



Aboriginal Human
Resource Council

connections – partnerships – solutions

GROWING THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

Aboriginal Human Resource Council • Performance Report 2009/2010



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INTRODUCTION



In this report we will speak to the many activities, projects and successes that made 2009-2010 a successful year for the council, despite the economic down turn facing Canada and the global economy.

The year 2009-2010 marked our organization's achievement in attaining ISO 9001:2008 accreditation. It was a year in which our outreach to corporate Canada achieved an unparalleled scale. This past year also resulted in new achievements in partnerships with more companies, governments and organizations -- growing the *Leadership Circle*. Our work throughout the year culminated in *Inclusion Works '10*, a tremendous national event which brought 565 people together to learn and celebrate successes in Indigenous inclusion.

Our organization continues to make a significant difference in the lives of Indigenous peoples through our innovative approach to the advancement of Indigenous inclusion. Please enjoy reading this report as an opportunity to learn what we have accomplished this past year with the help of our partners and friends.



ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Aboriginal Human Resource Council works with employers to develop inclusive workplace strategies. Founded in 1998, the council has been operating for 11 years as a social enterprise. We are a Canadian based organization with a mandate to advance the full participation of Indigenous people in the labour market. Our products and services help employers understand the value of inclusion and create inclusive workplaces that attract Indigenous people into the workforce. We also help members of the Indigenous community connect with employers, obtain essential skills and plan their careers through their own life experiences and cultural perspectives.

We also raise the profile of workplace inclusion from a media and communications perspective. The *Leadership Circle* and our governance board and champions contribute in important ways to deliver support and guidance and further position our brand and our message. This governance group has been the backbone of the organization; providing support and guidance to the organization.

THE YEAR IN BRIEF

The *Leadership Circle* and our governance board and champions contribute in important ways to deliver support and guidance that further position our brand and our message. These leaders have been the backbone of the organization.

GETTING OUR MESSAGE OUT

- We successfully scaled up our reach to national audiences. A new digital strategy is guiding the development of online products such as a new Aboriginal procurement offerings. We are tweeting and feeding blogs, LinkedIn groups and Facebook pages in order to engage people in the cause and two-way conversations about advancing inclusion. We are bringing those we know closer together and reaching out to bring new networks of people into the conversation. For example, a partnership with Canwest resulted in the development and airing of two TV public service announcements and national newspaper coverage of our events, products and branding. In the first year of our digital strategy we have produced more than 52 different digital assets (i.e., procurement online training workshops, Guiding Circles podcasts, various interview clips, Workforce Connex video library, etc.) in eight different categories which will help us grow our online product shelf over the next year. We are responding to employers that are looking to online learning as an efficient and cost-effective way to provide staff with training and learning.
- Our *Leadership Circle* partner program grew to 60 companies and organizations – on track to meeting our target of 100 partners by the end of 2010-2011.

Leadership Circle partners are supporting our work and playing an integral role to help us develop workplace tools and products that meet the needs of employers across Canada and beyond. This program is an important voice that will amplify our profile and our message of inclusion.

- In October 14-15, 2009 we held an *Ontario Workforce Connex* forum in Toronto to an audience of about 160. A two-hour digital record of the event was produced and posted on the council's website. Included in this video library are video vignettes of Hydro One, SNC Lavalin and the Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario. As available in a speech delivered by The Honourable Brad Duguid, former Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, who spoke on the benefits and the importance of private sector employers embracing Aboriginal Inclusion workplace strategies.

The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network produced and aired an extensive media segment on the event which aired nationally.

PERFORMANCE MATTERS

- In January 2010 we attained ISO 9001:2008 certification from QAS International Limited. Our ability to serve our *Leadership Circle* partners and our clients will be enhanced with this new emphasis on quality management.
- Our financial performance in 2009-2010 mirrored the economic uncertainties experienced this year -- nationally and globally. Groundwork has been set for a

rebound in 2010-2011, with revenue and profits growing, surpassing our peak from the years previous.

Our organization receives funds from government and raises the balance of its operating budget from the sales of products and services. In this respect it is a social enterprise. Last year, sales, services and membership accounted for 20% of all revenues compared to 25% in the prior year.

INCLUSION WORKS

- *Inclusion Works '10*, our national signature event was a huge success as a result of the careful planning and execution in the months prior to April 27-29. 86 Aboriginal graduates attended the national recruitment fair and vied for positions in Canada's leading employers-of-choice. The event's *Voices of Change* theme played well by providing audiences many opportunities to dialogue on various aspects of inclusion. Participants reported that our learning sessions brought new insights into workplace inclusion. Sir Ken Robinson, PhD, international speaker, well known for his Technology, Entertainment Design (TED Talk) gave a great keynote on diversity and creativity. The Right Honourable Paul Martin gave a powerful speech on Aboriginal education and his good natured tone and frank responses were welcomed by the audience.

