



# Urban Spirit

*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  
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2

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Gildas - Box of Treasures  
By Dan Wallace

## Urban Spirit Foundation

**T**he newly ACCESS formed society Urban Spirit Foundation was formed in 2008. The purposes of the society are:

To develop and deliver programs and services that provide education and training and that enhance job and career opportunities for urban youth-at-risk (Aboriginal and non Aboriginal). To provide post-secondary scholarships to persons of Aboriginal decent who are pursuing post-secondary studies in fields that will help meet the specific needs of First Nation, Inuit, or Metis peoples and communities in Canada. To relieve poverty among urban Aboriginal individuals and families by providing food hampers, clothing, bus passes, emergency funds, and similar assistance in times of need.

\*Urban Spirit Society is having a logo contest. For more details, see page 3.

Donations are accepted at ACCESS head office at 108-100 Park Royal West Vancouver, BC

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Mask by Yul Baker

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

by Elaine Clare



Welcome to the 2008 fall edition of the ACCESS newsletter. I am very happy to announce that ACCESS has been granted a one-year extension through the existing AHRDA contribution agreement.

ACCESS will continue to provide employment and training opportunities to urban Aboriginal people until March 2010. 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 programs, funding options, a job seeker page, and links to resources within the community.

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.

ACCESS delivers an assortment of training, one-on-one counselling support and financial support to help members of the urban Aboriginal community overcome employment barriers that may stand in the way of success and self-sufficiency.

The one-year extension will provide a gradual transition toward the renewal strategy and allow for planning of future initiatives. In the past five years it is safe to say that ACCESS has had a huge impact on the urban Aboriginal community in the area of employment and training. Clients are successful in

securing and maintaining employment. Statistics show employment opportunities and jobs have been created.

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 and Safeway. ACCESS Trades and Apprenticeships reports that they have many new apprenticeship trainees. BladeRunners youth who are working on construction sites are increasing every year. The amount of ACCESS bursaries awarded to post secondary students in 2008 is up to 17 compared to 3 awarded in 2003. The number of youth ages 15-30 years old who are employed or have returned to school is increasing every year. Statistics show that in 2006 - 2007 a total of 778 youth returned to school or secured employment.

In the next eighteen months ACCESS would like to continue to produce these numbers while creating more partnerships and increasing employment opportunities. This will only mean more client successes. First Nations support their own First Nations community. The Metis support the Metis community. However, what makes ACCESS unique is that it supports all Aboriginal people in the Metro Vancouver area who may or may not be status, and who live away from their home communities. For them, ACCESS opens doors when other doors have been closed to them. We remain confident that ACCESS will secure a renewal contract and until then, will continue to meet the employment and training needs of the urban Aboriginal community.

## Client Funding Information

Question: What can ACCESS do for me?

**A**CCCESS offers a variety of funding options for urban Aboriginal individuals interested in training. These options include individual seat purchases for post secondary education, skills enhancement programs, and targeted wage subsidies. ACCESS also offers a bursary that is designed to assist urban Aboriginal students who are enrolled in post secondary institutions.

Check out the ACCESS website at [www.accessfutures.com](http://www.accessfutures.com) for a list of upcoming ACCESS programs. Interested persons should make an appointment to see an Employment Counsellor at one of the ACCESS employment assistance services sites. Services include a fully equipped resource area with computers, internet, phones, photocopying and faxing services, one-on-one employment counselling, facilitated group workshops, individual client funding for seat purchases, and targeted wage subsidies.

Once there, the employment counsellor will provide information about the funding process. The applicant must meet the required criteria in order to be eligible for funding.

ACCESS Trades program can assist with EI applications and apprenticeships for those who are seeking a career in trades.

In the past ACCESS has worked with First Nations Bands to cost share for the client, whereby the band would cover the living allowance and ACCESS would provide funding for tuition.

The employment counsellor will determine if the client is EI eligible and assist with applications to request EI funding.

Please ensure applications are submitted six to eight weeks prior to the start date of the program to allow time for the funding process. An application for funding will not be granted once the program has already started and the client is enrolled.

Urban Spirit Foundation Logo Design Contest

Extended deadline for entry:

January 16th, 2009

For more information check out website or  
phone 604-913-7933



## SUMMER STUDENT PROGRAM

The children from the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre summer day camp attended the Vancouver aquarium as one of the fun activities offered through the day camp program. The camp is an affordable program offered to urban Aboriginal children ages 6-12. The program provides meaningful and fun activities in a safe and nurturing environment and offers recreational activities including sports and art, as well as provides healthy snacks. Five post secondary students were hired as youth leaders who gained career and leadership skills through these summer employment placements.

ACCESS partnered with eight other Aboriginal organizations to provide summer employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal secondary and post secondary students.



