Cando, is renewing their mentoring / coaching program that will provide EDOs, Entrepreneurs, and Indigenous business owners/managers with a road map and tools while they support companies that want to bid on government opportunities. **All participants are encouraged to be or become Cando members.**

The Mentorship Program will **start April 25th. There will be two sessions per week on a bi-weekly basis with the final session on June 15th.**

There will be one combined cohort:

**Pacific Region (British Columbia and Yukon) +
Western Region (NWT, Nunavut, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba)
Mornings on Tuesdays and Thursdays
at 10:00am PT / 11:00am MT**

**Cohorts for other Regions:
Ontario, Québec, National Capital Region, and Atlantic
will be scheduled this fall and winter**

The goal of the Mentorship Program is to empower Indigenous EDOs, communities and businesses, with the knowledge and the tools necessary to bid on federal government opportunities.

The framework of the mentorship/coaching program is designed to maximize the benefits for EDO's and Indigenous communities through ongoing support from PAC and Cando.

Presenter bios:

Tim Low, Cando



Tim is of Métis ancestry and is a semi-retired federal public service executive. He has served on the boards of two very successful Aboriginal Capital Corporations at the Chairperson and Executive Committee levels. Tim is also a former Associate faculty member of the Canadian School of Public Service where he facilitated courses in the Indigenous Learning series.

Tim joined Procurement Assistance Canada (PAC) as a part-time Policy Advisor in January 2021. His role is to assist with the Indigenous Engagement Strategy which is designed to facilitate Indigenous businesses gain greater access and success with Government of Canada procurement opportunities.

Tim holds a Bachelor of Administration degree from the University of Regina and a Professional Aboriginal Economic Developer designation from the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO).

www.edo.ca/edo-tools/procurement-mentorship

CANDO 29TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE & AGM June 26–29, 2023 | Membertou First Nation, Nova Scotia



June 26–29, 2023

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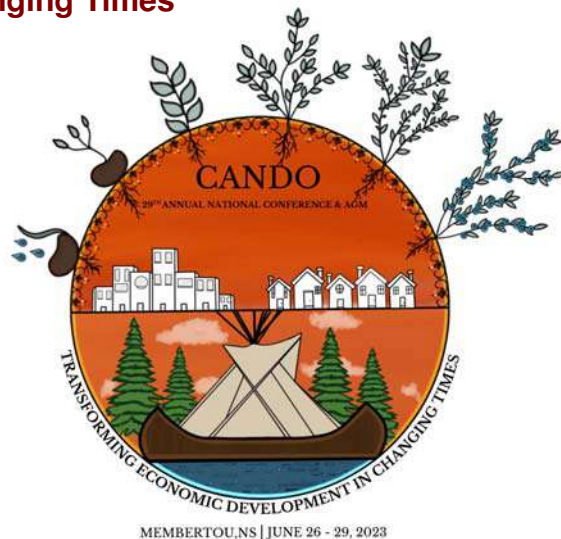
29TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

A National Platform Exclusively Focused on Excellence in Indigenous Economic Development

Cando is pleased to announce its 29th Annual National Conference to be held June 26-29, 2023 at the Membertou Trade and Covention Centre, Membertou, N.S. Theme: Transforming Economic Development in Changing Times

This year's conference will be co-hosted by Membertou First Nation.

The Cando national conference is the only platform that focuses exclusively on topics and trends related to the advancement of Indigenous Economic Development in Canada. It is an important venue for economic developers and related stakeholders to come together, create new business contacts, share best practices, address obstacles and reveal existing trends in our dynamic economy. Topics and training opportunities, conference attendees will not only see the region's innovative energy, but leave with fresh strategies and tools to take their organizations and communities to the next level.



What Can I Expect from the Cando Conference?

- Pre-Conference Professional Development Workshop
- Cando Accredited Training
- Conference Icebreaker Reception
- Community Cultural Event
- Economic Developer of the Year Awards
- National Youth Panel
- Women in Business Panel
- Interactive workshops, keynote presentations & informative plenary sessions
- Trade Show & Artisan Show & Sale
- President's Reception, Dinner & Dance

Who attends the Cando Conference?

The Cando conference attracts hundreds of delegates from across the country from a broad cross section of the corporate sector, government institutions, Indigenous communities & development corporations, academics and young people interested in pursuing a career in the field of Indigenous Economic Development.

Specifically:

- Economic Development
- Program Managers, Band Administrators & Finance
- Indigenous business owners and consultants working with Indigenous communities
- Elected leaders and senior executives
- Academic leaders and students presenting and pursuing the latest research
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The conference is a hotbed of interesting seminars and workshops - attending some great presentations during the conference will allow you to learn about all of the new things that are developing in other regions of the country while expanding your current knowledge within a specific area of expertise.

Catch Up With Trends!

Attending the Cando conference is a great way to stay on the cutting edge. Learn about the most recent trends in Indigenous Economic Development and bring the leading best practices back home for the benefit of your community or organization.

Expand Your Resources!

The conference is full of people promoting new ideas, vendors selling new products and consultants teaching new methodologies. Take advantage of this opportunity to fill your toolbox with new techniques for greater success.

Get Inspired!

The Cando conference offers Canada's most most inspirational showcase of Indigenous youth role models, and economic developers. With so many successful members of your industry present, chances are good that you could bump into your next mentor or role model at the Cando conference.

Don't miss this excellent opportunity to learn more about Indigenous community economic development & speak with the people directly involved in improving the economic viability of Canada's Indigenous communities!

To learn more about the upcoming conference or to register, please visit our web site at:

www.edo.ca/conference/2023

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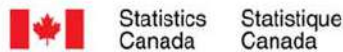


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Métis woman launches nut-free bakery/restaurant after developing nut allergies



Jenna White of Fredericton, New Brunswick launched Jenna's Nut-free Dessertery in 2019.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Jenna White is fulfilling a childhood dream.

"When I was a kid I always wanted to own a bakery or a restaurant," said White, who is a Métis Nation of Ontario member.

Mission accomplished. That's even though it took White a bit of time to accomplish her goal.

White, a 39-year-old who now lives in the New Brunswick capital of Fredericton, launched her business called Jenna's Nut-free Dessertery in 2019.

Her business started off on a rather small scale. She started off selling goodies including nut-free muffins, cookies and cupcakes at a farmers' market, held each Saturday in Fredericton.

"That's not what I wanted to be doing though," White said.

Her business expanded once she was able to purchase a refrigerated display case. That's when she was able to make some fancier desserts, including eclairs and cheesecakes.

"Things started going well then," White said. "I was the only nut-free bakery in the province at the time."

Once the pandemic hit, however, in early 2020, White was not able to continue operating her business.

"It made me stop everything, like it did for a lot of people," White said.

White, however, decided to make the most of her down time and she enrolled in various online business courses that she felt would help her in the future.

Then, in June of 2021 she opened a business, serving various breakfast and lunch options.

White had a personal reason for launching a nut-free bakery/restaurant. She developed a severe allergy to nuts while she was in her 30s.

Since her options to visit bakeries and restaurants she had previously enjoyed were now limited, White took matters into her own hands. White also knew countless others would enjoy nut-free products and a place where they could go to enjoy those items.

