

Urban Aboriginal Economic Development National Network



Background Brief: Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc.

Condensed from source documents by Julia Schwamborn, MA
UNBC Community Development Institute

May, 2010

Title: Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc.

Author: Julia Schwamborn, UNBC Community Development Institute

© Copyright 2010 UNBC Community Development Institute. All Rights Reserved.

About the Urban Aboriginal Economic Development 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.

This paper can be found on the network website: <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaed>

“The Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc. is a non-profit organization established to build leadership capacity in Indigenous people. We are run by Indigenous people and directed by a volunteer board reflecting the diversity of the Indigenous community. This board identifies specific training required to produce able and accomplished Indigenous leaders” (ILDII website).

Most people are not born leaders but acquire leadership skills over time. ILDII supports these people by providing the tools to acquire skills, receive education, gain experience, and understand what strong leadership means. ILDII also conducts research to identify community needs in the area of leadership and capacity building, to determine best practices, and to compile data on communities, which can be accessed by communities for the purpose of support and statistical backup. The goal is to prepare indigenous communities for “challenges and opportunities of the 21st century” (ILDII website “About Us”) with a focus on governance and the provision of necessary training and opportunities.

The Board of Directors consists of five members: Andrew Carrier, a Human Resources Specialist with past and present involvement and extensive experience in Community Services and Corrections, Family Services, Education and Training, and the Province of Manitoba Water Stewardship; Milton Tootoosis, who has worked with mainstream and Aboriginal businesses and public service organizations and has experience in Aboriginal human resource development; Lloyd Johnson, councilor for the Millbrook First Nation in Nova Scotia, who has a Bachelor of commerce degree and experience in technological and economic development; Allan Luby of the Ochiichagwe Babigo Ining Ojibway Nation, who has extensive business and professional expertise and is involved in numerous tourism-related businesses and organizations; and Ted Fontaine, former Chief of Sagkeeng First Nation, who has worked with First Nations groups for over thirty years and has served as Executive Director of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs for 4 years. (ILDII website “Board of Directors”)

ILDII also currently has five staff positions including a CEO, a Director of Program and Business Development, a Manager of Executive Training, a Manager of Project Development, and an Executive Assistant.

Executive Training

Through partnerships with educational institutions, ILDII offers a variety of courses as part of their executive training program. Courses are tailored to prepare participants for self-governance. As examples of typical participants of these courses ILDII lists band chiefs, band councilors, administrators, and senior executives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations. Organizations can register for courses annually and receive access to ILDII annual reports and research, invitations to events, and email notifications of events and sessions. Non-registered course participants pay \$400 per session. Courses are fully or partially sponsored through public and private partnerships.

Partnering educational institutions include:

- Carleton University

- The Centre for Professional Excellence
- Institute on Governance
- Native Nations Institute for leadership, management & policy/University of Arizona-Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development
- University of Victoria
- University of Winnipeg

Courses cover a wide range of leadership-related topics, including report and proposal writing, “How Ottawa works”, mediation and negotiation, strategic planning, nation building, board governance and policy development, accountability and performance reporting, and traditional teachings for contemporary leaders. These course topics aim at preparing Aboriginal communities to be strong and effective in areas such as government-to-government relations, financial management and accountability, nation building, media training, and negotiation and dispute resolution.

Initiatives

ILDII features a number of leadership initiatives.

Empowering Indigenous Youth in Government and Leadership (EIYGL) has members from fifteen to thirty-five years of age who are in a leadership role or are considered community role models. The goal is capacity building for youth leadership through mentoring and role modeling. In order to achieve this, EIYGL focuses on “improving high school completions rate for Indigenous students, creating more employment opportunities for Indigenous youth, providing positive activities for young people in Indigenous communities, and providing meaningful cultural awareness and contemporary learning opportunities for Indigenous youth” (EIYGL website).

Aboriginal leaders of the future need a skill set that is a combination of traditional leadership and community practices on the one hand and contemporary leadership skills on the other. EIYGL provides training opportunities to unite elder and community knowledge with professional education. They organize fundraiser luncheons where leaders share their experience and knowledge, and they send members to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. At special roundtables, EIYGL youth learn about and discuss best practices in areas such as leadership, governance, legislation, law enforcement, human resource management, and community involvement.

