

Disclaimer

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1. **Learning from Place**—Narcisse Blood, Red Crow Community College, Cardston, Alberta
2. **Comprehending and Nourishing the Learning Spirit**—Dr. Marie Battiste, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
3. **Aboriginal Language and Learning**—Dr. Leona Makokis, Blue Quills First Nations College, St. Paul, Alberta
4. **Diverse Educational Systems and Learning**—Saskatchewan Ministry of Education (Ted Amendt), Regina, Saskatchewan
5. **Pedagogy of Professionals and Practitioners and Learning**—Dr. Sakej Henderson, Native Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
6. **Technology and Learning**—Genesis Group, John and Deb Simpson, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

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ABORIGINAL PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS COMPOSED OF ABORIGINAL PROFESSIONALS

Introduction

The AbLKC's Pedagogy of Professions and Practitioners Animation Theme Bundle researchers found sixty-one Aboriginal professional organizations and organizations concerned with Aboriginals in the workforce and the inclusion of Aboriginal knowledge, heritage, worldviews, and epistemologies in occupational practice. Aboriginal professionals led initiatives to build representative workforces with inclusive practices. However, not all Aboriginal professionals belong to the Aboriginal professional, lifelong learning, research, or governance organizations listed in this paper. The organizations contained in this short paper may be further classified according to one or more of their primary functions: business or private sector, professional/lifelong learning/advanced training/advocacy, research, and governance. The leaders and stakeholders in these five clusters believe that five cross-cutting themes permeate their work: pursuit of opportunities for advanced education, training and lifelong learning, and facilitation of knowledge exchange on promising practices, applied research, development of mentorship programs, and achievement of meaningful and sustainable, long-term economic development on their traditional territories.

The Organizations

Business or private sector

Aboriginal Canada Professional Centre and Internet Services (ACPCIS)

“ACPCIS is a First Nations company that offers Aboriginal organizations, First Nations, individuals and businesses one stop business solutions.”¹ Additionally, the business offers

¹ “Aboriginal Canadian Professional Centre and Internet Services: Ottawa,” retrieved June 15, 2009 from

<http://www.aboriginalcanada.ca/apcistxt.htm>, para one.

web management and hosting services along with a number of other internet, intranet, and extranet products.

Aboriginal Tourism Canada (ATC)

ATC was the outcome of a joint initiative undertaken by stakeholders from Aboriginal businesses involved in tourism and provincial, territorial, and federal government departments interested in the economic potential of tourism; ATC lobbies the various levels of government, on behalf of Aboriginal peoples for policies and programs that benefit Aboriginal communities and businesses.²

Arctic Co-operatives Limited (ACL)

32 Inuit and Dene co-operatives in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and northern Manitoba govern the ACL. Collectively, ACL's stakeholders leverage purchasing power for all of its member co-operatives. As well, ACL supports the business and technical responsibilities associated with the management and governance of co-operatives in the Arctic.³

Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association (CAMA)

CAMA is non-profit organization governed by Aboriginal stakeholders. Its directors focus their advocacy on comprehension of the benefits and concerns associated with the minerals industry. CAMA balances the potential for Aboriginal mining with Aboriginal communities' paramount interests in the protection and conservation of lands and resources. Its volunteer directors promote Aboriginal community economic development, mineral resource management, and environmental protection.⁴

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB)

CCAB (est. 1984) is a national, non-profit organization that provides tools and resources for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners, employees, and customers. CCAB's mission

² See ATC's website at <http://www.aboriginaltourism.ca/>.

³ See ACL's website at <http://www.arcticco-op.com/>.

⁴ See CAMA's website at <http://www.aboriginalminerals.com/>.

is to broker business relationships between the corporate sector and the Aboriginal community by providing the private sector with the resources it needs to engage Aboriginal people, businesses and communities.⁵

The Alberta Chamber of Resources (ACR) credits the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program, developed by the CCAB and incepted in 2001. The PAR system allows for employers to measure their Aboriginal policies and practices against an Aboriginal-developed system and to be recognized if their policies match or exceed PAR standards. Another important mechanism is the CCAB's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) gauge, which allows for a corporation's record on Aboriginal issues to be released to stakeholders. The innovation of the ACR's catalogue and the systems it encourages its corporate members and non-members to follow, will enable all corporations to be accountable to Aboriginal political organizations and advocacy groups concerned with the environmental and ecological impacts of resource development.⁶

Eagle Feather Data Exchange (EFDX)

EFDX is an information exchange centre that provides the following services: website design, database creation and management, and online promotion and marketing. EFDX provides instant computerized ballot tabulations for First Nations band council elections, as well as vote tabulation for Aboriginal organizations and predominantly Aboriginal communities in small municipalities.⁷

Higgins International Inc.

