



# Urban Spirit Newsletter

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

Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society  
Administrative Office: 108-100 Park Royal  
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May 2011



ACCESS Trades apprenticeship counselor, Larry Webster, presents David Ward with a certificate of completion for the ATEP funded BCIT Sheet Metal Program. ATEP is funding made available through the Federal-Provincial Labour Market Agreement. David Ward now works for Alliance Fabrication as a Level I apprentice.

The Federal-Provincial LMA funding has also provided ACCESS with the opportunity to offer a BCIT Welding Level 'C' program in partnership with the Industry Training Authority of BC Aboriginal Initiative, and a Transportation Trades Discovery Program in Partnership with Vancouver Community College. For more information about ACCESS Trades programs see page 7.

## Featured Articles

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Drum by Yvette Pena

# Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers

The Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers resulted in a successful partnership outcome between ACCESS and VCC. The 18-week program consisted of three cohorts of 16 students. The program was designed to encourage Aboriginal people to explore and pursue careers in the health field while offering essential skills, upgrading, health career preparation courses and individual support. After the completion of the program the students were given an on line evaluation to provide feedback about the program.

The result of that evaluation was:

77% of respondents felt that AGHC had helped them improve their essential skills

83% of respondents said that the academic and personal coaching they received in AGHC was helpful.

75% of respondents said that the Aboriginal cultural supports offered with the program were helpful.

83% of respondents are currently in a training or education program.

75% of respondents became employed.



Hello, my name is Priscilla M Richard. I am a young Aboriginal woman from the Chippewas of Nawash tribe also known as Anishnabe or Ojibway. My home reserve is called Cape Croker which is located in Georgian Bay, Ontario. I come from the Sturgeon Clan. I have a huge family on both my Dad's and my Mother's side. Altogether from both sides, we are 12 siblings in total. My father has left to the next world but not without meeting his second generation of grandchildren. I am the youngest on my father's side of 7, and the second oldest on my mom's side of five. I have two beautiful boys, ages 6 and 8, who are the world to me. I have recently completed a program

called "Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers" which is assisting me in working towards my career goals. I have decided I would like to go into nursing and possibly specialize in the Maternity Ward. I have been accepted into the Nursing Unit Clerk Program, which is an 8 month program which started in January 2011. My plan is to finish getting my prerequisites for the LPN program as well as some grade 12 courses and then do some university courses once I'm finished the NUC program. Hopefully I'll be able to get into St. Paul's or other major hospitals.

The LPN program was what really interested me when I first started the Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers Program. But now that I have had some time and help to really explore, it has really opened my eyes to all the possibilities in the health careers workforce. I will be taking my education to the next level and will always continue to climb up.





## Essential Skills For Aboriginal Futures

Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures partnered with ATIRA Property Management Inc. to offer an Essential skills program for participants interested in learning about becoming Front Desk Clerks with ATIRA Hotels in the Downtown Eastside. The program consisted of six weeks-essential skills enhancements at the Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures office in New Westminster. During the program students had the opportunity to participate in full day job shadowing placements at three different Hotel sites.

This experience gave the students the hands on practical applications which prepared them for both their interviews and employment. At the closing of the program graduation ceremony the ATIRA Director of Human Resources Niki Antonopoulou announced that all 9 graduating students were hired for positions as Front Desk Clerks. To date, all participants of this program have maintained their employment.

A great success!

Bracelet by Joseph Robertson  
Northwest Coast Jewellery Arts  
Program



# BladeRunners Programs



*Victor McKay – 27 years old, MVUAS Construction Program 2010*

Victor McKay is from the Nisga'a Nation and grew up in the Prince Rupert area. By the age of 27 he had moved around between a number of different cities but always kept Vancouver as his focal point. Prior to joining the BladeRunners construction program in September 2010 he was living in a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

After completing the program he began working steadily to support his family. In October he found a job working with rebar with Lake Brothers Reinforcing. He has since moved to Luso Concrete Placer and Finisher. Victor's bosses have praised both his work abilities and his attitude. He now lives in Burnaby with his family; he has two young daughters and a new baby on the way. Victor talks highly of the BladeRunners program. He is grateful and appreciative of the support he has been given.



*Students in the BladeRunners Construction program spend a week at the Squamish Nation Trades Centre learning basic carpentry skills*



*Students attend a First Aid Level 1 course as part of the Building Maintenance program*



*As part of the Building Maintenance program, BladeRunners Coordinators have created a successful partnership with ATIRA Housing to employ students*

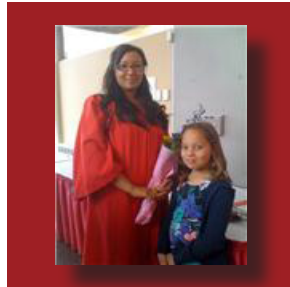


## Teresa Blyth-Resident Care Attendant

**M**y name is Teresa Blyth. I am a single mother of a seven year old daughter and am a non-status native of Coast Salish heritage from the Musqueam Nation. As my long term career goal, I wanted to work in the health care industry as I believe that it is an industry that is forever growing, evolving and will always be in demand.

I chose the Resident Care Attendant program at Kwantlen University as a stepping stone to reach this goal. I believe that becoming a care attendant will allow me vast opportunities to experience a variety of health care aspects that will help to further my knowledge and growth within the health care industry.

About two years ago I began to pursue the idea of becoming a Care Attendant and began gathering the prerequisites to put this goal into action. I hit a dilemma-how do I educate myself while having a full time job?



“I am now employed with both the Peace Arch Hospital and the Delta View Care Centre and I am eternally grateful for ACCESS’ support and assistance.”

## Diamond Point - Summer Student

**T**he Native Youth Program (NYP) is a work experience program for urban Aboriginal high school students aged 15-18. The NYP is entering its 32nd year at the Museum of Anthropology (MOA). One of the goals of the NYP is that the students learn about their own and other cultures in a contemporary museum setting. They are trained to give tours to Museum visitors. They go on field trips, and are exposed to mentors from the urban aboriginal community, including artists and elders. Diamond Point, aged 17, is from the Musqueam Nation and is a past NYP student. Diamond was a participant in the 2009 summer program and in the 2010 winter program. She was incredibly dedicated and hard

working.

Last summer, Diamond participated in a prestigious art program called the Summer Institute for Teens at Emily Carr University of Art and Design on Granville Island, where she received a full scholarship.

Diamond will be graduating next year and plans on attending UBC for an undergraduate degree in visual art. Her goal is to attend law school so that she can practice Aboriginal law as a career.

*High school students interested in applying to NYP, contact Pam Brown Tel: (604) 822-6587 by early June.*



# Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers Grad 2011

The third intake of the Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers program held its graduation ceremony at Vancouver Community College on March 3, 2011. This 18-week program is a partnership between ACCESS and VCC and was designed to encourage Aboriginal people to explore and pursue careers in the health field while offering essential skills, upgrading, health career preparation courses, and individual support.



*3rd Cohort Grad class of 2011*



*VCC staff Sue Aro and Ted Houghman honour the students*



*Lots of recognition and hugs*



*Grads share a proud moment*



*Jeannie Parnell and Brenda Crump give out attendance awards*



*The grads share a moment of laughter*



*Elaine Clare, Program Manager, and Lucie Lacille, ACCESS Director thank the students for their commitment*



*Students are enjoying their day of recognition*



*Students received completion certificates*

## ACCESS Trades (cont.)



*Dakota Carpenter Humchitt  
First Year Welder Level C*

ACCESS Trades is presently working with BCIT and the Industry Training Authority to deliver a Level C welding Program. The program started in October 2010. Thirteen students will be graduating in June 2011. This is an awesome accomplishment for both Student and Instructors. A graduation event is being held at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Center on June 3, 2011 to celebrate their achievement.

### ACCESS to Transportation Trades

In partnership with Vancouver Community College ACCESS Trades has 9 students attending a Transportation Trades Discovery program. The program is designed to provide introductory training for a transition into one of the following trades; Heavy Duty Commercial Transport, Automotive Service Technician, Automotive Collision Repair, or Automotive Collision Refinishing. This program is scheduled to conclude at the end of June 2011.



*Dave Ward  
First Year Sheet Metal Worker*

I am a Kaska Dene/Taku River Tlingit from Whitehorse, Yukon. My time with ACCESS Trades has been thoroughly helpful in starting my career in Sheet Metal. I feel I've been blessed having my BCIT tuition and books paid so I can learn as much as possible for my first year apprentice! My job coach, Bruce Mah, has also been a big help pushing me to stay on top of my studies in the classroom and hands on work in the shop. Since graduation from BCIT, I've acquired a job as a first year apprentice with my employer Evergreen Sheet Metal. I have been installing slab duct, and over head ducts in a high rise in Richmond. Now that I have a job working towards my goal of becoming a Red Seal Journeyman, I have the opportunity of moving ahead in my life with a secure feeling!! Mahsi-Cho (Kaska Dene) Gunesh Cheesh (Taku River Tlingit) ACCESS Trades!!"



## 2011 ACCESS Funded Programs

- ACCESS Trades
- Aboriginal Connections to Employment
- BladeRunners
- Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures
- ACCESS EAS sites
- Visions and Decisions Pre Employment Program
- Surrey Employment EAS site (new)
- Native Education College Northwest Coast Jewellery Arts
- Summer Student Program
- UNYA Native Youth Learning Centre
- Pre Employment Programs



### Quote of the day!

Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves

-Sir James Barrie

### Quote of the day!

The great thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving

-Oliver Wendall Holmes

### Quote of the day!

Just as the caterpillar thought the world was over it became a butterfly!

-Unknown

## Mission Statement

To increase Aboriginal participation in the labour market

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



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