



# Urban Spirit

*ACCESS envisions an urban Aboriginal community empowered through culture, wellness, achievement and self sufficiency.*

May 2009

Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society  
Administrative Office: 108-100 Park Royal  
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2

## ABORIGINAL INCLUSION WORKS '09

Nearly 600 employers, presenters, and job-ready graduates attended the *Inclusion Works '09* from April 6-8, 2009 in Vancouver. It's aim was to stimulate real change for the Aboriginal workforce. Employers and HR practitioners along with 100 Aboriginal post-secondary gathered together for this employment event.

ACCESS staff were on hand to support and encourage the students prior to their interviews with employers who arrived from all over Canada looking to hire the best and the brightest of the next generation of the Aboriginal community.



ACCESS Staff on a tour of the Trades programs at BCIT



Metis Buttertown Jiggers performed at the Aboriginal Inclusion '09 gala dinner

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The Honourable Steven Point Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, far right, along with Mrs. Point, far left, Nancy and Shawn Atleo attend the gala dinner

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

by Elaine Clare



Welcome to the 2009 spring edition of the ACCESS newsletter. For those who missed the last issue of Urban Spirit the following is an update regarding the AHRDA renewal.

ACCESS has been granted a one-year extension and will continue to provide employment and training opportunities to urban Aboriginal people until March 2010. The one-year extension will provide a gradual transition toward the renewal strategy and allow for planning of future initiatives.

If you wish to find out more about ACCESS then you can attend the ACCESS Spring community forum on May 14th to be held at the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Centre 1607 East Hastings Street. The forum runs from 11:00 to 3:00 p.m. Clients can peruse the information booths before lunch and speak with the local employers and various community organizations.

The Lac Kaine Dance group will perform at the forum and you also have a chance to win a door prize!

The theme of the community forum is “Riding out the Roller Coaster of Employment.” ACCESS’ goal is to equip clients with survival techniques on how to cope with today’s economic ups and downs and how it affects employment.

ACCESS offers customized employment and training services designed specifically to provide members of the Lower Mainland urban Aboriginal community with the education and skills to compete

equally and effectively in today’s job market. Building skills specific to the job site is the focus of the Essential skills lab in New Westminster. The Essential Skills lab has increased workplace skills specific to the employer partners within the Aboriginal community. New partnerships have been created including BC Ferries, CN Rail, CP Rail, BC Housing, Safeway and Overwaitea Food Group.

ACCESS Trades Training and Apprenticeships along with BCIT delivered programs such as the Carpentry IP refresher, Plumbing Level 1, and Women in Trades just to mention a few. ACCESS Trades also supports clients who are interested in apprenticeship opportunities. Call Helen or Rob or Larry at 604-922-4077 if you are interested in starting a career in the trades.

The BladeRunners program is designed to assist youth-at-risk to receive training and secure jobs in the construction field. The success of this program is largely due to the 24/7 support model that is now being adopted all across Canada. Call Darcy or Garry or Eddie or Peter at 604-688-9116 if you know of any youth who may be interested in this unique opportunity.

For those who may want to learn more about ACCESS services please check our new website at [www.accessfutures.com](http://www.accessfutures.com). You will find information on currently funded programs, funding options, a job seeker page, and links to resources within the community.

We hope to see you at the community forum.

Happy Spring!

## ACCESS Trades Training and Apprenticeships

ACCESS Trades, in partnership with VRCA (Vancouver Regional Construction Association), the (ITA) Industry Training Authority and BOB (Building Opportunities for Business) hosted a Women's CORE Program from January 12<sup>th</sup> to March 6, 2009 at the RONA/VANOC Fabrication Shop. The women attended life skills classes facilitated by Leslie Nelson, financial literacy facilitated by Danielle Levine, and basic carpentry and skills development instructed by James Martin.



Under the guidance of James Martin, the women learned to work with basic hand and power tools.

They completed two projects, a coat rack and a cedar chest that they were allowed to keep. They also built an Asian style kiosk that is currently in use at Lonsdale Quay.

ACCESS Trades provides training and support to apprentices and continues to host numerous trades related programs for Aboriginal people. For more information on this and other trades related programs, contact ACCESS Trades at (604) 922-4077 or visit any of the ACCESS offices in the lower mainland.



Over a thousand youth from all over Canada attended the *Gathering Our Voices Youth Conference* held at the Grand Okanagan Resort in Kelowna from March 17-20<sup>th</sup>. ACCESS Trades attended and presented at the conference. The youth were given an opportunity to dress in various trades gear, and providing they answered skill testing questions about the trades, were eligible to win great prizes, including two ipods.



# November 2008 Community Forum

Service Canada's Keith Conn: "ACCESS is there for 2010"

Community forum attendees braced themselves for news regarding changes to client and program funding as a result of the renewal process of the AHRDA's during Keith Conn's speech at the ACCESS community forum on November 27, 2008.

Keith, who is from the Aboriginal Unit Human Resources Skills and Development Canada listed the priorities for the successor strategy, including focus on youth, those with disabilities, multiple barriered clients, and Essential Skills.