Higgins International Inc. is an Aboriginal owned and operated executive search firm that has placed numerous qualified Aboriginal professionals in a diversity of industries. Most candidates have been placed in jobs at the senior management, executive, and Board of

⁵ See CCAB's website at <http://www.ccab.com/>.

⁶ More information on PAR is available at <http://www.ccab.com/par/>; also see J. Zahary and Art Meyer, foreword, *Learning from Experience: Aboriginal Programs in the Resource Industries*, by the Alberta Chamber of Resources (Edmonton, Alberta Chamber of Resources, 2006) 70 pp.

⁷ See EFDX's website at <http://www.efdx.ca/index.html>.

Directors levels of companies.⁸

National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association (NACCA)

“Established in 1996, NACCA was created to assist and support its member network of Aboriginal Financial Institutions [who] provide customized financial products and services to Aboriginal business communities across Canada. NACCA’s membership includes 116 community-owned Aboriginal Financial Institutes (AFI’s) controlled by local Aboriginal boards. Through NACCA, these AFIs promote and stimulate the growth of Aboriginal businesses in Canada.”⁹ NACCA provides advice on business loans, financial planning, and youth entrepreneurship.¹⁰

Ron Rivard Management

Ron Rivard Management “provides management advice on business development, project preparation, review, evaluation, analysis, report preparation and survey analysis”¹¹; the business partners on applied research studies with a national scope.

Professional/Lifelong learning/Advanced training/Advocacy

Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Canada (AFOAC)

AFOAC is a national, not-for-profit professional association concerned with the development of a critical mass of highly skilled Aboriginal professionals. The membership works to build capacity in Aboriginal communities as a means to ensure

⁸ See Higgins International Inc.’s website at <http://www.higginsinc.com/>.

⁹ “Aboriginal Connections – Web Directory: Canada/Business and Economy/Economic Development,”

retrieved June 16, 2009 from

http://directory.aboriginalconnections.com/Canada/Business_and_Economy/Economic_Development/index.html, para. six.

¹⁰ See NACCA’s website at <http://www.nacca.net/eng-splash.html>.

¹¹ “First Nation Information Project: FNIP-Saskatchewan Native Businesses,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from

<http://www.johnco.com/business/fnbsask.htm>, para. six.

self-determination in business. Professionals along with organizations and businesses who work in Aboriginal communities may apply to join the organization; members may write articles for *The Journal of Aboriginal Management* (published by AFOAC) and take courses to achieve certification as a Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager.¹²

Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada (ANAC)

“ANAC is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that was established out of the recognition that Aboriginal people’s health needs can best be met and understood by health professionals of a similar cultural background. An affiliate group of the Canadian Nurses Association, it is the only Aboriginal professional nursing organization in Canada.”¹³ Members are licensed and regulated by provincial and territorial nursing authorities.

Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC)

ASC formed in response to a need, articulated by Aboriginal communities across Canada, for enhanced opportunities for sport and recreation for Aboriginal families. ASC considers itself to be the national voice for Aboriginal sport and operates through consensus decision-making.¹⁴

Aboriginal Women’s Professional Association (AWPA)

Incorporated in 2003, AWPA strives to support and promote Aboriginal women to be successful, self-sustaining and skilled professionals. AWPA shares knowledge concerning access to employment, especially meaningful employment, and economic development. AWPA hosts career enhancing networking events where leaders from the organization provide information on business opportunities and career advancement. Leaders also use these events to establish mentorship opportunities for junior professionals.¹⁵

¹² Information on the AFOAC is available at <http://www.afoa.ca/index.asp>.

¹³ “Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.anac.on.ca/>.

¹⁴ More information on ASC may be found at <http://aboriginalsportcircle.ca/>.

