

Urban Aboriginal Economic Development

June, 2009

Volume 1, Issue 2

Welcome

We are pleased to present the Summer 2009 edition of the Urban Aboriginal Economic Development National Network newsletter. We hope that this quarterly newsletter will help to keep you informed about network activities and opportunities. If you have any comments on how we can improve the newsletter or any news that you would like us to include in our next issue, feel free to contact the coordinator at uaed@abdc.bc.ca.

About the National Network:

The Urban Aboriginal Economic Development National Network is an open and inclusive multi-stakeholder network of researchers and practitioners working in urban Aboriginal and Métis communities. This includes organizations, universities, federal/ provincial/ municipal and Aboriginal governments, private industry, community groups, and NGO's. The network's focus is on mobilizing economic development knowledge and strengthening organizational capacity.

We are now on the web: <http://www.abdc.bc.ca/uaed/>

Network News:

Second Call for Proposals

The UAED has the opportunity to support grad students in undertaking activities for the network. There are three streams of student support. For more information please contact Greg Halseth, halseth@unbc.ca.

Jodi Bruhn has recently joined the network as a temporary replacement for steering committee member Cheryl Matthew. She has recently joined the OFI from the Institute on Governance, and we have every confidence that she will be a valuable asset for the network.

The UAED Network is planning to host a second Learning Circle of Learning Circles to share knowledge gained from the Learning Circles this past year. This Learning Circle will be held in Vancouver, BC on November 5-6th, 2009. Please contact the coordinator at uaed@abdc.bc.ca for more information.

Learning Circle News:

News:

A "Learning Circle of Learning Circles" was held in Ottawa on March 9th. See the page: <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaed/learning-circles/learning-circle-of-learning-circles-2/march-9th-2009-learning-circle/> for the notes.

The Learning Circle in Sault Ste. Marie is up and running. They have just held their third successful circle. Notes from the circles are on the page: <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaed/learning-circles/sault-ste-marie/>

The Vancouver Learning Circle held their first meeting in May.

The Small Town Governance Learning Circle had their first meeting in June; there are notes about this circle in the Story to Share section on page four.



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Learning Circle News Continued:

Recently, one of the partners in the Network hosted a series of Learning Circles focused on Aboriginal women. With funding from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the Aboriginal Business and Community Development Centre initiated five Learning Circles in Edmonton, Fort St. John, Masset, Prince Rupert, and Prince George. The Circles were an opportunity for Aboriginal women in the communities to come together, learn from each other, and identify ideas to help Aboriginal women participate in the economy.

Each Circle produced a different outcome, but all were successful in identifying a project, a business, or an idea that the members of the Circle could pursue. A second round of Circles for those communities is being planned. A copy of the full report is available at the network website, at <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaid/learning-circles/women-s-social-enterprise/>

The circles were held in the following communities:

Edmonton: March 13th, 2009

<http://abdc.bc.ca/uaid/learning-circles/women-s-social-enterprise/edmonton/>

Fort St. John: March 25th, 2009

<http://abdc.bc.ca/uaid/learning-circles/women-s-social-enterprise/fort-st-john/>

Masset: March 20th, 2009

<http://abdc.bc.ca/uaid/learning-circles/women-s-social-enterprise/masset/>

Prince George: February 24th, 2009

<http://abdc.bc.ca/uaid/learning-circles/women-s-social-enterprise/prince-george/>

Prince Rupert: March 23rd, 2009

<http://abdc.bc.ca/uaid/learning-circles/women-s-social-enterprise/prince-rupert/>

Learning Circles that are the process of being formed:

- Halifax
- Prince George
- Victoria

How to Get Involved:

Please contact John McBride at john_mcbride@sfu.ca for more information about Learning Circles.

Contact Us:

Aboriginal Business Development Centre * 3845 15th Avenue Prince George BC V2N 1A4
Phone: (250) 562 6325 * Fax: (250) 562 6326

Urban Aboriginal Economic Development

Information: Conferences, Publications and Practices

Conferences:

Gathering for Success: Sharing Indigenous Economic Development Practices

Website: <http://www.aboriginal.alberta.ca/518.cfm>

The Government of Alberta, through the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations, is pleased to present Gathering for Success, a three-day international symposium sharing Indigenous economic development practices. Join over 500 delegates to hear world-class speakers and leaders sharing insights and successful practices in Indigenous economic and community development from around the world.