While she had longed for her own bakery or restaurant since she was a child, White said she was not able to pursue her goal when she herself became a parent.

She has three children now, aged 12, 13 and 14.

"When I was bringing up the kids, I was mostly bringing up the kids to be perfectly honest," she said, adding she would not have had the time to pursue another career as well at the time.

But now that her children are older, White can devote time to her business.

Actually, make that businesses since White is also the founder of A Taste of the Atlantic.

This event was a two-day pilot project last November in Fredericton and consisted of a celebration of Indigenous food and culture.

A Taste of the Atlantic is expanding this year and will be staged over a pair of weekends in August, once again in Fredericton.

And to think her initiatives all got their start because she had a booth at a weekly farmers' market a few years ago.

Continued on page 50.

2023 WOMEN IN BUSINESS PANEL

Cameron's entrepreneurial spirit started by making cookies at age 12

The fact Michelle Cameron has a pair of thriving businesses shouldn't come as much of a surprise.

That's because Cameron, a member of Peguis First Nation in Manitoba who is now 46, had an entrepreneurial spirit even before she was a teenager.

Cameron was 12 years old when she launched her first business. Each day she would make several dozen cookies and send them with her mother, who worked as a payroll administrator, to sell at her place of employment.

That venture lasted about a year.

"It kind of started my journey of entrepreneurship," said Cameron, whose previous money-making initiatives also included launching a homemade pizza and wing business.

For the past dozen years, however, Cameron has served as the CEO of Dreamcatcher Promotions, which has become the largest Indigenous-owned promotional company in Canada.

Cameron's business offers promotional items including apparel, bags and office items.

Before rebranding as Dreamcatcher Promotions in 2013, Cameron's company was called Dreamcatcher Embroidery.

She started her home business after buying an embroidery machine on Kijiji.

"I self-taught myself embroidery," she said. "I watched YouTube videos. And I practiced making things for 2-3 months."

In the early days of her business, Cameron continued to work as a daycare co-ordinator. She was often working 18 hours per day.

She eventually quit her daycare position.

"I didn't want to give up on my dream," she said. "But I had to make sure I had enough clients to give up my full-time job."

Then in June of 2021, Cameron launched a second company, Indigenous Nations Apparel Co. (INAC), which sells Indigenous apparel and gifts. Besides having an e-commerce site, INAC opened up a retail store at Winnipeg's Polo Park, Manitoba's largest mall.

Cameron will provide details of her success stories at this year's Cando Conference, scheduled for June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

She is one of four individuals that will be speaking at the conference's Women in Business panel. The panel, held annually at the conference, recognizes and highlights the major impacts Indigenous women entrepreneurs have on the Canadian economy.

Besides being chosen to be a part of Cando's Women in Business panel, Cameron has been singled out for a pair of prestigious accolades this year.

For starters, she received the Indigenous Business of the Year Award of Excellence, for her Dreamcatchers Promotions work, from the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association, during a ceremony in April in Gatineau, Que.

Cameron was also presented with the National Indigenous Business of the Year award, organized by CanadianSME, a publication which recognizes small businesses.



Michelle Cameron, a member of Peguis First Nation in Manitoba, had an entrepreneurial spirit even before she was a teenager.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Continued on page 50.

2023 WOMEN IN BUSINESS PANEL

May/June 2023

25

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Yukon woman abandons mining career and launches her own business



Natasha Peter is a member of Kaska Nation, owns and operates Kaska Dena Designs.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Natasha Peter admits that giving up a steady job in the mining industry was indeed a frightening thought.

But after working at various mines in her home territory Yukon for numerous years, Peter decided the time was right to find something else to do with her life.

"I wanted something different," said Peter, who is a member of Kaska Nation, which is comprised of First Nations in British Columbia and communities in Yukon. "And I got tired of camp life."

Peter, who is from Ross River, an unincorporated community in Yukon, now lives in Whitehorse.

And yes, she was somewhat terrified giving up a full-time job, not knowing what was next for her.

"I was scared," said Peter, who is now 32. "But my grandparents had always told me when I was a little girl to keep going, to keep moving. And that's what I did."

After quitting her job Peter did enroll in nursing classes at Yukon University. But she didn't finish that program since she realized she needed to go back to work to start making some money.

As a result, she turned to an interest that she had since she was a youngster. That love was a passion for making crafts, something she was taught from Elders.

Though the opportunity never existed before, Peter had longed to have her own business, promoting her own handmade crafts and fashion designs.

So that's what she started doing in 2017, launching a home business called Creative Dena Designs. Peter began designing, manufacturing and selling clothing and accessories through

Facebook but also in-person at various events.

Then, about two years ago, when Peter decided this was something she wanted to do as a full-time job, she switched the name of her company to Kaska Dena Designs, to better reflect her First Nation.

Business is now booming for Peter, who opened an online store in May of this year.

"My goal now is to create whatever I want," she said. "I was doing a lot of custom orders before. That was a lot more work for me because you have to come back and forth with the client to make sure you're doing what they want."

In 2022 Peter had travelled to a show in the French capital of Paris to promote her business. She also attended a pair of shows in New York City last year.

Those events proved to be worthwhile as she met tons of clients. And some of those American customers were keen to buy items when Kaska Dena Designs went online.

"As soon as I launched my store, the first day I had a lot of orders from the U.S.," Peter said.

Peter is now also looking forward to this year's Cando Conference, scheduled for June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

She's one of the four individuals chosen to be on the Women in Business panel.

This panel at the annual conference showcases and recognizes the impact Indigenous women entrepreneurs have on the Canadian economy.

Peter and the other panelists will all share their experiences of being an Indigenous woman in business in this country.

2023 WOMEN IN BUSINESS PANEL

Party rental business thriving for Indigenous woman in New Brunswick

A forced career change in her early 40s was something Sabrina Bear was not anticipating.

But Bear, a 43-year-old member of Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick, couldn't be happier with the way things have turned out for her.

Bear spent a total of 16 years working in the oral health industry. The last 11 of those years she worked for the federal government as a dental therapist and community oral health practitioner, servicing clients not only in New Brunswick but Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island as well.

But once the pandemic hit she was unable to continue in that role. When restrictions were lifted and Bear could return to work, she was physically unable to do so, as she was diagnosed with arthritis in her hand and wrist, leaving her unable to perform many duties of her job.

Taking an early retirement, however, turned out to be a blessing for Bear.

That's because her mother gifted her a large tent, which was frequently rented out as part of a family business. Bear's grandfather had launched a family business called Pete's Pool Hall - Bodin's Native Crafts & Supplies, more than 60 years ago.

Renting the massive tent out was just a small part of the family business. Shortly after receiving the tent, Bear launched her own business in 2021, not only renting out the massive tent, measuring 20 feet by 40 feet, but also other party accessories including tables and chairs.

That's how her company called Party Bear Rentals was started.

And now Bear has numerous bookings throughout New Brunswick. Her company has expanded to include services such as Bear herself coming in to decorate various events, such as weddings or any type of celebration, or providing guidance on other vendors to hire.

"This sort of business hasn't really been established here," Bear said. "There are some guys that rent tents but they are not doing the scale of the work and providing the services that I'm doing."

Bear has also been selected as one of the four individuals to serve on this year's Women in Business panel at the Cando Conference.

"It means I'm getting myself out there big time," Bear said. "It makes me feel honoured and proud to sit on a panel with these other women."

The panelists will share their own experiences of being an Indigenous woman in business in Canada. They were selected to speak at the conference to highlight and recognize the impact Indigenous women entrepreneurs have on the Canadian economy.

Bear is thrilled with her current career.

"Now I'm doing something I love," she said. "I can't believe I can go on my land and forage and help decorate centerpieces."

In the future Bear is hoping her services will be required at some large festivals held in eastern Canada.

"To be able to do procurement is my other goal," she said, adding an already hectic schedule has prevented her from bidding on events yet.



Sabrina Bear a member of Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick owns and operates Party Bear Rentals.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

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Starbucks Canada is a proud sponsor of Cando's 29th Annual National Conference and the National Youth Panel.

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Basketball star named to Cando's national youth panel

Macyn Morning Bull has given her share of motivational speeches over the years.

And now the 24-year-old, a member of Piikani Nation in Alberta, will be able to share her story on a national scale.

Morning Bull, an elite basketball player and recent university graduate, is one of six individuals that have been named to the National Youth Panel for this year's Cando Conference.

The conference, which will be held in Membertou, N.S., begins on June 26 and continues until June 29.

Morning Bull and the other panelists were selected based on their strengths, initiatives, accomplishments, entrepreneurial spirit and participation within their communities.

Morning Bull has been a guest speaker at numerous youth events in her First Nation.

"I grew up playing basketball," she said. "And I tell them I want you to be better than I am."

Morning Bull actually was not introduced to the sport until she was 11. Prior to that she was a figure skater and played hockey. Her other interests were playing the piano and being a band member.

But she quickly fell in love with basketball.

"I just think it was something I had more opportunities with," she said. "Doors were opening up for me and I stuck with it."

Morning Bull ended up playing basketball with three different post-secondary teams in her home province.

For starters, she toiled for the women's team at the Southern Alberta

Institute of Technology, where she was enrolled in travel and tourism courses.

Morning Bull then attended Olds College for its business program. While at Olds she helped her school win the national women's college championship in 2019.

And then Morning Bull capped off her post-secondary studies by at St. Mary's University in Calgary by earning her Bachelor of General Arts degree. She graduated in April of this year.

Morning Bull used up her final year of post-secondary athletic eligibility after the first of her two years at St. Mary's.

Though she wasn't representing the school in basketball, she was keen to continue attending the university this past year.

"I kind of learned everything more than just business," she said of her general arts program.

Morning Bull, who gave birth to a daughter this past December, is now back at work.

She is working in the human resources department, focusing on disability management, at ATCO, a Canadian engineering, logistics and energy holding company based in Calgary.

"I'm hoping to stay there for a while," Morning Bull said. "It's such a large company. You can move to different departments."

Morning Bull continues to play basketball, suiting up for a squad named Creefoots, which competes in various Indigenous tournaments.

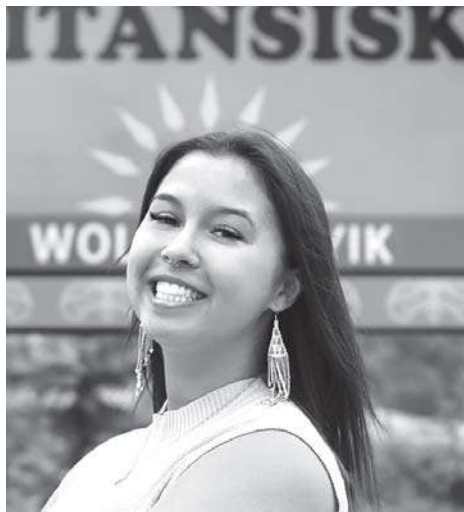


Macyn Morning Bull is a 24-year-old member of Piikani Nation in Alberta.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Continued on page 50.

University grad hoping to be voice for those facing environmental injustices



Kianna Bear-Hetherington, who is 23, graduated this spring from the University of New Brunswick.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Kianna Bear-Hetherington has managed to turn her life around and she's now considered a role model.

Bear-Hetherington, who is 23, graduated this spring from the University of New Brunswick (UNB) with a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental and natural resources, with a major in water resource management.

It didn't take long for the member of St. Mary's First Nation in New Brunswick to find some work. She accepted a position to work as a fisheries technician for the Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick, which is comprised of a half dozen First Nations throughout the province.

Bear-Hetherington is also one of six individuals that have been chosen to be a part of the National Youth Panel, for this year's Cando Conference, set for June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

The youth panelists, who are between the ages of 18-30, were selected for their strengths, initiatives, accomplishments, entrepreneurial spirit and participation within their communities.

"It really means a lot to me," Bear-Hetherington said of her selection to the panel. "I'm really inspired to go and share my story. It's really empowering for me."

Bear-Hetherington has no qualms providing details of her past.

"I have a lot of deep-rooted trauma in my story," she said. "It's important for me to be able to share this."

Her mother is an Indian day school survivor. And her grandfather was a residential school survivor.

"It's very much common with youth in our community who face that," she said of intergenerational trauma.

Bear-Hetherington said her trauma led her to abusing alcohol and drugs during her first two years of university.

But she said she has been sober and clean for the past two years, in large part because she was able to engage with university activities that she enjoyed.

For example, she served as the Indigenous rep for her university's student union the past two years.

Through this volunteer position Bear-Hetherington focused on advancing efforts that improved the opportunities and experiences for Indigenous students at her school.

While attending UNB, Bear-Hetherington also served as a teacher assistant for two semesters, in 2022, for a course titled Indigenous Issues and Perspectives in Natural Resource Stewardship.

Her responsibilities included assisting the professor with classroom instructions and grading and proctoring quizzes and exams.

Bear-Hetherington also led discussion sections and provided mentoring sessions with students.

Other duties included helping out with the development of course planning, keeping an eye on the students' comprehension of the course and also providing feedback to the professor.

Though she is now working, Bear-Hetherington is also keen to continue her education.

In her current and in any future positions, Bear-Hetherington is eager to assist those living in Indigenous communities.

"I want to be a voice for communities facing environmental injustices," she said.

2023 NATIONAL YOUTH PANEL

Future architect also has mind set on obtaining her PhD

Reanna Merasty is well on her way to fulfilling one of her life goals.

Merasty, a member of Barren Lands First Nation in Manitoba, has spent the past two years working as an architectural intern at Number TEN Architectural Group, an award-winning Winnipeg firm.

Besides having to take some future exams, Merasty is more than halfway past the 3,700 internship hours required before she becomes a licensed architect.

Merasty, who is now 28, had graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Master of Architecture and a Bachelor of Environmental Design.

She had earned her undergraduate degree in 2019. Two years later she obtained her Master's degree.

With her current position she frequently advocates for Indigenous inclusion and representation in design education.

There's also a good chance Merasty will resume her academic studies, perhaps in a few years.