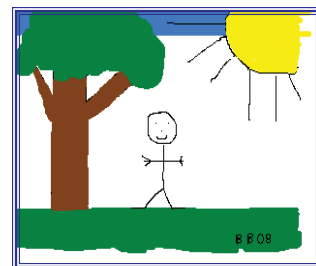
## SUMMER STUDENT CORNER



Caitlin Davie is enrolled in her third year at UBC on a soccer scholarship. She had a summer placement as a Planning Engineering Technologist trainee at Naut Sa Mawt Tribal Council/Hemmera

Enviro Chem Inc. Caitlin was also awarded the 2008 ACCESS bursary for \$3,500.

Caitlin's family is originally from Norway House, Manitoba and is from the Cree nation.



**Sunny Happy Day  
By  
Blair Bellerose**

## ACCESS TRADES UPDATE

ACCESS trades apprentices Randy and Ryan Spencer spoke about how training has changed their lives and also influenced family. Ryan was quick to offer that he quit drinking two years ago. “I have more motivation to move forward...I have a goal to better myself. Didn’t know I wanted to do construction but it opened the door. My brother Chris went to college and didn’t know what he wanted to do. He saw what I was doing so he took gas fitting. The money was better. Now my youngest brother is a plumbing apprentice too.”

Randy said the training made it easier to get jobs. “The wages are better. Financially, I can give stuff to my kids that I never had growing up.”

Charles Narcisse completed the Carpenter IP refresher and challenged the Red Seal Carpenter examinations. Charles was successful and is now a certified Red Seal Carpenter. Congratulations, Charles!

New programs starting in November 2008:

- \*Plumbing Level I: November 17, 2008 Full time 16 weeks program
- \*Carpentry IP Refresher: November 6, 2008. 90 Hours (part time) evening program
- \*Women in Trades: CORE program TBA Full time

CALL ACCESS TRADES FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TRADES TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIPS at 604-922-4077



Ryan Spencer with Larry Webster, ACCESS Trades Apprenticeship Counsellor, and Randy Thomas. Both Ryan and Randy are year III Plumbing apprentices.



ACCESS apprenticeship counsellor Rob Egan congratulates Charles Narcisse who received his Red Seal carpenter certificate.

## BLADERUNNERS TRIP TO NEW ORLEANS

In April 2008, the Vancouver BladeRunners made a second trip to New Orleans to continue to build partnerships, network, and exchange program information. They shared the BladeRunners award winning model of providing 24 -7 support to at-risk youth. The visit included doing volunteer work to build housing after Hurricane Katrina. BladeRunners also coordinated a seminar for local youth and community groups.

The trip was featured in the media by *24 Newspaper* and *CBC radio*.

Next Steps: One local New Orleans group, *Make It Right*, is interested in possibly using the BladeRunner model in the future. Vancouver ACCESS BladeRunners will invite New Orleans groups to Vancouver to learn about the program first hand.

A future trip focusing efforts on the most devastated area of New Orleans, The ninthth Ward, is being considered.



## COORDINATOR SCOTT MCKINTY LEAVES BLADERUNNERS TO WORK WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

BladeRunners Scott McKinty from the John Howard Society, will be leaving the BladeRunners program to begin work with Habitat for Humanity. He has been with the BladeRunners program supporting at-risk youth on and off construction sites for three years.

Scott exemplified all of the best qualities of a BladeRunners coordinator and was extremely committed to his work.

He will be missed by all the BladeRunners staff throughout the province, and the youth that he supported so well.





## ACCESS BIDS FAREWELL TO WENDY CHENEY

**W**endy Cheney, Manager, Aboriginal Partnerships Labour Market and Social Development Programs with Service Canada was a great support to the ACCESS team. Wendy has moved on to Justice Canada as the Manager for Restorative Justice programming.

Wendy is the new Regional Coordinator, responsible for the BC Aboriginal Justice Strategy (AJS). She works directly with Aboriginal communities to develop restorative justice programs. Key goals are to reduce crime and incarceration in Aboriginal communities and increase their involvement in local administration of justice. The AJS strategy is in response to the fact that Aboriginal people are over-represented in the justice system.

The staff of ACCESS wish to thank her for all her work and support over the years and wish her the best of luck in her new position.



## ACCESS PARTNERSHIP WITH CP RAIL



Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures program successfully partnered with CP Rail to deliver essential skills training leading to training and employment as conductors. CP instructor Leif Sorenson, bottom left with Francesca de Bastiani from Service Canada, centre, shown here with Essential Skills participants.

## 2008 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
- UNYA Native Youth Learning Centre
- UNYA Tutor Mentor Program
- Various trades skills training programs

## Five Year Service Awards



Seven employees celebrated five years of service at ACCESS. They are Helen Boyce, Linda Federaton, Jackie Grandbois, Shannon McMillan, Blair Bellerose, Garry Jobin, and Lucie Lacaille.

CEO John Webster (far right) thanked them for hard work and dedication to ACCESS.



## ACCESS CORE VALUES



## 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)