The conference will benefit anyone working to improve socio-economic outcomes for Indigenous people. It's ideal for Aboriginal leaders, economic development organizations, policy makers, community planners, educators, program developers and others who want practical examples, expert advice and first-hand, relevant information.

For more information, contact gatheringforsuccess@gov.ab.ca or phone 780.427.2105.

Publications:

All of the publications listed here can be found on the network website:

<http://abdc.bc.ca/uaed/documents/document-library/>

Title: Aboriginal Women in Economic Development

Author: Charles Horn, University of Victoria

Title: Opportunities and Challenges Urban Environments Represent for Urban Aboriginal Economic Development,

Author: Evelyn J. Peters, University of Saskatchewan

Summary by John McBride: The first distinction that Evelyn Peters makes is that it focuses on collective urban economic development issues rather than individuals requiring assistance, such as; training for skills upgrading, social assistance for unemployment, loans and grants for entrepreneurs, or assistance finding a job. The collective issues include governance, culture, spirituality, education, community healing & social development and training.

She states that economic issues are not perceived as existing in isolation from other issues in the community. The success or failure of economic development is connected to the spiritual and cultural well-being of the community. Economic development is seen as a tool to help Aboriginal people rebuild their communities and societies. Peters implies that community development is the central focus.

The key strategy outlined in the paper is the opportunity for the formation of political organizations. In larger urban Aboriginal populations where there's Aboriginal control over sectors, there's control over factors required for the development of healthy communities.

Peters says, "It may be important to view the idea of political sovereignty from another perspective. If the main kernel of this ingredient is control over a variety of interlocking initiatives (e.g. governance, spirituality, education, training, community healing) that have to do with creating healthy communities, it may be that some urban areas offer an advantage because of their larger population size. In other words, there may be more opportunities for 'institutional completeness.' "

Date:

June 28th–30th, 2009

Place:

Fairmont Springs
Conference
Centre

City:

Banff, Alberta

Information:

Ray Gerow and
John McBride will
represent the
network at
Gathering For
Success.

Urban Aboriginal Economic Development

Story to Share: Learning Circle on Small Town Governance, June 3rd, 2009

Members Attending:

- First Nations University of Canada, Regina: Bettina Schneider & Oksana Starchenko
- Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation: John Harper & Milt Wright
- Prince George Aboriginal Business & Community Development Centre: Ray Gerow & Veronica Creyke
- Simon Fraser University, Burnaby: John McBride
- TRICORP, Prince Rupert: Peter Lantin
- University of Victoria: Charles Horn
- University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George: Don Manson

The purpose of a discussion of small town governance is related to the focus of our SSHRC project on urban Aboriginal economic development. What we mean by governance is taking collective action by a group that is formally or informally constituted. The benefits associated with supporting the emergence of governance are: a point of contact for government agencies, and through agency coordination, the lower transaction costs associated with shared resources. The risk is an association of elites in conversation with themselves.

Our discussion reflected the idea that urban governance works towards the development of the whole community. This includes the attributes of a healthy community, a community that is connected to one another and has connections to the non-native community. We believe economic development follows from community development. The conditions we need to support aboriginal business are enhanced by good governance. They are: champions, mentors and a relationship of trust between the community leaders and the aboriginal entrepreneurs they intend to serve. Beyond that there is the need to provide: work readiness, job experience, business skills, access to capital, and community support for the businesses started.

What we want this circle to have accomplished in six months time are:

- Define what we mean by governance. What is the nature/form of collective action?
- Better understand the relationship between the political/organizational and Economic Development, Community Economic Development and Community Development.
- Difference between urban and on-Reserve Economic Development.
- More clarity about who wants to be organized in the community, when, where, and to what degree including an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal collaborative model, and more first person involvement in the conversation about these issues
- Identify three or four different models of small town governance.
- Start a case study of relationship between governance structures and economic development in Regina.

In future issues of the newsletter, this section will be an interactive space for Network participants. Participants will have the opportunity to share a story with the rest of the network. If you would like to submit a story to be included in the next newsletter, please email the coordinator at uaed@abdc.bc.ca

We are now on the web! Check out the website at: <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaed/>