"I want to really pursue a PhD in the future and become a professor on the side," she said.

Merasty added she has established a five-year goal by which point she wants to have started working towards her PhD.

"But I have to become an architect first," said Merasty, who has also spent two summers while still in school working as an Indigenous architectural intern at Brook McIlroy, another Winnipeg-based firm.

She's one of six young people chosen to be on the National Youth Panel, for the conference, which is

scheduled to begin on June 26 in Membertou, N.S.

The four-day conference concludes on June 29.

The youth panelists were selected based on initiatives, accomplishments, strengths, entrepreneurial spirit and participation within their communities.

"It's important to have young Indigenous voices and to have them be celebrated," Merasty said. "I'm extremely proud to have an opportunity like this."

Those eligible to be youth panelists must be between the ages of 18-30.

Besides having the opportunity to provide details of her life experiences, Merasty is also eager to hear from the other panelists from across the country.

"I think it's incredible," Merasty said. "A lot of times you don't hear a lot of things going on out of province. It's important to hear those other youth and for them to be celebrated."

As for Merasty's voice, she had co-founded the University of Manitoba's Indigenous Design and Planning Student Association (IDPSA) while she was at the school.

The association in part was created to address the misrepresentation of Indigenous values and practices in Indigenous design. IDPSA was the first association of its kind in Canada to promote adding Indigenous values in design education.

Merasty also received recent news of another impressive accolade.

She's one of three youth recipients this year for the Indspire Awards, annually presented to those Indigenous people across the country who excel in various categories.



Reanna Merasty, a member of Barren Lands First Nation in Manitoba, has spent the past two years working as an architectural intern.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Role model pursuing career in education



Brayden Omeasoo-Steinhauer, a member of Ermineskin Cree Nation in Alberta, recently completed his third year of Bachelor of Education studies.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Besides continuing his own academic interests, Brayden Omeasoo-Steinhauer is also considered a positive role model for his First Nation.

Omeasoo-Steinhauer, a member of Ermineskin Cree Nation in Alberta, recently completed his third year of Bachelor of Education studies from the University of Alberta.

He's expected to complete his degree requirements in the spring of 2024, following one more year of studies.

Omeasoo-Steinhauer, who is 21, is also in his second year of serving as the youth advisory board member for the Neyaskweyahk Group of Companies Inc., the economic arm of his First Nation.

"It was a newly created position in my community," he said. "I was keen to do it. They're leading change in my community."

Omeasoo-Steinhauer's two-year term on the board is up this coming November. Ideally, he would like to be selected to serve another term as well.

"They've grown so much in the past 10 years," he added of the Neyaskweyahk Group of Companies Inc. "They've gone from five companies to 13."

As the youth advisory board member, Omeasoo-Steinhauer is expected to attend quarterly meetings.

Besides bringing a youth voice to the board, he's also counted on to help organize a community business fair, targeting individuals aged 16-30 who have an interest in joining the workforce.

Omeasoo-Steinhauer is also exploring the possibility of organizing a pilot project, an Elder/Youth exchange this fall.

"We do youth things and we do Elder things separately," Omeasoo-Steinhauer said. "But we don't do things with the two groups together."

Omeasoo-Steinhauer is also looking forward to an event that he'll be involved with. He's one of six individuals from across Canada that have been selected to be on the National Youth Panel for this year's Cando Conference.

The conference, which will be staged in Membertou, N.S., begins on June 26 and continues until June 29.

"I think it's such an honour," Omeasoo-Steinhauer said of his selection to the panel.

The half dozen panelists throughout the country were chosen for their strengths, initiatives, accomplishments, entrepreneurial spirit and participation within their communities.

Omeasoo-Steinhauer is hoping to continue being someone youth look up to in the future as well.

"The goal is definitely to be an educator in any capacity," he said.

He anticipates he'll continue his own education after earning his undergrad degree.

"I do want to go into graduate studies," he said.

He's hoping to enroll in the Masters of Management program, a 10-month, fast-track program offered through the University of Calgary.

Continued on page 50.

2023 NATIONAL YOUTH PANEL

Future lawyer also has political aspirations

Justin Langan already has a lengthy list of accolades and accomplishments.

And the 24-year-old Métis, who is an Indigenous and LGBTQ2+ activist, will soon add another highlight to his already impressive record.

Langan, who is from the Manitoba town of Swan River, is one of six individuals that have been selected to serve on the National Youth Panel for this year's Cando Conference.

The conference, scheduled for June 26-29, will be held in Membertou, N.S.

The half dozen panelists from across the country were chosen based on their strengths, initiatives, accomplishments, entrepreneurial spirit and participation within their communities.

"It's truly, I know it's a cliché, but an honour honestly, just to be selected to be amongst these other amazing youths and to have to not only listen to their story but to be able to tell mine," he said.

Langan recently completed his third year of political studies at the University of Manitoba. He'll begin his fourth and final year of his program later this year.

But he's already planning on continuing his education. He will be taking his LSAT (Law School Admission Test) this coming November and then applying to various schools to study law.

Langan already knows which schools will in all likelihood be his preferred choices.

"I went to Boston last year and I checked out Harvard," he said. "They are on my radar. But I also like McGill. Those are the top two. We can all have our wish list. So, I will be applying to a few."

It seems Langan has been destined to become a lawyer since he was a child.

"My mom always told me growing up 'I want you to be a lawyer,'" he said. "I liked to argue she says."

Langan also loves helping others. He's been a longtime volunteer with the Manitoba Métis Federation.

Langan worked with various people living in rural northern communities through this work.

"It really opened my eyes to the kinds of people that lived there," he said. "They're loving and the word community can be summed up in these towns and villages that I visited. Advocating on behalf of them and advocating for more projects, for more assistance to help the youth prosperity is what kind of drove me. In my spare time I would volunteer and help others."

Langan added he himself grew through his volunteerism as he was able to enjoy new experiences and also gain new friends.

"In any selfless endeavour like volunteering, we all want to make our community better, better for ourselves and better for our future generations," Langan added.

Langan also said he does have a passion for learning.

"That's why I love education so much," he said. "Learning along the way in life and just meeting new people, having conversations, that's what really motivates me. But it's also helping to inspire others do something that they want to do – pursue their own passions."

Besides becoming a lawyer, Langan said he also has political aspirations.

"Anywhere that I can help affect change, whether that be at the town level, municipal, provincial or federal," he said.



Justin Langan is a 24-year-old Métis, who is an Indigenous and LGBTQ2+ activist.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Penelist juggles teaching career with political life and entrepreneurship



Kathleen Doxtator, a member of the Oneida Nation of the Thames, is a teacher on special assignment with the Thames Valley District School Board.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

Kathleen Doxtator is certainly one busy individual.

For starters, Doxtator, a member of the Oneida Nation of the Thames in southwestern Ontario, is a teacher on special assignment with the Thames Valley District School Board.

She travels to various schools within the board and offers Indigenous-themed classes.

“It all depends on the needs of the school,” Doxtator said, adding her school visits can range anywhere from a single day to several days in a row at the same school.

For schools that are in her board and that do have one, Doxtator also works alongside Indigenous associations.