National Chief Shawn Atleo offered inspiring words, insights and optimism about the future.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2009-2010

We are pleased to be working with the Assembly of First Nations on new initiatives that will result in a greater degree of prosperity for First Nations people and communities.

REACHING OUT INTERNATIONALLY

- Although our core mandate is to advance Indigenous inclusion in workplaces across Canada, through funding received from international sources, we are continuing our work with the Australia federal government to help them achieve their 2015 target to increase the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the public service. We have applied to the Australian Government's Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for funds to adapt and deliver our *Guiding Circles* training in Australia.
- A new International Good Faith HR Agreement was signed with the National Native American Human Resources Association. We will work together on exchanges that increase human resource professional standards and develop business-to-business opportunities between Canada, USA and abroad.

The Canada and USA embassies were supportive of this partnership agreement and participated in the signing ceremony.

FOCUSING OUR ENERGIES

- We are winding down our trades project agenda; allowing more time to devote to its core business on workplace inclusion. Our trades projects resulted in

more than 212 placements and 14 people receiving training in essentials skills curriculum in our last Pilot in Alberta. In Quebec, the project provided a table for Aboriginal organizations, businesses and unions to plan a province-wide strategy together. The Nova Scotia project made important advances working with unions in the province, as did our work with British Columbia's Industry Training Authority to produce communications materials that encourage Aboriginal entry in trades.

- We expanded our *Guiding Circles* offer with the completion of a second booklet. The program continues to be offered across Canada. In 2009-2010 our workshop was delivered in 15 locations. Success stories about *Guiding Circles* have been developed and are posted on the program's newly launched webpages at aboriginalhr.ca.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS IN VITAL AREAS OF THE ECONOMY

- We established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA), and produced a new *Green Energy Outlook* booklet, which was paid for through a 60K financial contribution from the Government of Ontario. This publication will be available in English and French and it will be our first publication made available in Cree language.

- A new online Aboriginal procurement training course was produced this year to help purchasing managers in large organizations advance buying relationships with Aboriginal communities and businesses. Institutes of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada have awarded continuing education credits toward the Certified Procurement Professional (C.P.P.) for those who complete the course.

CLIMBING THE INCLUSION CONTINUUM

- Our core competency and business line program, *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* and its Inclusion Continuum continued to evolve its product line over this past year. We now have a three-part assessment tool in the beta testing stage. The Aboriginal Inclusion Survey Series queries companies on topics such as employee engagement, leadership initiatives, policies, and strategies. *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* has now been delivered to over 400 people across the country in our facilitator led workshops.

THE COUNCIL'S WORKPLACE AGENDA

Studies have shown a clear relationship between employee engagement and business performance. In 2009-10 we adopted a new organizational development model which allows us to evolve *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* into a more robust suite; featuring products and takeaway tools that will bring a greater focus and definition to Aboriginal inclusion in the workplace. Our product development is being driven by what employers need and want in their efforts to develop a more inclusive workplace.

We established the following three strategic priorities for the year, which aligned with our results-based management and accountability framework and provided additional shape and focus to

our work.

- **Position and leverage our brand**, increasing our national reach to build partnerships with Canada's largest companies in diverse sectors. We continue to develop workplace strategies that build (Aboriginal) employee engagement and increase organizational performance. Increased Aboriginal employment will be the outcome.
- **Grow our Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion program** as a core competency; creating a growing product suite using an organizational development approach to workplace transformation. We are leading exciting research and innovation initiatives which are moving the *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* program into a scalable web-based product line that will enable employers to embed inclusion into their workplaces and benchmark their successes with increased engagement, company performance and workplace productivity.
- **Build a close relationship with employers** through an invigorated digital product line and enhanced service platform. Social media and marketing tools will be used to increase our relationship with a wider network of employers; working with them to amplify communications, understanding and national awareness of Aboriginal employment as a social - economic imperative.

GETTING OUR MESSAGE OUT

Our message of inclusion is being shared across the country in new ways. Our growing line of products and services is helping companies and organizations to become more inclusive and to realize important bottom line gains as a result. Reaching out, we are finding new audiences both nationally and internationally.

With impressive momentum and positive outcome, the communications and marketing efforts this year focused on increasing our reach and value. Positive branding and marketing outcomes from previous years enabled us to expand on what worked in the past, while exploring new and innovative approaches designed to get the message out to our audiences, partners and clients.

Our communications team developed tools to help partners promote our products and services to their networks. Focus was given to cross-marketing our products and services in conjunction with the delivery of our national signature event, *Inclusion Works '10*.

In effort to extend our message and influence far beyond traditional borders, we relied heavily on strategies to advance social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Blogs) and Web 2.0 tools. To reach clients on a very personal level, we positioned the council at several high profile tradeshows that were designed to host our target audiences. We also rolled out a major telephone campaign to over 4500 selected contacts from our database.