Canadian Aboriginal Science and Technology Society (CASTS)

In 1992, a group of Aboriginal professionals in Calgary established a national, non-profit corporation to address the under-representation of Aboriginals in applied science professions. Its mission has remained consistent over 17 years; stakeholders work not only to recruit and retain Aboriginal science professionals but to also address systemic racism and Euro-centrism in the scientific professions' practices. CASTS members want their professionals from the myriad of scientific fields to excel in their chosen professions and provide leadership to Aboriginal and mainstream scientific professional organizations. CASTS holds an annual meeting in the fall where participants may exchange knowledge, research, and promising practices related to science education in Canada. CASTS' strength is in its inclusiveness. At an annual CASTS meeting draws students in the K-12 and post-secondary educational systems, Elders, Old People, and Traditional Teachers, in-service professionals, retired professionals, scholars, and administrators together to share knowledge of promising practices and innovations in science.¹⁶

Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER)

CIER is "a national, First Nation-directed environmental non-profit organization with charitable status"¹⁷ and based in Winnipeg, Manitoba. A group of band chiefs concerned with the ongoing and potential degradation of lands and resources across Canada established CIER in 1994. Since its inception, its leadership has facilitated knowledge exchange of promising practices in conservation and sustainability. It works to arrest the adverse effects of climate change and is a catalyst for awareness of contemporary environmental issues on First Nations' traditional territories and homelands.

Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO)

Founded in 1990, CANDO is a national body dedicated to the provision of training, education, and networking opportunities that have been deemed to be necessary for

¹⁶ More information on AWPA may be found at <http://www.awpa.ca/>.

¹⁶ More information on CASTS may be found at <http://www.casts.ca/>.

¹⁷ "CIER: Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources," retrieved June 16, 2009 from

<http://www.cier.ca/>, para. one.

Aboriginal professionals and the communities they serve. “Aboriginal-controlled, community-based and membership driven,” CANDO is “a federally registered non-profit society...that focuses on education and professional development for economic development officers working in Aboriginal communities or organizations.”¹⁸

First Nations Chiefs of Police Association (FNCPA)

Established in 1992, the FNCPA works “diligently towards advancing the First Nations Police services within Canada.”¹⁹ Members are in-service police officers and police chiefs; they participate on various national and provincial committees. The FNCPA credentials committee receives all applications for membership in the FNCPA and “depending on the class of membership being considered, the Credentials Committee... [determines] whether [the] applicant[s] meet...the criteria set out in the...[membership] by-laws.”²⁰

First Nations Environmental Network (FNEN)

FNEN “is a circle of First Nations people committed to protecting, defending, and restoring the balance of all life by honoring [sic] traditional Indigenous values and the path of our ancestors.” Officially founded in 1992, “its roots go back to 1986, when representatives of First Nations sought national recognition in the Canadian Environmental Network (CEN)...In 1995, FNEN was officially accepted as an affiliate of CEN” and in 2002, “FNEN resigned...from the CEN” in order to preserve First Nations principles. “In addition to protecting the sacred lands and territories of First Nations people” from commercial exploitation and environmental degradation, “FNEN has worked against old-growth logging, dam construction, industrial pollution, nuclear waste dumping, strip mining, species extinction, and habitat encroachment.”²¹

¹⁸ The two quotes are from “About CANDO – CANDO” at <http://www.edo.ca/about-cando>, para three.

¹⁹ “The First Nations Chiefs of Police Association,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.fnepa.ca/activities.htm>, para. one.

²⁰ “The First Nations” para. three.

²¹ Quotes from “FORE: Religion-Indigenous Traditions-EP-First Nations Environmental Network,”

First Nations National Housing Managers Association (FNNHMA)

FNNHMA's "mission is to promote and enhance the professional development of Housing Managers, create a central professional network for sharing best practices, be a centralized source of information to support front line operations, and provide a knowledgeable voice to Housing Managers and on their behalf while recognizing and respecting the diverse needs of First Nations communities."²²

Frontiers Foundation

Frontiers Foundation is "A non-profit Aboriginal voluntary service organization that promotes the advancement of economically and socially disadvantaged communities" through meaningful community development projects. Its Operation Beaver Program recruits volunteers from around the world to "work with Aboriginal communities to provide affordable housing and improvements in education."²³

Hawkeye Associates Training and Consulting

Located in La Ronge, SK, Hawkeye Associates "provides psychological, counselling and consulting services in health, social development and child welfare...[Hawkey] also provide[s] cross-cultural workshops and motivational training."²⁴

Indigenous Bar Association (IBA)

retrieved June 16, 2009 from http://fore.research.yale.edu/religion/indigenous/projects/first_nations.html, paras. two and three; see FNEN's website at <http://www.fnen.org/?q=node/35>.

²² "First Nations National Housing Managers Association," retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.fnnhma.com/home.php>, para. one.

²³ Two quotes taken from "Frontiers Foundation | Providing Housing and Education Improvements to Northern Communities," retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://frontiersfoundation.ca/node?page=7>, para. one.

²⁴ "First Nation Information Project: FNIP-Saskatchewan Native Businesses," retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.johnco.com/business/fnbsask.htm>, para. two.

The IBA “is a non-profit professional organization for Indian, Inuit, and Metis persons trained in...law. Its membership consists of Aboriginal lawyers (practicing and non-practicing), judges, law professors, legal consultants, and law students...[and] IBA plays an active role in promoting the development of Indigenous law and supporting Indigenous legal practitioners.”²⁵ Members are licensed and regulated by their respective provincial and territorial law societies.

Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada (IPAC)

First Nations, Inuit and Métis medical students and physicians belong to IPAC. Membership in the organization is voluntary, but those who join share insights and concerns related to Aboriginal workforce representation, healthcare needs, practices, research, pedagogies, curricula, worldviews, and epistemologies.²⁶

Inuit Art Foundation (IAF)

Inuit artists and northern cultural workers established IAF in 1985; the organization is the only non-profit Aboriginal arts service organization in Canada. Its supporters provide venues for the creative expression of Inuit artists and northern cultural workers and seek to open up international space for the visibility of Inuit art. Owned and governed by Inuit artists and northern cultural workers, IAF’s autonomy enables it to develop programs and services to generate awareness of the cultural value of Inuit art and artistic expressions.²⁷

National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF)

The NAAF “is a nationally registered non-profit organization”²⁸ devoted to the celebration of excellence and to the provision of the tools necessary for Aboriginal youth to achieve brighter futures. NAAF showcases Aboriginal success with its annual National

²⁵ “Indigenous Bar Association,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from http://www.indigenousbar.ca/main_e.html, paras. eight-nine.

²⁶ For more information about IPAC, see <http://www.ipac-amic.org/index.php>.

²⁷ See the IAF’s webpage at <http://www.inuitart.org/content.aro?pageID=8>.

²⁸ “About NAAF,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from http://www.naaf.ca/html/about_e.html, para one.

Aboriginal Achievement Awards, “showing all of Canada the accomplishments of Aboriginal peoples and demonstrating to youth that anything is possible for them to achieve.”²⁹

National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence (NACAFV)

NACAFV emerged from a series of grassroots-level consultations with Aboriginal family violence service providers. It is an organization governed by service providers employed by women’s shelters. Its leaders and members establish needs, conduct applied research and program scans, form partnerships with supportive allies, raise awareness of the challenges to family harmony posed by family violence, and share knowledge and insights gathered on family violence.³⁰

National Aboriginal Diabetes Association (NADA)

NADA belongs to the Diabetes Council of Canada. In its advocacy work, NADA prioritizes effective diabetes research and treatment practice that responds in accordance with the protocols and knowledge held by the myriad of Aboriginal societies it represents. Ultimately, its stakeholders hope to arrest the growth in diabetes rates amongst Aboriginals in Canada.³¹

National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA)

NAFA formed in 1991 as a national organization to promote forestry as a necessary condition for Aboriginal economic development, the repair of environment degradation, and the restoration of cultural and community spiritual health for Aboriginal people across the country. NAFA is a grass roots initiative backed by First Nations and other Aboriginal groups and organizations that function at either the regional or community level in the area of forestry.

²⁹ “Aboriginal Connections – Web Directory: Canada/Organizations,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://directory.aboriginalconnections.com/Canada/Organizations/more6.html>, para one.

³⁰ See NACAFV’s website at <http://www.nacafv.ca/en/index.html#>,

³¹ See NADA’s website at <http://www.nada.ca/>,

Lorraine Rekmans of NAFA speaks to the most profound issue facing Aboriginals in the scientific professions, under-representation. Using the low numbers of Aboriginal foresters as the touchstone to its campaigns, NAFA has put together a ‘Careers in Forestry’ kit which contains a video which discusses careers in the profession and a paper prepared by the association. The target audience has been Aboriginal learners in secondary and post-secondary institutions. NAFA has found that if Aboriginals are fortunate to enter higher learning, many come ill-prepared from secondary school to tackle programs which require a high level of proficiency in mathematics and the natural sciences. Consequently, Rekmans realizes a ‘Careers in Forestry’ campaign must reach students at the secondary and primary school levels. Running the campaign led to another revelation, that teachers in First Nations schools require the resources necessary to successfully teach the skills in math and natural sciences that are necessary for ensuring success for those students who continue on to technical schools, colleges, and universities.³² The initiatives of NAFA stand out not only because the personnel focus on recruitment but also because they ensure the students who enter the programs come proficient in the core subjects required for proficiency in the forestry program. Finally, NAFA participates in forestry strategies emanating from the federal government. On February 21st, 2006, NAFA signed the Canada Forest Accord and will participate actively in theme three of the Accord “developing new institutional frameworks, incorporating traditional knowledge in forest management, increasing access to benefits from forest use, and building capacity in communities.”³³ NAFA can collaborate or lead initiatives both in education and can advocate on behalf of forestry in realms like program development.

National Aboriginal Housing Association (NAHA)

Off-reserve Aboriginal housing authorities compose the membership of NADA; leaders from the housing authorities, from every province and territory in Canada, belong to its board. The Board and its members seek to improve existing housing for off-reserve

³² Lorraine Rekmans, personal communication, 15 December 2006.

³³ Lorraine Rekmans, “National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) Signs Canada Forest Accord,” press release, February 21, 2006.

Aboriginals and establish new and safe housing in all communities.³⁴

National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association (NALMA)

NALMA formed as a non-profit, non-partisan organization in 2000; it is governed by an elected board of directors who represent all regions of Canada. NALMA has the following two functions: first, it seeks to open up space for the professional development of Aboriginals in land management and resource professions and second, its stakeholders seek to fuse western scientific practices in land management with ancestral wisdom shared by Elders, Old People, and Traditional Teachers in all Aboriginal territories and homelands in Canada.

National Aboriginal Professional Artist Training Program (NAPATP)

NAPATP provides professional development opportunities for Aboriginal artists trained in all fields of the fine arts. Writers, visual artists, storytellers, drum makers, carvers, weavers, and traditional performers have taken courses through the program, located on the Penticton Indian Reserve at Penticton, British Columbia. The En'owkin Centre houses NAPATP and describes the program as a space “where story, cooperation, craft and artistry come together.”³⁵

National Aboriginal Recording Industry Association (NARIA)

NARIA is a national association of professional Aboriginal musicians; NARIA has successfully established ties to business leaders in the music industry. Its board counts representatives performers, writers, and managers amongst its representatives. NARIA fosters “the development of a national Aboriginal music recording industry...promote[s] ...[its] members through the internet...advocate[s] to national and provincial governments...[proposed] policies...to insure Aboriginal content on Canadian airwaves...[and] represent[s] the concerns and aspirations of NARIA members...”³⁶

³⁴ More information on NAHA is available at <http://www.aboriginalhousing.org/>.

³⁵ “About the En’owkin Centre,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.enowkincentre.ca/about.html>,

para. one.

³⁶ See “Digital Drum | Did you know about the National Aboriginal Recording Industry Association?” at

<http://www.digitaldrum.ca/en/node/1102>, para. one.

National Association of Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning (NAIHL)

“The NAIHL is a vehicle to represent and assert...[the] distinctiveness [of Aboriginals] and affirm...[Aboriginals’] Inherent, Aboriginal and Treaty rights and responsibilities as Indigenous nations.”³⁷ Through advocacy on behalf of all Aboriginal post-secondary learners and academic and non-academic staff, NAIHL works to improve opportunities for advancement of Aboriginal people in all institutions of higher learning as a means to improve the social and economic environments of Aboriginal communities in Canada.

National Indian and Inuit Community Health Representatives Organization (NIICHO)

Aboriginal community health organizations came together in 1986 to establish NIICHO as the national body for the improvement of healthcare service delivery to all Aboriginals in Canada; its stakeholders incorporated NIICHO in 1992. Twenty member community health organizations direct the activities of NIICHO through an elected Board of Directors who advise on the work of the organization’s elected President, Vice-president, and Secretary/Treasurer. These who belong to the board represent community health organizations come from all over Canada.³⁸

Native Mental Health Association of Canada (NMHAC)

NMHAC “is a national not-for-profit association that is governed and managed by Aboriginal leaders and exists to improve the lives of Canada’s First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations by addressing healing, wellness, and other mental health challenges. It is a voluntary mental health association with membership open to all Canadians who are committed to healing, wellness and related mental health challenges.”³⁹

³⁷ National Association Of Indigenous Institutes Of Higher Learning – Main, retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.naihl.com/>, para. two.

³⁸ See NIICHO’s website at http://www.niichro.com/2004/?page=index_e&lang=en for more information about the organization.

³⁹ “NMHAC About Us,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.nmhac.ca/aboutus.htm>, para. four.

Native Psychologists in Canada (NPC)

NPC was established as a corporate body in 1995 as a venue for knowledge exchange and advocacy for Aboriginals who work as psychologists and in the allied professionals. Members advocate on behalf of Aboriginal clients in the care of mental health services and work to establish bridges with non-Aboriginal stakeholders and professionals who work in mental health fields.⁴⁰

Royal Canadian Mounted Police – Aboriginal Policing Services

“The Aboriginal Policing Branch is responsible for the development of culturally sensitive policing services which are acceptable to Aboriginal peoples and promotes the recruitment of Aboriginal people into the RCMP.”⁴¹

Research

Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF)

AHF formed as a result of the Government of Canada’s January, 1998 response to the 1996 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. The AHF is a not-for-profit Aboriginal-run organization that supports community-based initiatives designed to address the healing needs of Aboriginal people affected by church-state residential schools. AHF is funded until 2011 through agreement with the Government of Canada.⁴²

Aboriginal Human Resource Council (AHRC)

AHRC not-for-profit organization composed of public and private stakeholders concerned with Aboriginal labour market issues in Canada.⁴³

⁴⁰ NPC’s objectives are available at <http://www.brandonu.ca/native/npc.html>.

⁴¹ “RCMP-History-Mod4,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from http://www.rcmp-learning.org/history/history_mod4.htm, para. 57.

⁴² More information on the AHF is available at <http://www.ahf.ca/>.

⁴³ More information on AHRC is available at <http://www.aboriginalhr.ca/>.

Aboriginal Leadership Institute Inc. (ALII)

ALII is a non-profit organization governed and staffed by Aboriginal people committed to the development of leadership capacity in Aboriginal people and communities across Canada; its staff help to identify leadership training needs in communities. ALII states, “By actively promoting good governance...by identifying needed training...and by providing unique educational and skill-building opportunities...we help prepare Aboriginal people for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.”⁴⁴

First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCSC)

FNCFCSC promotes the well-being of all First Nations children, youth, families, and communities with a particular focus on the prevention of, and response to, child maltreatment. FNCFCSC’s mandate includes research, networking, policy, and professional development.⁴⁵

National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO)

NAHO’s leaders advocate on behalf of the three Aboriginal identity groups in Canada. The First Nations Centre, the Ajunnginiq (Inuit) Centre, and the Métis Centre work to advance the health and well-being of their respective populations while promoting culturally relevant approaches to health care.⁴⁶

National Centre for First Nations Governance (NCFNG)

The NCFNG’s “purpose is to provide support, research and information services to First Nations who realize that, to improve their community/Nation, eliminate poverty, rebuild their economy and implement their inherent right of self government, critical changes are needed to their current governance.”⁴⁷ The centre’s research and knowledge exchange activities are fourfold: advice to all levels of government, professional development, land,

⁴⁴ (<http://www.alii.ca/index.html>) (about us)

⁴⁵ To learn more about the FNCFCSC, see <http://www.fncfcs.com/>.

⁴⁶ For more information on NAHO, see <http://www.naho.ca/english/>.

⁴⁷ “NCFNG | FAQs,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.fngovernance.org/about/faq.htm>, para. one.

law, and governance research, and publication of findings in diverse formats and media. Its research, advocacy, and knowledge exchange activities are arranged by regions, with offices in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairie provinces, and British Columbia.⁴⁸

National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation (NNAPF)

NNAPF was incorporated in 2000 to serve as a catalyst for knowledge exchange and applied research concerning Aboriginal awareness of addictions and ancestral perspectives on treatment. Its work is guided by a 1996 National General Review of programs and services for Aboriginals with alcohol and drug abuse problems out of which a report was published with recommendations that currently guide the NNAPF's work. The decision incorporate was motivated by the desire to seek out funding to support the recommendations proposed by the report of the 1996 review.⁴⁹

Native Law Centre of Canada (NLCC)

Established in 1975, the objectives of the NLCC “are to provide and promote access to high quality legal education for Aboriginal[s]...to showcase Aboriginal legal education...; undertake and promote legal, especially interdisciplinary, research and ... nationally and internationally; publish legal reference and scholarly materials...; serve as a specialist resource on Aboriginal legal issues; and foster national and international relationships and collaboration.”⁵⁰

Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute

Since the 1970's, Aboriginal communities have become active and highly respected stakeholders in programs designed to rehabilitate Aboriginal offenders and individuals with substance abuse problems; Nechi (est. 1974) stands as one of the most-promising practices in the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction amongst Aboriginals.

⁴⁸ Information on the work of the NCFNG is available at <http://www.fngovernance.org/index.htm>.

⁴⁹ Information on the work of the NNAPF is available at <http://www.nnapf.org/>.

⁵⁰ “Native Law Centre of Canada,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.usask.ca/nativelaw/>, para. four.

Nechi Training Institute has developed nuanced therapeutic approaches to understanding substance abuse in Aboriginal communities. They have uncovered the relationship between substance abuse and inflicted damage to one's learning spirit which has come from colonialism, and its manifestations⁵¹; Nechi practitioners seek to reintegrate individuals into their communities through a holistic approach that involves families, traditional teachers (i.e. Elders), the land, and languages.

Participants leave Nechi Institute with a restored spirit for living, learning, and teaching. Communities receive and welcome healthy individuals home. Finally, the healing process allows everyone involved to address the legacy of colonialism in their homes, communities, and families.

Governance

Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

The AFN is a national organization that represents all Status First Nations citizens in Canada, regardless of age, gender, or place of residence.⁵²

Canadian Métis Council (CMC)

CMC was established in 1997 to further the economic, political, spiritual and cultural aspirations of Métis in Canada. The CMC is comprised of 50 community councils and affiliate Métis organizations in every province of Canada.

Center for Indigenous Sovereignty (CIS)

CFIS is comprised of Indigenous professionals with a strong history of commitment to nationalism, sovereignty, and self-government. CIS members focus on the facilitation of

⁵¹ See M.B. Castellano, "Contemporary Family Trends: Aboriginal Family Trends: Extended Families, Nuclear Families, Families of the Heart," report the Vanier Institute of the Family, 2002, retrieved January 27, 2008 from <http://www.vifamily.ca/library/cft/aboriginal.pdf>.

⁵² For more information on the AFN, see <http://www.afn.ca/>.

processes for Aboriginal nation-building; they provide the following services: facilitation and dispute resolution; business and marketing plan development; consulting; communications and public relations; and research and graphic design.⁵³

The Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) Aboriginal Services

CESO is a not-for-profit organization that helps to build proud and independent communities; CESO began offering the services of its volunteer advisors (VAs) to Canada's First Nations in 1969. At the time, Status First Nations in Canada had begun to organization around the goals of self-government and economic independence. CESO posts VAs in communities to promote development, build economic capacity, and support sustainable business. "Every year, CESO completes approximately 1,500 assignments in collaboration with Canadian Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal and international clients"⁵⁴; its Canadian projects are funded by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and international projects by the Canadian International Development Agency.⁵⁵

Confederation of Aboriginal People of Canada

Founded on July 8, 2006, the confederation is the first national off-reserve Aboriginal government that represents the Aboriginal people of Canada and advocates for basic human rights and cultural freedoms. The confederation has a national membership that gathers all Aboriginal people of Canada whose members belong to their respective community, which is then affiliated with the confederation. In accordance with Section 35, the definition of Aboriginal people includes Status and Non-status First Nations, Métis and Inuit.⁵⁶

Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP)

CAP "is a nationally incorporated umbrella organization that represents the interests [at

⁵³ List of services available at the CIS's webpage at <http://www.cfis.ca/whatwedo.htm>.

⁵⁴ "Global Citizens for Change," retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.citizens4change.org/en/about/about.php>, para. four.

⁵⁵ For more information on CESO, see <http://www.ceso-saco.com/>.

⁵⁶ For more information on the Confederation, see <http://www.capcpac.ca/>.

the federal level]...of its provincial and territorial affiliate organizations across Canada.”⁵⁷ CAP was “founded in 1971 as the Native Council of Canada (NCC). It was established to represent the interests nationally of Métis and non-status Indians [a population that at the time of its founding]...outnumbered all other native people combined.”⁵⁸

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)

ITK is the only national Inuit organization in Canada; it represents the nation’s four Inuit regions: Nunatsiavut (Labrador), Nunavik (northern Quebec), Nunavut, and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region in the Northwest Territories.⁵⁹

Métis National Council (MNC)

“Since 1983, the MNC has represented the Métis Nation nationally and internationally. It receives its mandate and direction from the democratically elected leadership of the Métis Nation’s governments from Ontario westward...the MNC’s central goal is to secure healthy space for the Métis Nation’s on-going existence within the Canadian federation.”⁶⁰

Métis National Council of Women (MNCW)

The MNCW “is mandated to improve the lives of Métis women”⁶¹; it “seeks to foster a contemporary understanding of the traditions and roles of Métis women.” The women

⁵⁷ “NAHO National Aboriginal Health Organization,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.naho.ca/english/links.php>, para. two.

⁵⁸ “Political Structure Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Representing the rights and interests of...,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.abo-peoples.org/about/structure.html>, para. six.

⁵⁹ For more information on ITK, see <http://www.itk.ca/>.

⁶⁰ “MNC :: Who Is the MNC?,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.metisnation.ca/mnc/index.html>, paras. four and five.

⁶¹ “Métis National Council of Women,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.metiswomen.ca/>, para. one.

seek to understand and act on the issues and concerns involving Métis women and their children.⁶²

Métis National Youth Advisory Council (MNYAC)

MNYAC formed to address the needs, concerns, and issues that currently face the youth of the Métis Nation.⁶³

National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC)

NAFC formed in 1972 as a non-profit organization with voluntary board of directors. NAFC responded to “the growing number of Friendship Centres at the national level”⁶⁴ through an organization representative of the provincial and territorial jurisdictions in Canada. The board has eleven regional representatives and a youth representative who guide the work of a four-member executive committee. NAFC is the national voice of Canadian Friendship Centres, who “promote and advocate the concerns of Aboriginal Peoples...and...represent the needs of local Friendship Centres across the country to the federal government and to the public in general.”⁶⁵

National Inuit Youth Council (NIYC)

NIYC is a council of Inuit youth who draw wisdom from supportive Elders. NIYC believes that through the reclamation and celebration of Inuit knowledge, heritage, and language, the dreams and visions of its constituents can be accomplished.

Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC)

“NWAC (est. 1974 as a non-profit organization) operates according to the collective

⁶² Quote and the rest of the information in the paragraph drawn from “Metis National Council of Women,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.metiswomen.ca/home/mandate.htm>.

⁶³ For more information on MNYAC, see <http://www.metisnation.ca/youth/index.html>.

⁶⁴ National Association of Friendship Centres, retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.nafc-aboriginal.com/about.htm>, para. one.

⁶⁵ National Association of Friendship Centres, para three.

goals of its founders. Its stakeholders work “to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies.”⁶⁶

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada (PIWC)

PIWC formed in 1984, and it is the national advocacy body for all Inuit women in Canada. “It advocates on behalf of Inuit women in an effort to ensure their input on national issues of concern to aboriginal peoples in Canada, and to increase their participation in federal policies and programs.”⁶⁷

Turtle Island Music

“Turtle Island Music [est. 1996] an Independent Record Label”⁶⁸ in Saskatoon, SK; it promotes Aboriginal artists as a means to ensure that the wisdom and talents of its performers are available for the future generations to access.⁶⁹

Conclusion

Five cross-cutting themes or priorities permeate the business, professional and lifelong learning, research, and governance organizations identified and defined in this paper: opportunities for advanced education and training, pursuit of knowledge exchange, applied research, mentorship programs, and leadership of meaningful economic development opportunities. The leaders of the organizations recognize that access to and successful completion of advanced education and training is the means by which First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities may achieve sovereignty. However, staff, and boards of directors, and executives recognize that their concerns cannot be met merely

⁶⁶ “About NWAC,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.nwac-hq.org/en/nwacstructure.html>.

⁶⁷ “Frequently Asked Questions – Pauktuutit,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from http://www.pauktuutit.ca/faq_e.html.

⁶⁸ “First Nation Information Project: FNIP-Saskatchewan Native Businesses,” retrieved June 16, 2009 from <http://www.johnco.com/business/fnbsask.htm>, para. five.

⁶⁹ Also see Turtle Island Music’s website at <http://www.turtleislandmusic.com/aboutti.html>,

through recruitment of more Aboriginal learners and professionals. These organizations recognize that there must be venues for knowledge exchange on promising practices. In order to start new initiatives, organizations must conduct applied research through surveys and questionnaires to in-service professionals and learners on priorities for training and effective practices. Mentorship turns up in the mandates of the businesses and professional organizations; these programs enable youth to realize that they are capable of leading social and economic development. All stakeholders believe that only meaningful and locally owned and controlled social and economic development projects can help to achieve sovereignty in twenty-first-century Canada.

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