“There’s like a handful, probably five or six schools, that have an Indigenous association,” she said. “I think there’s more that are up and coming and starting to be developed.”

For Doxtator, the 2022-23 academic year marked her first one in her current role.

But prior to that she was a teacher at Saunders Secondary School in London, Ont. Her responsibilities included being an Oneida language teacher and also developing Indigenous-focused programs to support Indigenous students.

Besides her teaching responsibilities, Doxtator, who is 30, also found the time to serve a total of six years as a council member for her First Nation. She served three terms, each one lasting two years, from 2016 to 2022.

Doxtator opted not to seek another term during last year’s elections.

“But I’m still involved in youth politics at the provincial and national levels,” she said.

Doxtator’s current roles include being on the education committee for the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, serving on the Ontario First Nations Youth Peoples Council and the Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council.

Doxtator also recently found out about another plum gig. She’s one of six individuals from across Canada that have been selected to serve on the National Youth Panel for this year’s Cando Conference.

The conference, which will be held on June 26-29, will be held in Membertou, N.S.

Those that were picked to be on the youth panel were selected based on their strengths, initiatives, accomplishments, entrepreneurial spirit, and participation within their communities.

“I’m really excited and looking forward to it,” Doxtator said of her participation on the panel. “I was a last-minute application and I’m thankful they’ve allowed me to share my story.”

Those who are Indigenous and between the ages of 18-30 were eligible to apply to be on the Cando youth panel.

Besides her aforementioned work and experience with various political organizations, Doxtator, who graduated in 2016 with a bachelor’s degree in Science and Education, with a major in Chemistry, from Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., also operates her own business.

Continued on page 50.

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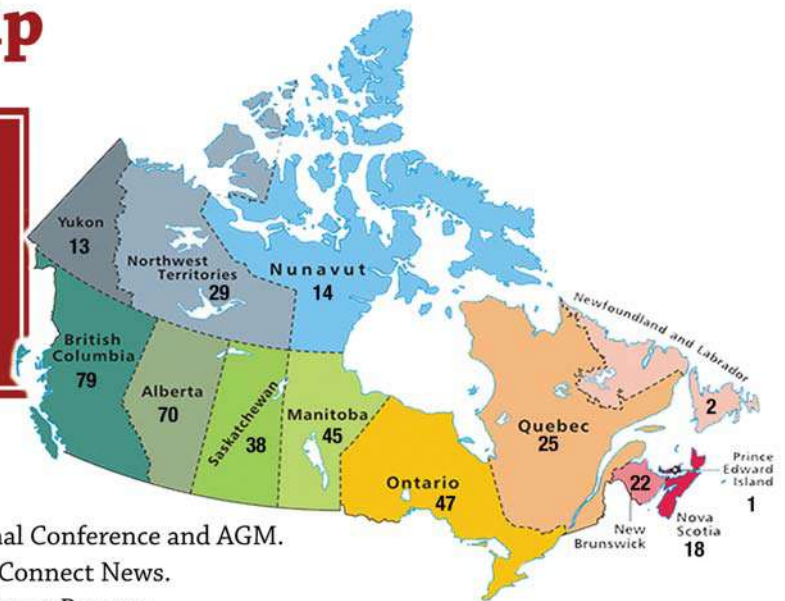
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Inspiring Success

Former U.S. Marine now a respected economic development leader



James Stevens serves as the director of commercial operations for Millbrook First Nation in Nova Scotia.

By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor

FINALIST INDIVIDUAL EDO

This award proudly sponsored by:
Joint Economic Development Initiative

James Stevens is one busy guy. For starters, Stevens serves as the director of commercial operations for Millbrook First Nation, a Nation in Nova Scotia that he is a member of.

Stevens is also in his second term of being a councillor for his First Nation.

“It’s definitely all about time management,” Stevens said of how his juggles his work duties. “They are two distinct jobs.”

Stevens, who is 42, is required to attend two council meetings each month. But he said his two positions in his community keep him busy around the clock. At times he utilizes his vacation days to fulfil his councillor responsibilities.

“During the day, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m, it’s all economic development,” Stevens said of where his main focus is during those hours. “And it does go into the weekend sometimes.”

Stevens’ responsibilities included serving as his First Nation’s leasing agent for all of its properties. He’s also in charge of property management, helping to deal with any issues that arise.

And client relations management is also part of his job, meaning he frequently meets with tenants to see things are running smoothly and to address any concerns.

Stevens had been hired as Millbrook’s economic development officer in January of 2019. The following January he was named the First Nation’s director of commercial operations.

Stevens’ efforts have not gone unrecognized. In fact, he is one of two

finalists this year for Cando’s Economic Developer of the Year award.

The other finalist is Thomas Benjoe, who is the president and CEO of File Hills Qu’Appelle Developments in Saskatchewan, a corporation that represents the economic interests of a tribal council comprised of 11 First Nations in the province.

Stevens and Benjoe will both attend this year’s Cando Conference, scheduled for June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

Both will give presentations about their current careers. The winner of the national EDO award will be announced at the conference.

Two other awards will also be presented at the conference. Winners will be selected in the Indigenous Community of the Year and Indigenous Private Sector Business categories.

Stevens, who was born in New Hampshire city of Manchester, served in the United States Marine Corps from 2000-2004.

He believes many of the skills he acquired during his military life are transferrable to his current positions.

“It definitely helped me with my discipline and my people skills,” he said. “I can speak in front of people.”

Stevens added his time spent in the military also carried over to his post-secondary days when plenty of commitment was required in his studies. He graduated in 2010 with a commerce degree from Dalhousie University in Halifax.

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Former youth board member now spearheads thriving corporation

Back in 2010, when he was still a student at the First Nations University of Canada, Thomas Benjoe was brought on board as the youth representative for a newly-established company.

That company was File Hills Qu'Appelle (FHQ) Developments, a corporation that represents the economic interests of File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, consisting of 11 First Nations in Saskatchewan.

Benjoe has remained with the company since Day 1. After serving six years as a board member, he was appointed as the president and CEO of FHQ Developments in September of 2016.

"We're an organization that started off with a \$10 investment from each of our First Nations plus our Tribal Council," Benjoe said.

Today, FHQ Developments is a multi-million-dollar corporation. Its interests include oil and gas, mining, hospitality, tech and renewable energy companies.

Benjoe explained how the corporation has thrived and has been able to keep reps from various First Nations satisfied.

"We have a board and we have a specific governance model in place that tries to keep the politics out of it," he said.

FHQ Developments collectively represents the interests of about 17,000 citizens from all of the First Nations under its umbrella.

Many others across the country have taken notice of Benjoe's leadership and FHQ Developments' successes.

As a result, it's not the least bit surprising that he is one of the two finalists for Cando's Economic Developer of the Year award this year.

James Stevens from Millbrook First Nation in Nova Scotia is the other finalist for the top economic developer accolade. Stevens is currently serving as the director of commercial operations for his First Nation.

The winner will be selected at this year's Cando Conference, scheduled for June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

Awards will also be presented at the conference to the top Indigenous community and the best company in the Indigenous Private Sector Business category.

"I guess it's exciting to be nominated," said Benjoe, a member of Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation in Saskatchewan. "We have been doing a lot to try and address what Indigenous businesses mean to us in our neck of the woods."

Muscowpetung is one of the 11 First Nations which make up the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council.

The others are Nekaneet First Nation, Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation, Piapot First Nation, Pasqua First Nation, Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation, Okanese First Nation, Star Blanket Cree Nation, Peepeekisis Cree Nation, Carry-The-Kettle Nakoda Nation and Little Black Bear's Band of Cree & Assiniboine Nations.



In 2010 Thomas Benjoe was brought on board as the youth representative for a newly-established File Hills Qu'Appelle (FHQ) Developments. Benjoe has remained with the company since Day 1.

By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor

FINALIST INDIVIDUAL EDO

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Cree Nation in Manitoba in running for national top community accolade



Larson Anderson has served as the chief for Norway House First Nation since 2018.

By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor

FINALIST COMMUNITY

This award proudly sponsored by:
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Things are not perfect in Norway House Cree Nation.

But there's no denying things are getting better for one of the largest First Nations in Manitoba.

"Norway House has strong leadership, engaged staff and is on an upward trajectory for achieving major economic development success," said Larson Anderson, who has served as the chief for the First Nation since 2018.

Norway House has had its share of successes under Anderson's leadership. But he is not entirely content.

Anderson said a former premier had asked him what his proudest accomplishment has been.

"I said I was not proud of what I had done because we still had members that were unemployed and we still had some members that were homeless," Anderson said.

Norway House Cree Nation has about 8,700 members in total with about 6,500 of them living on reserve.

The First Nation is also getting some recognition nationally this year. That is because Norway House Cree Nation is one of two finalists for the Cando Community of the Year Award.

The other finalist is Red Rock Indian Band, located in northwestern Ontario, about 120 kilometres east of Thunder Bay.

The winner of the top community award will be announced at the Cando Conference, scheduled for June 26-29. That event will be held in Membertou, N.S.

Two other national award recipients will also be honoured at the conference.

There are currently two finalists in the Economic Development Officer of the Year award and two companies that are vying to be named as the best in the Indigenous Private Sector Business category.

One of the main reasons the future for Norway House Cree Nation is looking bright is because it now has a detailed economic plan, approved by council in April of this year.

"We didn't have an action plan on how we could get more community members into business," Anderson said. "Now we've got the finalized version of our economic development strategy."

Norway House Cree Nation had hired one of its own members, Rob Campbell, to spearhead the development of an economic development plan.

Campbell is also the national director as well as a provincial director for Indigenous services for MNP, one of Canada's largest full-service chartered professional accountancy and business advisory companies.

Campbell worked with Norway House Cree Nation representatives to finalize an economic development plan.

Even though the economic developed strategy is now complete, Anderson said Campbell will remain an advisor for the First Nation as it moves forward.

One project Anderson is rather pumped up about is a high-speed fibre optic infrastructure project that the First Nation has undertaken.

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First Nation in northern Ontario in running for national community award

Small but mighty.

That's certainly an apt description for the Red Rock Indian Band, located in northwestern Ontario.

The First Nation's main community of Lake Helen, located about 120 kilometres east of Thunder Bay, has less than 300 of its estimated 2,300 members living on reserve.

Yet Red Rock Indian Band is viewed as a role model amongst other northern First Nations in the province.

"In this region Red Rock Indian Band is a leader economically and in the business world," said Marcus Hardy, who has served as the chief of the First Nation since 2019. "We want everyone to move ahead with us."

Red Rock Indian Band is also being thrust into the national spotlight this year. That's because the First Nation is one of two finalists for the 2023 Cando community economic developer of the year award.

Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba is the other finalist.

The winner will be announced at this year's Cando Conference, which runs from June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

Two other national awards will also be presented at the four-day conference.

There are two finalists in the running for the Economic Developer of the Year award and a pair of companies vying to win the Indigenous Private Sector Business category.

Hardy is understandably thrilled his First Nation has the opportunity to garner national recognition.

"I think it's a testament to the hard work and the dedication of the staff," Hardy said.

And it's not as if Red Rock Indian Band has just one or two noteworthy projects that led to the First Nation being a finalist for a Cando award.

"There's so much on the go," Hardy said.

For example, earlier this year Red Rock Indian Band made its share of headlines when it was announced it had reached an agreement with the BMI Group to open a heavy-cargo port.

The deal means the First Nation will become a major transportation hub as shipping lanes will connect it to Lake Superior.

"We have the capacity, our people have the capability, and we want to make them shine," Hardy said of the deal which will tremendously benefit the First Nation's residents. "We want to give people a good life."

Red Rock had previously been known as a timber and mill community.

In recent years, that has changed. It now has various ventures including a gas station, plumbing and heating business, forestry operations, real estate rentals and various contracts with Ontario's ministry of transportation.

The First Nation also has various partnerships with rock crushing, mining and drilling companies.

One of Red Rock Indian Band's successful businesses these days is the Chalet Lodge. The First Nation bought the facility, which had been vacant for a number of years, in 2009.



Red Rock Indian Band is a finalist for the 2023 Cando community economic developer of the year.

By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor

FINALIST COMMUNITY

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Yukon friends have enjoyed success with their consulting business



IRP Consulting was launched in 2020 and is based in Whitehorse. IRP stands for Inspire, Reconciliation, Potential.

By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor

FINALIST PRIVATE SECTOR BUSINESS

This award proudly sponsored by:
Acosys Consulting Services Inc.

It seemed like a natural fit when Tosh Southwick and Davida Wood decided to join forces and incorporate a new consulting business.

IRP Consulting was launched in August of 2020. And now the business, based in the Yukon capital of Whitehorse, is considered a leader in the services it provides.

IRP, which stands for Inspire, Reconciliation, Potential, is a consulting company that works with federal, territorial and Indigenous governments, post-secondary schools, private businesses and even individuals to support Indigenous self-determination and to amplify reconciliation efforts.

Both Southwick and Wood, who have known each other for more than 20 years, had been basically doing the same type of work for others the past couple of decades that they are doing now with their company.

Southwick, a Kluane First Nation citizen, had worked as the associate vice-president of Indigenous engagement and reconciliation at Yukon university before she co-founded IRP Consulting.

She worked a dozen years for the university and part of her duties included ensuring the school was meeting the training needs and education of its students representing the 14 First Nations in Yukon.

As for Wood, a member of Teslin Tlingit Council, her previous roles including working for Yukon College's First Nations Initiatives (FNI) in various capacities. She started off with the college in 2011 as a facilitator for its FNI

program, later becoming its manager and then the director.

Southwick and Wood decided to go into business for themselves and to support other organization in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, including supporting Indigenous self-determination.

Since launching IRP Consulting, the co-founders have primarily worked with Yukon organizations. But they have also travelled to British Columbia and Alberta to provide their services.

Southwick said there is no shortage of companies these days that are offering services that further reconciliation efforts.

But she believes IRP is different for a few reasons.

"The difference with our company is that we are anchored in the north and with the breadth of services we are able to offer," Southwick said. "And we are women that have an Indigenous-owned and operated business."

IRP Consulting has also garnered some national recognition. It is one of two finalists this year that are in the running for the Indigenous Private Sector Business award at the Cando Conference.

This conference, annually attended by Indigenous economic development leaders across the country, is scheduled for June 26-29. The four-day event will be held in Membertou, N.S.

The other finalist in the running for the award in Cando's Indigenous Private Sector Business category is the Bayside Development Corporation, which is a distinct travel centre located

2023 ECONOMIC DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Cando Connect

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Paqtnkek now reaping rewards from EDO's longstanding vision

Rose Paul certainly has a lot of perseverance.

Paul had been hired as the economic development officer for her Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation back in February of 2006.

The following year she came across some paperwork, which would end up having a major impact on her work responsibilities for numerous years.

"It was something I actually stumbled on in storage," Paul said.

The 'something' Paul discovered were minutes of meetings and wordings from provincial and federal governments about a breached agreement involving her First Nation.

Back in the early 1960s, when Highway 104, which is part of the Trans-Canada Highway was constructed, Paqtnkek was basically divided into half. The southern portions of the First Nation were not developed since they were not easily accessible.

Paul was keen to change that.

"I'd seen their wrongdoing on my community," Paul said of government officials who had initially downplayed the developmental impacts on Paqtnkek but then fought to deny any construction on the south side of the First Nation. "I wanted to rectify it."

Though it took quite some time, Paul did just that. She was the driving force behind the creation of the Bayside Development Corporation, comprised of all the businesses at the Bayside Travel Centre.

Besides keeping up with her EDO duties, Paul has also served as the CEO of the corporation since it was launched in 2019.

People are no longer just driving through Paqtnkek now. They are frequently visiting the Bayside site, which includes a Husky diesel cardlock for those in the trucking industry, an Esso gas station, a convenience store, a Tim Hortons and a Mary Brown's restaurant.

And that's just some of the first phase of development on a 12-acre site.

"It's known as the destination to be," Paul said. "The project is a very victorious moment for us."

The Bayside site also includes an entertainment centre, By The Bay which is a tourism and gift centre and a liquor store, the first provincially sanctioned Nova Scotia Liquor Store agency in a Mi'kmaw community.

Bayside Development Corporation is now in the running for some national recognition as well.

It is one of two finalists in the Indigenous Private Sector Business award at this year's Cando Conference.

The other finalist in the category is the IRP Consulting, a Whitehorse-based company owned by a pair of Indigenous women, Davida Wood and Tosh Southwick.

The category winner will be determined at this year's Cando Conference, set for June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

National awards will also be handed out at the conference to the Economic Developer of the Year and the Indigenous Community of the Year.



Rose Paul was the driving force behind the creation of the Bayside Development Corporation owned by Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation.

**By Sam Laskaris
Cando Contributor**

FINALIST PRIVATE SECTOR BUSINESS

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Brayden Omeasoo-Steinhauer

From page 36.

Omeasoo-Steinhauer has completed all of his post-secondary education thus far remotely. He said his living and travel expenses have been greatly reduced since he has been able to continue living in his First Nation house.

He lives in a house with seven other family members, including his mother and his two siblings and their spouses and children.

"It's quite a busy house," he said. "But I created my own sanctuary where I can go for my own quiet space."

Omeasoo-Steinhauer added if he does indeed pursue his Master's degree, he'll be required to attend in-person classes for that.

Omeasoo-Steinhauer is also on the planning committee for Cando's sixth annual economic development youth summit.

This event, which runs Aug. 14-17, will be held at the Grey Eagle Resort on Tsuut'ina Nation, adjacent to Calgary.

Jenna White

From page 22.

"It's a big surprise," White said. "I didn't really know how things would go. It definitely took on a mind of its own."

White will be sharing her recent career successes at this year's Cando Conference, scheduled for June 26-29 in Membertou, N.S.

She has been selected as one of the four individuals to be on the conference's Women in Business panel.

The panelists will discuss their stories of being Indigenous women entrepreneurs in Canada.

"I think it's probably quite interesting because I had a lot of obstacles," White said. "I think it's important to start small and grow from there."

Kathleen Doxtator

From page 38.

She launched Guided by our Gifts in June of 2021. Through this online company Doxtator sells Indigenous handmade beaded accessories including earrings, phone grips, necklace pendants and lanyards.

Doxtator also hosts a podcast titled Divine Rezolutions. During podcast episodes she shares her experiences of being a young Indigenous professional and talks about various things that make her happy.

Besides being on Cando's youth panel, Doxtator is also involved with the association as she is a member of the planning committee for its Economic Development Youth Summit, which will be held this August in Tsuut'ina Nation in Alberta.

Michelle Cameron

From page 22.

Cameron has no intentions of slowing down.

INAC now has a second location in Saskatoon. And she's currently looking at a site to expand to Alberta. Expansion to other provinces is also on the horizon.

Cameron has also reached a deal with The North West Company, a popular grocery and retail business, to have 80 mini INACs (a store within a store) throughout western Canadian provinces.

"It's kind of mind-blowing," Cameron said. "I've turned my own little business into a multi-million-dollar business."

Myca Morning Bull

From page 33.

"We've been travelling and playing in tournaments for a while," she said. "Hopefully we will be able to keep doing that."

Morning Bull is also eagerly anticipating the Cando Conference, where she will be able to provide details on her athletic career and other life experiences.

"I think it's really special being highlighted," she said. "You put in so much work as an individual. And now you're work is being recognized."



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Bayside Development Corp.

From page 49.

Despite numerous obstacles, including funding problems and layers of bureaucracy, Paul never gave up hopes of her vision of thriving businesses on the south side of her First Nation.

She kept plugging away to make her dream a reality, even though various chiefs and council members in her First Nation were changed over the years.

“It was a very long process, very difficult and a lot of barriers we had to go through,” Paul said.

But it was a process that she deemed necessary.

Lobbying for a highway interchange and connector roads eventually proved to be successful.

Having various businesses start welcoming customers at the Bayside Development Corporation was indeed a pleasant sight for Paul and others.

“It was a journey to achieve such a milestone for a community,” she said.

Paul, however, believes she should not be the only one receiving credit.

“I had a strong team,” she said. “The community trusted me. And the leadership trusted me to lead.”

Paul continues to lead the corporation. And in the near future she'll be able to publicly discuss the next phase of Bayside expansion and the various new businesses expected to open up in Paqtnkek.

“We're giving ourselves an 18-month window because it takes time to get everything together,” Paul said in early June 2023, adding the preliminary planning stages includes determining financing pieces and also securing funding partners.

Paul said it won't be long, however, before construction commences on Bayside's next phase.

“We're looking to break ground in 2024 with the business centre,” she said. “Right now there's a lot of different players at the table.”

Other initiatives in the community include a microgrid project to support net zero initiatives with solar development, battery storage and two rapid EVP charging stations. These renewable energy projects will all be housed in one building.

Red Rock Indian Band

From page 47.

“It is a historical building by the railway built in the early 1900s,” Hardy said. “We decided to purchase it and revitalize it. We spent quite a lot of money on it. But we had to wait for the land to become reserve land. It was private land all my life beside our reserve.”

It took until 2017 for the building to officially become reserve property. The 3,500-square foot lodge includes six cabins as well as space for meetings, conference, weddings and a number of other events.

The Chalet Lodge also provides the First Nation opportunities to promote its Anishinaabe culture, history and life through various educational and training opportunities.

Plans are also in the works to expand the lodge to include a butcher shop and tannery.

The First Nation has also developed an economic development strategic plan that will work toward economic self-sufficiency.

Part of its economic development vision statement reads as follows: “Red Rock Indian Band envisions a future where economic opportunities are enabled, providing long-lasting measurable benefits to community members and the First Nation.”

Norway House

From page 462.

“That is going to set the stage for a better future,” he said.

Anderson added having faster and better connectivity on the First Nation will be beneficial for all. He also believes some members will be able to conduct all of their work at home instead of leaving the reserve.

Another major accomplishment for the community was securing the funding to build the Norway House Cree Nation Health Centre of Excellence, the largest hospital on a First Nation in Canada.

And Norway House Cree Nation also has some other major projects on the horizon. These plans

include building a new school as well as a new business centre.

Officials with the First Nation are also keen to purchase some heavy equipment, improve community infrastructure and expand the York Boat Inn, located in the community.

A diner at the inn has already reopened to provide another culinary option for community members.

Norway House Cree Nation had previously won Cando's community of the year award in 2001. Anderson had served as a councillor for the First Nation from 1994-98 and he believes he was instrumental in various projects then that led Norway House to garnering the national community award a few years later.

James Stevens

From page 44.

Stevens is thrilled his First Nation is now thriving in terms of economic development.

“I think it’s an amazing story,” he said. “We’ve come a long way.”

Stevens can take a bit of credit for some recent developments his First Nation is involved with.

For example, he was instrumental in the construction of a new 68-unit apartment building that started welcoming tenants last year.

Though Millbrook First Nation is located within the city of Truro, it also has reserve land in three other communities, including Cole Harbour, where the new apartment building is located.

“It was fully leased before construction,” Stevens said of the building.

Stevens is also thrilled he played a role with the construction of a new 39,000-square foot building that will serve as the new home for the Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq office.

“Bringing them along under one roof is a game changer,” Stevens said.

Another massive victory under Stevens’ leadership is the fact Farm Credit Canada now has a branch in Millbrook First Nation.

“I think it’s huge,” Stevens said. “And it will help in attracting Indigenous talent for them.”

Farm Credit Canada’s Millbrook location is the first one in an Indigenous community in Canada.

“It shows we can be a place where a crown corporation can locate to and be in our community,” Stevens said.

Thomas Benjoe

From page 45.

One of Benjoe’s most significant accomplishments with his corporation was finalized earlier this year when he worked alongside members of Regina’s procurement team. He was able to get the city officials to agree to an Indigenous procurement policy that will lead to a mandatory 20 per cent of Regina procurement spending.

“That’s never been done anywhere else in Canada,” Benjoe said, adding most other Indigenous procurement policies are five per cent.

So how was Benjoe able to set the bar that high with Regina reps?

“I have a good relationship with the mayor,” he said. “It’s taken two years and a tremendous amount of work. It was a thorough and engaging process.”

Benjoe is keen to share his story and the positives emerging from his First Nation at the Cando Conference.

And he enjoys the fact FHQ Developments is considered a role model.

“I want to be able to share information with other Nations,” he said.

Benjoe said he frequently accepts speaking engagements in order to let others know how FHQ Developments has been able to have its share of successes.

“I do that so Indigenous economic developers can learn from us about the unique strategies we’ve had,” he said.

Co-operatives First organizes new webinar series

By Sam Laskaris
Cando Writer

Officials with Co-operatives First have come up with a new way to further their mission.

The Saskatoon-based organization promotes and supports business development in rural and Indigenous communities, primarily throughout the four western Canadian provinces.

One of the latest ways Co-operatives First officials plan to get their message out is via the Regional Synergies Webinar Series.

Throughout this series those who tune in for the free online webinars will hear about business and community leaders that have forged regional partnerships.

Co-operatives First hosted the first event in this series on Dec. 8. That event featured representatives from the South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP).

“The group we had was super engaged,” said Heather Hallgrimson, who is Co-operatives First’s business development lead. “People had such great questions that they were asking.”

In fact, Hallgrimson said organizers had to scrap the prepared questions they had for the hosts since webinar participants had plenty of their own asks.

SIPP is an alliance of more than 70 public and private sector partners in Greater Victoria. Partners include nine First Nations, 11 local governments, three post-secondary schools, nine industry associations and non-profits and more than 30 employers.

SIPP representatives who spoke at December’s webinar were Elysia Glover and Kear Porttris. Glover is SIPP’s manager of strategic partnerships while Porttris is a SIPP board director and the director of Indigenous relations from QM Environmental.

Co-operatives First’s webinar series will continue to explore rural and Indigenous partnerships throughout western Canada.

Continues on page 56.



Trista Pewapisconias, the Indigenous Engagement Lead for Co-operatives First.



Heather Hallgrimson, Co-operatives First's business development lead.

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Co-operatives First organizes webinar series

Continued from page 54.

The goal will be to learn how members of communities and their neighbours join forces to share resources and knowledge. The plan of these partnerships is to have an entire region benefit as opposed to just one community.

Hallgrimson is teaming up with her colleague, Trista Pewapisconias, who is Co-operatives First's Indigenous relations lead, to organize the webinar series.

"It went really well," Pewapisconias said of December's webinar. "And we want this to be an ongoing conversation. We just want to promote both Indigenous and municipal partnerships."

Despite its moniker, Pewapisconias, a member of Little Pine First Nation in Saskatchewan, said discussions in the series do not have to be focused on co-ops.

"They don't have to be a co-op model, just a partnership within your region," she said.

Pewapisconias said Co-operatives First officials are still trying to finalize dates and speakers for upcoming events in the series.

She added the next event will in all likelihood be at some point in March. And then the plan is to stage one another event later on in 2022.

"The need for these webinars came about based upon feedback from groups we had dealt with," Pewapisconias said.

She added since she focuses her work on Indigenous groups and Hallgrimson's efforts concentrate on non-Indigenous organizations, it made sense to merge the two.

"We just said let's create a space so that other people can come and talk together," Pewapisconias said.

A couple of dozen participants took part in December's webinar. Besides municipal representatives, also attending were individuals in various economic development positions.

Following presentations from the two SIPP reps, the inaugural webinar in the series allowed for discussions in various breakout rooms.

"We were able to group people together based on where they're at (with their partnership ventures)," Pewapisconias said. "It was really positive being able to create those breakout sessions. We had a lot of positive feedback."

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Info.: www.edo.ca/youth/nieef-scholarships

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What Does CEDI Do?

CEDI supports First Nation-Municipal partnerships across Canada to build sustainable relationships and to engage in joint long-term land use and community economic development planning and initiatives.

8

Current
Partnerships

15

Graduated
Partnerships

36

First Nation
Partners

31

Municipal
Partners

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