Communication and marketing materials spoke to our cause and engaged partners

and audiences in the "experience" of inclusion. We heard stories of people who attended *Inclusion Works '10* and spoke about it as a defining moment in their personal connection to inclusion. Our partners passed on their stories illustrating how their organizations built upon the business case for inclusion, the advancement of professional development and the ability to grow and contribute to in-person and online conversations and teachings through a strong, knowledgeable and supportive community of practice. Work was also completed to support the development and rollout of our new *Leadership Circle* partnership program with a reward program, the marketing of our workshops and publication, and the development and distribution of various internal and external communications pieces such as our newsletter, *Aboriginal HR Narrator*.

Canwest provided 100K of in-kind assistance. This media company aired two different public service announcements hundreds of times on Global TV across the country. (Global network alone reaches 94 per cent of English speaking audiences in Canada).

Thanks to our partnership with Workopolis, a full-page colour advertisement about our workplace strategies appeared in the Toronto Star -- a significant promotion given the paper's circulation of 314,000 daily readers. Rogers Communications also provided help to air a public service announcement about *Inclusion Works '10* on Toronto radio and television stations.

The following benchmarks the success of communications efforts in 2009-2010:

-
- Two separate public service announcements aired many hundreds of times (Global TV National and CityTV) and one radio public service announcement aired on Toronto radio stations.
-
- Approximately 40 ads in newspapers, magazine and newsletters (i.e., Toronto Star, National Post and many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal publications across Canada)
-
- Marketing activities reached several million Canadians in all sectors of the economy through Global TV, Rogers Radio and various daily newspapers such as the Toronto Star
-
- Marketing efforts results in 368 grads applying to attend the *Inclusion Works '10* national Aboriginal recruitment fair
-
- Over 30 web-based advertising/stories
-
- One telephone and postage campaign



THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PAUL MARTIN

- Increased web traffic to aboriginalhr.ca by 7.7 per cent between March 31, 2009 and March 31, 2010. Unique visitors were up 14.27 per cent (42,792 separate individuals) and hits to the home page increased by 9.46 per cent (27,405 visits)

- Increased the number of job seekers on the Inclusion Network by 17.46 per cent or 838 registered job seekers (4799 to 5637) and attracted 73 new employers to register on the site representing a six per cent increase (1186 to 1259)

- Engagement of approximately 60 partners that helped spread the council's messages

- 40 local and national media stories filed

- 35 direct email campaigns (council and partners)

- 12 publications of an editorial

The Toronto Star, Thu Apr 29 2010

Page: A18, Section: News

Byline: Leslie Ferenc

EX-PM: SCHOOLS MUST MEET ABORIGINAL NEEDS;

PAUL MARTIN'S EDUCATION INITIATIVE AIMS TO KEEP STUDENTS IN CLASSES, OFFER BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Providing better education in the early years for aboriginal Canadians - the fastest-growing segment of the population - is key to improving their social and economic well-being and this country's future.

That was the message from former prime minister Paul Martin, who told the Aboriginal Human Resource Council Inclusion Works and Voice of Change conference that his goals include bridging the gap in education for First Nations youth starting in the elementary and high school years...

"I believe if Canadians understood the discrimination in aboriginal education and child welfare, I don't think they'd stand for it," Martin said in an interview.

In 2006, he and his family set up the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative - a not-for-profit organization working with First Nations communities, governments and the private sector to improve education opportunities for young people.

YOUNG INDIGENOUS PROFESSIONALS (YIPS)



We started working with a small group of young Indigenous professional volunteers last year. These volunteers emerged from the first 2009 *Inclusion Works* recruitment fair which brought together 100 new graduates from across the country. A handful of those participants saw the potential of organizing a Young Indigenous Professionals (YIPs) group that will expand on the connections and partnerships that were started at *Inclusion Works '09*. This group is working with us to expand the connections between young Indigenous people in Canada and around the world. The group will be focused on professional mentorship, career advancement and advancing the cause for inclusion.

"As recent post-secondary grads and Inclusion Works grad alumni, we are committed to the cause of advancing Aboriginal inclusion and developing an active Young Indigenous Professionals (YIPs) group. The YIPs group will provide Inclusion Works grad alumni with an opportunity to keep in touch and build a professional network of support that will strengthen career opportunities for Indigenous Peoples in local, national and international communities."

- Jeremy Belyea and Lisa Charleyboy

REPRESENTATION

Our board members, senior management and staff often appear as guests, meeting representatives or keynote speakers at major events and at organizations throughout Canada. These venues provide a further opportunity for outreach and for our message to be customized to the specific needs and interests of particular audiences. These venues create a presence for us and our messaging on regional or national stages.

Following is a small sample of the wide-range venues at which our staff and board members spoke this year.

- Assembly of First Nations National Youth Summit
- Association of Canadian Community Colleges, Winnipeg
- National Quality Institute Panel, Toronto
- Dreamcatcher's event, Hamilton,
- North American Native Human Resource Association conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Tribal Investment Councils of Manitoba
- CCH Canadian Ltd.
- Conference Board of Canada, Toronto
- Ontario Sustainable Energy Association, Toronto
- Human Resource Professional Association Diversity Conference, Toronto

"As we talk with employers we are developing a greater appreciation of their need for web-based learning tools."

- Kelly Lendsay
President and CEO

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

Making Inclusion Work



We continue to evolve and grow our Leadership Circle partnership group, which consists of companies and organizations that work with us to advance inclusion. These partner companies make an investment in our infrastructure programs and services and help us with strategic direction in areas that relate to product development such as our new digital product platform. We are very fortunate to work with a committed group of organizations that willing share their expertise and knowledge in ways which are extraordinarily helpful to our work. Many of these partners lend their expertise to the council in the form of in-kind services such as marketing, database management, governance, design and promotion. Among some of the more notable companies that have lent their in-kind expertise to the council are: Canwest, Royal Bank of Canada, Cameco, IBM, Tribal Investment Councils of Manitoba, Nation Talk, SAY Magazine, CCH Canadian Ltd, MGM Communications, Casino Rama, SNC Lavalin and TransCanada.

In 2008-2009 we set a goal to grow the *Leadership Circle* to 100 members. Thanks to the support of 60 partners, we are on target. Our *Leadership Circle* partners were invited to attend *Inclusion Works '10* in April. It is our goal to have 100 partners signed up to our *Leadership Circle* program when we host *Inclusion Works '11* in Montreal, May 2011.

The *Leadership Circle* plays an important role in our work through their commitment to climb the Inclusion Continuum. These organizations are working at all levels to create more inclusive workplaces.

Their work begins with their leadership, which sets the direction and empowers management and staff to advance inclusion. For many employers new to this work, the formation of a business case is a critical milestone. For others, the setting of goals and targets is an important accomplishment in their efforts to advance Aboriginal recruitment, retention or procurement partnerships. Common to all *Leadership Circle* partners is a commitment to learn and share practices. We are grateful for the time and effort our partners take to help us build a 'community of inclusion' with their promising practices, systems and behaviours to help others make inclusion and organizational effectiveness work.

Leadership Circle partners beta test our products and services. This is an important step in our product development process; ensuring that what we produce meets the needs of corporate Canada.

These partners also amplify the message of inclusion -- joining us to send a collective voice in support of inclusion to boardrooms and executive offices across Canada and beyond. *Leadership Circle* partners create a pull factor for corporate Canada; encouraging larger firms to adopt inclusion as a vital part of their business plans.

"The challenge for our country's leadership is to convey a sense of urgency about the skills shortage. In just a few short years Canada's demographics will be shifting as more people are set to retire. Aboriginal people can fill those gaps."

- Rob Kendel
TransCanada

CLIMBING THE INCLUSION CONTINUUM

Employers have told us what they need to work more effectively with Aboriginal people, businesses and communities.

The *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* program and its Inclusion Continuum help employers to transform their workplaces and capitalize on the diversity of its talent pool. This approach requires systematic engagement work with companies at each of the continuum's seven stages. The model is used to illustrate the changes that organizations can make to become more inclusive; gradually reshaping their organization to enable a more effective working relationship with Aboriginal people, communities and businesses. We are committed to helping employers build workplaces that are inclusive for people of Aboriginal identity.

This year our three workshop trainers delivered 17 *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* workshops across the country. The workshop is now being delivered in French. One set of workshops was organized solely by us, while a second set was organized in collaboration with Human Resources and Social Development, Labour Division as part of Canada's Racism Free Workplace Strategy.

We are excited about the ability of *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* to help employers attain new levels of inclusion in their workplaces. The adoption of our digital strategy means that new product innovations can be continuously developed for *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion*. Online products, webinars and new kinds of innovative training are just a few of the exciting products we are developing. In this effort we are continuing to work with IT suppliers. We have also been working hard this year to develop products in the area of assessment tools.

We also continue to create innovative products and models that enable employers to "situate" their organizations on the Inclusion Continuum. Currently our three-part assessment tool, built in 2009-2010 is in beta testing to examine the systems, practices and behaviours that characterize inclusive workplaces. The three-part Aboriginal Inclusion Survey Series queries companies on topics such as employee engagement, leadership initiatives, policies and strategies.

"We bring rigour to help employers understand and measure workplace inclusion against standards and benchmarks. Employers have told us they want to know what they need to do to work more effectively with Aboriginal employees, business and communities."

- **Rob Jonston**
RBC Royal Bank and Council Co-chair

A follow-up survey of participants who took the *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* workshop rated consistently high with most indicating the high degree of relevance to their job and their workplace needs. Participants say they like the takeaways from the *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* workshops:

- importance of change agents in an organization
- the best practices listed in the presentation -- the sources
- enjoyed the group session -- finding out what other employers are doing.

"The cultural learnings I've already experienced by being involved in the development of the Mastering Aboriginal

Inclusion program series modules have been invaluable. Effective use of these resource tools by employers will advance the employment and inclusion of Aboriginal job-seekers across Canada. It's a very positive step forward."

- **Danny Strilchuk**
Manager, Diversity & Employment Equity Compliance, Spectra Energy

"As an Aboriginal employee, I walked away from MAI (Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion) with much more than I had expected. I realized what significant role I can play to strengthen and extend the linkages between labour force demand and supply. MAI validated the many reasons why I have changed employers six times in nine years: tokenism, management, organizational insensitivity and lack of a support system. I appreciate that MAI will help the demand side (employers) understand why Aboriginal people leave their jobs and, perhaps, over time more employers will endeavour to make the necessary changes in order to become workplaces of choice for Aboriginal people."

- **Dorothy Haché**
Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion participant, September 2008

GUIDING CIRCLES

The *Guiding Circles* program achieved several aspects of its plan in 2009-2010. New product development, workshop delivery and new marketing initiatives characterized the year.

We completed its 22 month project *Guiding Circles Booklet 2: Finding New Possibilities*. This project funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada was completed in August 31, 2009 and resulted in the second booklet in this learning suite, which was also completed. The new booklet complements *Guiding Circles Booklet 1: Understanding Yourself*, which invites individuals to explore their life experiences as a guide for career assessment.

The project manager attended 29 events over the course of the project to provide information about the *Guiding Circles* approach and to teach workshops at conferences about the methodology. The awareness and high quality of the program has been noticed by the education and career development community from provincial and national networks. The council provided two conference workshops; one in November for the Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT) group in British Columbia, an association of community-based trainers and a second national conference held in January 2010 with Cannexus, a National Career Development Conference.

Over the course of the year we delivered 15 sessions of *Guiding Circles* to over 159 appreciative participants. These

workshops are having a profound impact at the community level and with the organizations and institutions involved in the hosting and sponsoring of these events. In 2009-2010 the council produced a series of success stories which explain the use and impact of *Guiding Circles*. These stories are posted on the program's newly launched webpages at aboriginalhr.ca, along with four podcasts outlining the various benefits to trainers, youth and sponsors.

Guiding Circles... "... no fluff stuff - real world stuff."

- *Chief Clarence Louie*
Osoyoos Indian Band

"This is a fabulous tool... The workbook was helpful but after the training it became valuable beyond belief. I will be using this tool every chance I get. Finally we have something that can be related to by Aboriginals."

- *Bonnie Kiyon*
Corrections Canada

TRADES PROJECTS

We continued to deliver on our trades agenda; achieving employment results and developing partnerships which helped facilitate Aboriginal entry into trades. This agenda is drawing to a close and we have no current plans to take on new projects in this area, focusing instead on workplace human resource issues.

As of March 31, 2010, the Nova Scotia project placed 63 Aboriginal apprentices. The Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre based in Halifax took on the project management for this project in late fall. As a result, a renewed energy was infused into the project and by year-end, staff had attended and organized 52 meetings and information sessions. 163 employers were called upon and 88 trades candidates had been identified in partnership with the provincial Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement holder (AHRDA) organizations.

The project team is developing important relationships with many of the unions operating in the province. In October 2010 the project will come to a close and as a result, we are working with project partners on a sustainability plan for the project to continue this valuable trades work in Nova Scotia after the seed funds are spent.

We requested that the Quebec project agreement be extended to June 30, 2010 to enable planning work in this project to be completed. The planning table offered by this project is enabling partners and

interest parties to meet and forge a Quebec wide Aboriginal trades strategy. It has been a very beneficial process.

In February the Manitoba Trades project continued with its first primary goal to build and consolidate a plan for a coordinated development strategy that will increase Aboriginal entry and retention in the trades. The project is at the developmental stages as project management continued to work with partners to develop a strategy.

In partnership with the Government of Alberta we completed the Alberta Essential Skills project with 92 people completing the essential skills training covering four pilots within a period 33 months. The main objective of the project was to develop curriculum that was designed to help Aboriginal people pass written apprenticeship exams.

The Job Horizons project came to a close in March 2010 having placed 480 people over the past 26 months. With the support of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada this successful project was carried on in 2009-2010. Funding from Western Economic Diversification Canada and the Province of Saskatchewan's Northern Development Agreement sunset in the previous year. We presented information about the Job Horizons at the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum's national conference held in early June 2010.

WORKFORCE CONNEX

In October 2009 we worked with an Ontario advisory committee to deliver an *Ontario Workforce Connex* forum in Toronto to an audience of about 160 people. The event was highly successful with strong commendations from the Government of Ontario.

The Ontario forum focused on the green energy and construction sectors, as well as other growth areas of the economy. Funds in the amount of 100K were provided by Government of Ontario, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs to help stage the event and contribute to the development work which took place before and after *Workforce Connex*. The steering committee for the Ontario forum consisted of Government of Ontario representatives, First Nations and Métis organizations, federal government employees and employer representatives who volunteered their time.