The *Indigenous Leadership Initiative* focuses on Aboriginal poverty as well as programs and initiatives to alleviate economic disparities. The group addresses the fact that government programs to date have failed to close the socioeconomic gap between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population and are not successful in motivating Aboriginal youth. They aim to bring together leaders of the main stakeholder groups to develop and implement “innovative systemic changes” (ILDII website. Indigenous Leadership Initiative). “The Leadership Initiative is an application of the ‘u-process’, a social technology for addressing highly complex challenges” (ILDII website. Indigenous Leadership Initiative).

The *First Nations Joint Initiative on Governance* (FNJI-G) provides a communication platform for indigenous leadership with indigenous capacity building as their main goal. As a forum, they invite First Nations communities and leaders to share expertise and enter a networking collaboration.

In order to increase the number of women in Aboriginal leadership positions, the *Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba*, in cooperation with other organizations, have created a one year formal training, networking, and mentoring program for women.

Multi-Sectoral Economic Opportunities for Indigenous People (MSEOIP) facilitates employment and other economic opportunities for indigenous people with a special focus on youth. The project manifests itself in a roundtable of twelve individuals representing a microcosm of the Canadian economy. Roundtable representation includes indigenous leadership, government, and business and education sectors. MSEOIP aims at holistic collaboration to come to an understanding of the indigenous economic situation and develop solutions based on that understanding.

ILDII also provides links to other initiatives and organizations. One of them is the *Aboriginal Cultural Awareness* initiative, a program developed in partnership with the Assembly of First Nations and Millbrook Technologies. This initiative offers online courses and learning material related to Aboriginal awareness, a respectful workplace, youth, racism, and cultural awareness of specific Aboriginal cultures.

ILDII and Urban Aboriginal Economic Development (UAED)

In the UAED context, ILDII can be regarded as both a model of urban Aboriginal organizations and a tool for urban Aboriginal people and other urban Aboriginal organizations.

As a model, ILDII demonstrates how an urban Aboriginal organization can be structured and governed, what a board can look like, and which staff positions should be considered when establishing an urban Aboriginal governance or service organization. EIYGL is a pool of excellent role models for other young Aboriginal people, rural or urban, and is an inspiration as such. It also provides an opportunity for interested young individuals to get involved and at the same time learn from peers and network nation-wide. Another aspect of ILDII as a role model is its focus on leadership capacity building. Education, training, and leadership capacity are crucial in UAED, and other urban Aboriginal organizations can learn from the approach.

As a tool for urban Aboriginal communities and organizations, ILDII offers the opportunity to acquire education and training. This kind of capacity building is needed in many Aboriginal communities and has the potential to help urban communities to create an improved sense of community and belonging, community cohesion in an urban setting, and the development of appropriate service delivery and Aboriginal rights advocacy.

“By actively promoting good governance...by identifying needed training...and by providing unique educational and skill-building opportunities...we help prepare Indigenous people for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century” (ILDII website “Executive Training”).

Contact Information

Email:

info@ildii.ca

The Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc.

101-1874 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0H2

Phone: (204) 940-1700

Fax: (204) 940-1719

Sources and Related Links

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness. Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://www.aboriginalawareness.ca>

Carlton University. Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://www.carleton.ca>

Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc. About Us. Accessed May 4, 2010.
<http://ildii.ca/>

_____. Indigenous Leadership Initiative. Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://ildii.ca/leadership-initiatives/aboriginal-leadership-initiative/>

Institute on Governance. Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://iog.ca/en>

Multi-Sectoral Economic Opportunities for Indigenous People (MSEOIP). Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://mseqip.com>

Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management, and Policy. University of Arizona. Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://nni.arizona.edu>

The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development. Accessed May 12, 2010.
<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/hpaied>

University of Victoria. Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://www.uvic.ca>

University of Winnipeg. Accessed May 12, 2010. <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca>