

## Why Support Kocihta's Cause?

We have a national focus to build healthy and resilient Indigenous youth that will contribute to the building of inclusive workplaces and healthy, sustainable and resilient Indigenous communities.

Approximately 50 per cent of the Indigenous youth in Canada, by no choice or fault of their own, are living in poverty - some in third-world conditions. This socio-economic crisis presents barriers to their education and employment, and their overall physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

Indigenous people are the fastest growing population in Canada with 50 per cent under 25 years of age. The median age is 27 compared to 39 for the Canadian population at large. More than 400,000 Indigenous youth are about to enter the labour market in the next decade. The current education system is not meeting their needs and new innovations are needed to advance Canada's Indigenous workforce.

Canada's economic future will rise or fall, depending on how well we collectively and effectively include Indigenous youth into the workforce, in particular through meaningful careers of their choice.

The May 2014 UN Special Rapporteur's report, <sup>1</sup>*The situation of Indigenous Peoples*, examines the human rights of Indigenous Peoples and summarizes the "notable episodes and patterns of devastating human rights violations."

The report states: "the most jarring manifestation of these human rights problems is the distressing socio-economic conditions of Indigenous Peoples in a highly developed country."

### KOCIHTA

*To reach someone or something...*

#### MAKING AN IMPACT

Overcoming Canada's greatest socio-economic crisis

Creating social & economic Inclusion

Advancing our most underleveraged asset

Overcoming enormous barriers

Closing gaps & deficits

Delivering a global ROI: Return on Investment, Inclusion & Integrity

Change agents offer Indigenous youth HOPE

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya Addendum - *The Situation of Indigenous peoples in Canada\** - May 2014



*Empowering Indigenous Youth  
to Reach Their Career Potential*

Canadians that have an understanding of the Indigenous circumstance or a personal connection with a First Nations, Métis or Inuit person understand the devastating consequence of “Indigenous exclusion”, and the cost to Canada in the loss of potential from within our most underleveraged and fastest growing human resource asset.

Good work is being done to advance Indigenous workplace inclusion, and more Indigenous youth are overcoming barriers to succeed in school and work. However, the majority of Canada’s disadvantaged Indigenous youth have limited access to mentors, technology, help to stay in school, get to school, and access to the leadership skills they need to overcome barriers that are limiting/preventing them from reaching their potential. More needs to be done to support the education and employment needs, and advancement of Indigenous youth.

Canadians are generous by nature -- we like to donate our time, talent and financial resources to help the disadvantaged. We also like to work and support companies that have a social consciousness. Supporting the career development of Indigenous youth aligns with advocating for human rights and equality, while producing Global ROI across the nation, and beyond.

By becoming an agent of change you or your organization will help create a positive domino effect within the Indigenous community -- one youth at a time. The outcome will result in more Indigenous youth living independent lives and contributing to the building of healthy Indigenous families, communities, workplaces of inclusion, and the socio-economic strength of Canada.

## **Understanding the Indigenous socio-economic gap**

Many Canadians lack understanding or knowledge about the history of Indigenous Peoples and their relationship to Canada.

The 2014 UN report further explain the situation as “a particularly distressing part of the history of human rights violations was the residential school era (1874-1970s, with some schools operating until 1996), during which Indigenous children were forced from their homes into institutions, the explicit purpose of which was to destroy their family and community bonds, their languages, their cultures, and even their names. Thousands of Indigenous children did not survive the experience and some of them are buried in unidentified graves. Generations of those who survived grew up estranged from their cultures and languages, with debilitating effects on the maintenance of their Indigenous identity.”

For these historical reasons, and various political issues that are present today, there is a high level of distrust within the Indigenous community toward government and corporations. <sup>2</sup>The well-being gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada has not narrowed over the last several years, treaty and Indigenous claims remain persistently unresolved, Indigenous women and girls remain vulnerable to abuse, and overall there appears to be high levels of distrust among Indigenous Peoples toward government at both the federal and provincial levels.

More information on the state of Indigenous affairs in Canada can be found among the resources that are referenced on the last page.

## Tackling Canada's Largest Socio-Economic Gap

The findings described below underscore the important work that Kocihta and its partners are addressing to create promise and prosperity.

- “Of the bottom 100 Canadian communities on the Community Wellbeing Index, 96 are First Nations, and only one First Nation community is in the top 100”: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya Addendum - May 2014:

*Kocihta will help create a positive domino effect within Indigenous communities through the development of its youth.*

- In his report to the Prime Minister of Canada, *Building Relationships Forging Partnerships*, Doug R. Eyford cited the “need to address the state of distrust between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and communities and the need to forge ahead with action that fosters inclusion.”

*Kocihta eMentoring will help Indigenous youth stay in school and receive the hard and soft skills they need to achieve successful and long-term careers.*

- Canadian Council of Chief Executives Survey, March 2014 (Taking Action for Canada: Jobs & Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century) says... **Skills Shortages Pose a Risk to Business Investment Plans** - a solution that can be resolved through access to Canada's youngest and fastest growing mountain of untapped and under career-patched Indigenous youth. Report: <http://www.ceocouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Second-survey-report-skills-shortages-in-Canada-13-March-20141.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: The situation of Indigenous Peoples in Canada



*Empowering Indigenous Youth  
to Reach Their Career Potential*

*Kocihta will help build Canada's largest underleveraged asset, Indigenous youth, into a larger, more confident and connected group with skills and passions that are better matched to opportunities in the workforce.*

- 2011 Statistic Canada Census data brings highlight to the **dismal unemployment rate of Indigenous people** in Canada, which is double that of non-Indigenous Canadians (Indigenous: 15.0% - Non-Indigenous: 7.5%).

This unemployment issue is exasperated by **low graduation rates of Indigenous people** -- only 43% First Nations, 26% Inuit, and 47% Métis students complete high school and obtain a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree.

*Kocihta is a strategic initiative taking aim at closing the education and employment gap of Indigenous Peoples. The charity Kocihta is working to help keep Indigenous youth in school and presenting them with leadership and learning opportunities that will help them connect to employers-of-choice.*

- As demonstrated through a recent study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Save the Children Canada, **Indigenous children in Canada suffer a disproportionate amount of poverty**, at 27%, compared to a rate of 15% for non-Indigenous children. 50% of First Nations children in Canada live in poverty.

*Kocihta is working to close the education and employment gap, and break the cycle of poverty that has plagued Indigenous people in Canada for far too long.*

- According to the results of the 2010 Environics Urban Aboriginal Peoples study, almost all of the 2,614 Indigenous people interviewed believe they are consistently **viewed in negative ways by non-Aboriginal people in Canada**. Almost three in four participants perceived assumptions about addiction problems, while many felt negative stereotypes about laziness (30%), lack of intelligence (20%) and poverty (20%). This underscores the fact that **our Indigenous people also face social gaps, deficits and exclusion**.

*Kocihta is working to create awareness among Canadians that will help shift the perception about the potential of Indigenous youth, and the value they bring into workplaces across the country.*



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- While Canada averages a ranking year after year among the **10 top countries** on a **UN human development index**, **Canada's Indigenous population** rank around **78**. As well, the rate of persons with disabilities is over 20 per cent higher among Indigenous people in Canada, than our non-Indigenous population.

*Kocihta will increasingly become an important catalyst to create powerful connections between employer volunteers and Indigenous youth. The charity is the only one in Canada to give foundations, business and the philanthropic communities an opportunity to direct resources to help Indigenous youth achieve their human resource and career potential. The result will help close the gap that currently exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.*