With the help of Government of Ontario and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada funding, a two-hour digital record of the event was produced and posted on our website so the benefit of the event can be available to all. Cooperation in producing this video library was received from Hydro One, SNC Lavalin and the Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario. The Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs spoke at the forum, which further raised the profile and importance of companies' embracing Aboriginal inclusion workplace strategies. The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network produced an in-depth news story on the event which showcased the council and our messages to a national audience.

In the aftermath of the forum, we established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA). We were also invited to speak at their annual event and co-produce a *Green Energy Outlook* booklet that was funded by the Government of Ontario in the amount of 60K. The publication will be published in English and French. It will also be our first publication published in the Cree language.

The Ontario forum was the last *Workforce Connex* event delivered within our successful national forum series, which was inaugurated in April of 2006. This series, funded in part by the federal department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, brought together more than 1000 employers and representatives from the Aboriginal community/business, colleges, labour, government and others to focus on how they can learn about and connect to the Aboriginal workforce and benefit through Aboriginal inclusion. In return, members from the Aboriginal community, in particular the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement holders (AHRDA) community, learned about the needs of employers, labour market information and how to connect to employers and their job and training opportunities. In its entirety the *Workforce Connex* series facilitated dialogue and encouraged action in 11 of the provinces and territories.



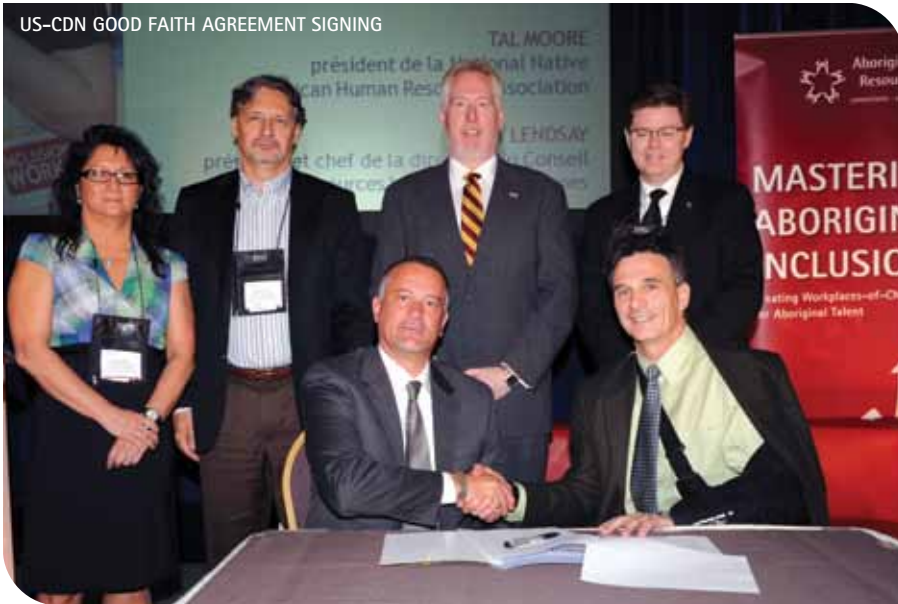
"In our work we talk about employer engagement. We have come to appreciate that investments need to be made to develop social capital and that this will eventually lead to partnerships and private sector investment in Aboriginal employment and training. This engagement period is so important and it requires specialized approaches, venues and facilitation, which we facilitate."

- Anne Noonan
Council Co-chair

"I found the workshop to be very informative. I made some connections with people in the local aboriginal community and am confident we can continue to network and form partnerships to benefit us both. I would highly recommend this workshop to all employers and am looking forward to getting together at future events to discuss follow up to our action items."

- Nancy Veal
Human Resource Manager NW,
Ontario Power Generation Inc.

INTERNATIONAL WORK



Internationally, we are continuing our work in Australia to help their federal government achieve their 2015 target of increasing Indigenous Peoples recruitment to the public service. We have also applied to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for funds to adapt and deliver our *Guiding Circles* facilitator training program.

With the support and endorsement of the Canadian and US embassies, a new International Good Faith HR Agreement was signed with the National Native American Human Resource Association (NNAHRA) to work together on exchanges that will increase human resource professional standards and develop business-to-business opportunities in Canada and USA.

We will work with NNAHRA to share information in areas such as Indigenous employment and business opportunities in sectors (i.e., green energy, trade & investment and information technology). In the longer term, additional signatories to this Agreement will be invited in effort to expand international cooperation to advance human resource development, Indigenous partnerships, procurement and career development.

"We are delighted to be working with our friends from Canada. There is so much we can learn from each other."

– *Tal Moore*
President, National Native American Human Resource Association

ISO

Early in the year our senior management set a goal for the organization to become ISO certified. As the QAS International Ltd. notes... "the achievement of the ISO 9001 Standard is probably the most important and respected quality management standard in use in business throughout the world today. In any organization large or small, it controls quality and brings clear and identifiable financial benefits, offering clients a high degree of confidence and providing a competitive edge."