He exclaimed that while he doesn't have a crystal ball in front of him, that looking at the results and achievements of ACCESS, "it is logical to think ACCESS is there for the future."

This is encouraging news indeed, and we hope that ACCESS will continue to provide services to Aboriginal clients, build partnerships and deliver employment and training programs in the Metro Vancouver area in and beyond 2010.



## New Partnership for Essential Skills Lab

Building skills specific to job site is the focus for the Essential Skills Lab in New Westminster. The Essential Skills lab has increased workplace skills specific to the employer partners within the Aboriginal community. New partnerships have been created including BC Ferries, CN Rail and CP Rail, BC Housing, Safeway and Overwaitea.



*Essential Skills Participants pose for picture on Personality Development day.*



*Participants take time to get some sun during their visit to Overwaitea store.*



*Ian Kato, Manager, Recruitment & Retention, far left, along with Essential Skills participants and Overwaitea store manager Wayne Allan, right, on a site tour.*



*Participants work toward attaining certification in First Aid.*



## BladeRunners Receive Lifeskills Training

In January 2009 Vancouver ACCESS BladeRunners youth recieved gang awareness training from Amir Javid of *Real World Truth*.

Amir Javid, a former gang member, puts his life on the line and wears a bullet proof vest when trying to recruit youth at-risk out of a gang lifestyle.

The gang awareness training was part of the life skills training in which funding was received by BladeRunners partners Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Strategy and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada - Office of the Federal Interlocutor.

Youth also learned cultural teachings from various Elders and spiritual advisors. Activities included pipe ceremonies, moccasin making, bannock making and drum making.



*BR Courtney Point completes her bannok bread*



*Elder Madeline Bird instructs BR Youth on moccasins and the importance of detail in their designs.*

**Urban Spirit Foundation**  
For more information check out website or  
phone 604-913-7933

## Cary Speck: Red Seal Certified

ACCESS is pleased to announce that Carey Speck from Namgis First Nation received his Red Seal Plumber certification in April 2009. ACCESS acknowledges that acquiring Red Seal certification is challenging and difficult and would like to congratulate Carey on his diligence, hard work and accomplishments.

To Carey the benefit of having a Red Seal means greater job security, confidence, and meaningful work. With the Red Seal and new found feelings of accomplishment, Carey is able to handle on the job demands and greater responsibilities. Carey wishes to thank ACCESS, BCIT, the trades' community and his family for their ongoing support.



According to Carey, BCIT instructors were supportive in providing extra tutoring time as well as other needed resources. ACCESS provided financial aid, moral support, guidance and help with paperwork. Carey appreciates the mentorship he received from other skilled workers at his job sites. Carey Speck's recommendations to others for success include, "Don't quit, get on it, and stick by it. The grunt work is part of learning!"

## Reginal Scow: ACE Administrative Assistant



Paulette Seymour, ACE Manager is pleased to introduce the newest staff member and ex ACCESS client, Reginal Scow who started his new job at ACCESS Aboriginal Connections of Employment (ACE) in April 2009.

He holds a certificate in Applied Business Technology from the Native Education College that was funded by ACCESS. He brings with him office administration experience from two housing societies of Vancouver as well as from employment services in North Vancouver. In the short time he's been working

at ACE he has proven himself to be reliable, diligent, friendly, and personable.

All visitors have welcomed him and he's even connected with some friends and family that haven't seen him for awhile. Paulette and Employment counsellor Pam Ryan agree that, "He fits right in, is a joy to work with, and he certainly balances out the gender scale."

## 2009 ACCESS Funded Programs

- ACCESS Trades
- Aboriginal Connections to Employment
- Anderson Lodge Pre-Employment Program
- BladeRunners
- Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures
- Helping Spirit Lodge Society Visions and Decisions Pre-Employment Program
- Kla-how-eya EAS Program
- Native Education College West Coast Jewellery Arts Program
- Summer Student Program
- Turtle Island Aboriginal Self Employment Program
- UNYA Native Youth Learning Centre
- Aboriginal Tourism BC Trailblazers Program

## NORTHWEST COAST JEWELLERY ARTS GRADUATES



ACCESS wishes to congratulate the 2009 Northwest Coast Jewellery Arts graduates. The program is in partnership with ACCESS and Native Education College.

Lattimer Gallery will be hosting the *Contemporary Reflections II* graduation show on May 23, 2009. The gallery will display the students' pieces.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Much of the jewellery presented will be available for purchase.

## Mission Statement

To provide training and human resource development opportunities that inspire, nurture & encourage urban Aboriginal people on their journey to success.

*If you would like to subscribe to ACCESS newsletter, submit an article, or provide general comments, or artwork please contact: [elaine@buildingfuturestoday.com](mailto:elaine@buildingfuturestoday.com) Fax 604-913-7938*



Service  
Canada



ACCESS Website: [www.accessfutures.com](http://www.accessfutures.com)