In January 2010 QAS International Limited, the certifying body, entered our Council in its register of Quality Approved Companies operating to the BS EN ISO 9000:2008 series.

"Achieving ISO is an important milestone for us, as the designation will enable us to better serve our customers and clients."

– *Roberta Hewson*
Treasurer



INCLUSIVE PROCUREMENT

During this fiscal year we worked on an online Aboriginal procurement training program with the funding support of 557K from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Participating companies included SNC Lavalin, Western Union, Lowes, Shoppers Home Health Care, Hydro One, Sobeys, TransCanada and others.

As part of this pilot project, we undertook a literature review, commissioned research, conducted key informant interviews and organized two national focus groups. Unique to this initiative was our adoption of an "action research" model. We developed a series of diagnostic instruments to help analyze companies, describe their current state of inclusion and provide the data to craft a tailored strategy to strengthen their procurement strategies. As a result of this work, Aboriginal businesses were identified and introduced to these large companies, business deals were concluded and procurement practices were adjusted to create more opportunities for Aboriginal businesses.

We gathered 565 business leaders to fashion the companies' individual experiences into a suite of tools that help businesses identify the barriers to deeper engagement. This work also encapsulated best practice strategies that help businesses overcome these barriers. As a result of this project, there is now a system available for other companies to follow to advance Aboriginal procurement. The foundation of this systematic approach is a new first of its kind online and instructor delivered course, *Introduction to Successful Aboriginal Procurement*.

This course will equip change leaders



with the knowledge and skills they need to develop an Aboriginal procurement policy and adjust procurement practices to create opportunities for Aboriginal businesses. Institutes of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada have awarded continuing education credits towards the Certified Procurement Professional (CPP) for those who complete the course. The reach for the course is as wide as the Internet.

On February 25, 2010 in Calgary, we hosted a pilot for the instructor led version of the procurement training program with facilitator, Jim Sweezy from Friesen Kay Associates.

"A cross section of companies including

Suncor, Syncrude, TransCanada, Cameco, Areva, Enbridge, STAT Oil, Government of Alberta, Graham Industrial Services Ltd and SNC Lavalin attended and gave their final critique of the course and offered insights into the training curriculum."

*- Stephen Lindley
Vice President,
Aboriginal & Northern Affairs,
SNC Lavalin*



VOICES of
CHANGE

**INCLUSION
WORKS** **10**

Inclusion Works '10: Voices of Change gathered 565 business leaders, HR Professionals Aboriginal employment officers, Aboriginal business representatives, students, career practitioners, school administrators/ teachers and many others to the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto, April 27-29, 2010 for an exciting and action-packed three-day event. The event created employment, resulted in new economic opportunities, provided networking opportunities and built learning and partnerships.

Opening on the first day with a recruitment fair, 86 post-secondary graduates from across the country met employers in a round of interviews that resulted in job offers. Several candidates had multiple offers! 21 grads were hired on-the-spot and many more made connections and leads for further jobs. Graduates told us that the future of Aboriginal people and Canada's future is bright and in good hands. Cool, calm and collected, these graduates showed tremendous skill sets and composure. For many this was an opportunity for them to meet other young professionals from across the country and form lasting relationships.

To assist grads with their interviews, we offered a "skill build" seminar which covered job hunting, interview techniques, media relations and other topics highly relevant to the needs of these young grads as they take the big step forward into the workplace as Canada's future engineers, nurses, marketers, accountants, trades

INCLUSION WORKS '10 GRADS



people and mentors.

Inclusion Works '10 hosted one day workshops on *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion*, Aboriginal Procurement and a one-day condensed version of our *Guiding Circles* training workshop.

Our keynote thought leaders joined the cast of experts to captivate attention, challenge thinking and advance insights into the business case and opportunities for success through inclusion. As a sample of keynotes, The Right Honourable Paul Martin spoke on Aboriginal education. Sir Ken Robinson Ph.D., an internationally recognized leader in the development of creativity, innovation and human resources inspired and informed the audience with his unique international perspective. National Chief Shawn Atleo gave his insights into First Nations economic development and human resource opportunities.

Learning workshops offered business representatives the opportunity to study more effective recruitment and retention strategies and build an inclusive workplace. Participants learned about the Inclusion Continuum and how this model will help them understand what practices, systems and behaviours work best to harnesses diversity and encourage employee engagement.

The three-day event also featured our biggest yet tradeshow for businesses, organizations and Aboriginal artisans.

A gala dinner featured Aboriginal

entertainment and an opportunity to network with guests and participants. In previous events delegates have cited networking and the ability to engage in peer learning as the single biggest reason to attend *Inclusion Works*. Those who attended this year's gala will remember the fun we all had banging drums and percussion instruments in unison – a testament to what people can achieve together if they work in cooperation to form a Global Heartbeat.

Inclusion Works'10 dazzled and entertained. Master facilitator Bob Chartier led the audience in a unique repertoire "The Inclusion Bistro". It was all part of *Inclusion Works'10* theme of "Voices of Change" which delivered innovative ways for participants to connect, express themselves and engage in discussions.

Inclusion Works'10 was an exciting event for participants with its quality program, insightful speakers and opportunities to network and learn. One attendee said it best.

Congratulations on an absolutely fantastic event! It is wonderful to see such dedication in putting together a world class event. Based on the feedback from the grads, it is easy to see how Inclusion Works has proven to motivate and empower Aboriginal Youth throughout the country. The speakers were insightful, the audience was diverse, and each individual event throughout the conference was



NATIONAL CHIEF ATLEO AND KELLY LINDSAY

energetic and a lot of fun.

"The grads presented at this year's Inclusion Works '10 are wonderful. I see the future leaders of Canada in these young people."

– Charlie Coffey, O.C.

"In this economy jobs are scarce and being an Aboriginal person with a shiny new degree certainly doesn't guarantee we will land a job. Inclusion Works' 10 exceeded our expectations. The opportunity for graduates to meet and network with company executives was awesome."

– Gabrielle Scrimshaw

THE SECTOR COUNCIL PROGRAM

We continue to enjoy the support of the Sector Council program with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. In March 2010 our infrastructure agreement, \$2.25 million over the next three years 2010-2013, provides core funding for our organization. We are grateful to this federal government department for its support which has developed into a model partnership over the years.

The federal government Sector Council program includes some 37 different Sector Councils which offer labour market programming in various sectors. Over the past few years our council has been working in various ways with these organizations to encourage their engagement in Aboriginal human resource development matters. This effort has been steadily progressing over the last decade. In 2009-2010 we continued to work with a sub-committee raising their level of understanding of Aboriginal human resource needs. This committee is co-chaired by the "Wood value-added Council. This group also presented at the *Ontario Workforce Connex* event in October 2009 mentioned earlier in this report.

Our president and CEO, Kelly Lendsay, continues to sit on the boards of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum and the Mining Industry Human Resource Council.

Both of those boards have generously shared their networks and contacts with our council. One outcome of these associations resulted in Kelly's designation as a distinguished lecturer by the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum. Six presentations were delivered during the course of the year under this lectureship.

This was the final year of the Aboriginal Council's Sector Council Liaison project which has provided ongoing technical assistance to the Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) project – a national project which has been the longest running aboriginal single initiative undertaken by a Sector Council. A collaboration of Eco Canada and the Aboriginal Human Resource Council it has provided a comprehensive and systematic inroad into the environment industry labour market.

We accept invitations to speak at Sector Council events. For example, Kelly was a keynote in November 2009 at the Electricity Sector Council Aboriginal Forum held in Toronto. In February 2010 we spoke at the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board meeting in Ottawa, which was organized by The Alliance of Sector Councils.

THE COUNCIL

We have an extremely talented and hard-working staff. Our administrative headquarters is based in Saskatoon in an office building which we purchased in 2008. Other staff are located in home offices at various locations across the country. These directors oversaw programs and projects in about 13 areas of business in 2009-2010. Contractors also work with us to share their expertise and specialized skills and knowledge. We have qualified as an Aboriginal business under the federal government's set aside program.

We receive our infrastructure funding from the federal government and raise the balance of our operating budget from the sales of products and services. In this respect we are a social enterprise organization. Last year our sales accounted for 19 per cent of our operating budget.

We also have a charitable arm. This year we have committed to donate the proceeds of our art auction to the Arctic Children and

Youth Foundation, which Susan Aglukark chairs. We believe in supporting Aboriginal organizations that help develop Aboriginal an Aboriginal person's ability to develop career skills, a career path and be an engaged and productive member of the workforce.

SUMMARY

The past 2009-2010 year has seen many accomplishments and successes advanced by the Aboriginal Human Resource Council in cooperation with our partners, friends, Leadership Circle partners and governance contributors. Working closely with government, industry, education, Aboriginal and Labour groups we continue to make an important and positive difference in the lives of First Nation, Métis and Inuit people throughout the country. This is our overriding purpose as an organization.

Our message of inclusion was heard by more people this year thanks to innovations in the way we communicated. Our council is clearly connecting in a way and to a level never achieved before. But there is still so much to do. We feel that our best work is yet to come as we enter our second decade. Our product innovations will continue and we will look for new ways to help employers create inclusive workplaces.

We know that we need to continue efforts to grow the partnership throughout the country. We hope that you will renew your efforts to work with us in the coming year. If you see an opportunity to work with us and our many friends and partners we hope you will contact us.

"As a founding board member our company continues to see exceptional value in the work of the Aboriginal Human Resource Council and our partners. We hope that more companies will join us in our second decade ahead."

- *Dan Brown*
Synchrude Canada Ltd.



**Aboriginal Human
Resource Council**

connections – partnerships – solutions

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Leadership in Indigenous Workplace Inclusion

Canada

The council is a non-profit social enterprise that receives infrastructure funding support from the Sector Council Program, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada