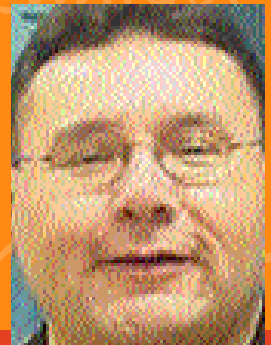


Employment Resource Centre
Employment Counselling • Skills
Workshops • Job Searching Techniques • S
Community Project Training • Subsid
Job Creation • Skills Development • employ

MIZIWE BIIK 2003/04 ANNUAL REPORT



ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING





Community Partners

Anishnawbe Health Toronto
Aboriginal Legal Services Toronto
Aboriginal Voices Radio
Big Soul Productions
Blue Dawn Consulting
Community Information Toronto
Digital Distance
Evergreen
Native Child and Family Services
Native Men's Residence
Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
Native Women's Resource Centre
Nishnawbe Homes
Toronto Council Fire Cultural Centre

Miziwe Biik acknowledges financial support from the following:

Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle (ALFDC)
Human Resources Skills Development Canada
Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat
City of Toronto

Miziwe Biik Staff

<i>Executive Director</i> Nancy Martin	<i>Project Officers Assistant</i> Eileen Meawasige	<i>Employment Counsellor/ Trainer</i> Joseph McQuabbie	<i>Reception</i> Kim Phillips
<i>Finance Manager</i> Marina Elliott	<i>Urban Aboriginal Homeless (UAH) Projects Assistant</i> Ruby Eisen	<i>Employment Counsellor</i> Denise Davad	<i>Partnership Development Advisor</i> Dan Shaule
<i>Executive Assistant</i> Jennifer Abbott	<i>Employment Counselling Manager</i> Ruby Dreger	<i>Employment Counsellor</i> EJ Kwandibens	<i>Aboriginal Business Resource Centre Consultant</i> Kenn Ross
<i>Project Officer</i> Arlene Caribou	<i>JobDeveloper/ Employment Counsellor</i> Paul Sayers	<i>Employment Counsellor Assistant</i> Lillian Wesley	

Our Mission and Vision

Vision Statement

At Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training, we believe that securing a job is crucial to becoming a full participating member of the community. A job is a passport to self-sufficiency. It brings pride, dignity, a better quality of life and hope for the future.

We know that Aboriginal people in Toronto face many barriers when attempting to join the work force. We are committed to breaking down those barriers by providing Native people with access to training programs and employment services, and by entering into partnerships within the Aboriginal community and non-Aboriginal community.

Miziwe Biik Board of Directors

Miziwe Biik adheres to traditional Aboriginal teachings, and practices. Miziwe Biik draws its Board of Directors from the Greater Toronto Aboriginal community. Although Board members are associated with, or may be employed by community agencies, provincial or federal departments, they do not represent these agencies or their employers while serving on the Board.

Members are elected from the Greater Toronto community through an open forum held during Miziwe Biik's annual general meeting. Selection of Board members is based on knowledge, experience and expertise in the employment, training, and business fields affecting the Greater Toronto Aboriginal community.

When there are seats available, the Board may appoint members to fill these vacancies until the appointed members are accepted by the community at the annual general meeting. Board members may hold their positions for a three-year term.

2003/2004 Board Members

JIMMY DICK, PRESIDENT

HARRY WILLMOT, SECRETARY/TREASURER

STEVE TEEKENS

DWAYNE PAMAJEWON

LIZ JORDAN, VICE PRESIDENT

JENNY RESTOULE-MALLOZZI

LARRY FROST

Mission

Miziwe Biik is committed to assisting all persons of Aboriginal ancestry in the Greater Toronto Area to attain a better quality of life.

Miziwe Biik believes that community needs and aspirations are paramount. We are committed to strengthening the community through partnerships promoting equality and self-reliance.

Miziwe Biik strives to provide employment and training opportunities in a supportive environment in which people can affirm their Native identities and develop to their full potential.

Miziwe Biik is committed to the belief that it is through traditional cultural values, practices and resources that we will reclaim our destiny.

Report to the Community

PRESIDENT

This year at Miziwe Biik has been both a busy and challenging one due to funding uncertainties from Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSD). As you may recall, HRSD met with National Aboriginal Organizations because they recognize that these organizations represent the wishes and desires of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. Thus, these organizations have a major stake in determining how HRSD funds for Aboriginal people should be spent.

HRSD was also in the process of finalizing the terms of reference for a broad consultation across the country with the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement (AHRDA) holders and other interested parties.

As we continued to experience difficulties, especially with homelessness funding, Miziwe Biik was successful in its request for a meeting with Bill Cameron of HRSD. The Toronto Aboriginal community had the opportunity to give input at this meeting that was held at Native Men's Residence. Our community members conveyed the message to HRSD that the community supports (and will continue to support) Miziwe Biik as the organization that distributes all employment training and homelessness funds for this community.

I would like to thank all those in the community who united together that day and delivered this message to the HRSD representatives.

We are half way through 2004 and we still have not received the HRDC increase in funding for the Misquadis case – even though we have continuously advocated for this in our meetings. When this drags on the ones who suffer most are the members in our community who depend on particular services and programs. These services are important in our community and every year we need more funding for employment and training services and programs. We also need significant amounts of funding to properly correct the homelessness issues that our community faces – and for the front line workers who work with them. It seems that each year in our community the homeless are becoming younger. When we see this happening it means that we are not fully united. Therefore, we should unite and

*As we move
forward . . .
we at Miziwe
Biik would like
to expand our
horizons in
employment
and training
services for our
community*

declare war against homelessness, alcoholism, drug abuse and violence. The time is now to do this as we have continued to struggle with these issues every day in our community throughout this year and during several previous years.

So lets move forward this year with that in our minds and accomplish this mission. We are a proud people and take great pride in our unique culture. Lets show this pride in a good way within our own community and to the greater Canadian public. Let's tell Canada that we demand to be reckoned with and that our people can make a tremendous contribution to society through our teachings and culture (as we have already done since the earliest arrivals on our shores).

As we move forward with this in mind we at Miziwe Biik would like to expand our horizons in employment and training services for our community. We would like to see more of our people employed or trained in: Television, Media, Hotel Management, First Nations Taxi Services, Drivers Education & Training Services, the Food and Restaurant Industry, the Music Industry and within various City of Toronto departments.

In closing I would like to thank our Executive Director Nancy Martin and all the staff at Miziwe Biik for their hard work and dedication. I also want to thank my colleagues on the board of directors and the former members I served with since being here at Miziwe Biik. I also wish to say thank you to all community members for your continued support in our initiatives. Lastly, I want to thank our Elders who offer their teachings and guidance to us.

If I have missed anything or anyone in my report I apologize and hope that I have not offended anyone in my oversight.

In Unity
All Our Relations

Jimmy Dick
PRESIDENT

*. . . we demand to
be reckoned with
. . . our people
can make a
tremendous
contribution to
society through
our teachings
and culture*

Never Lose Sight of the Goals

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
REPORT TO THE AGM
FOR APRIL 1, 2003
TO MARCH 31, 2004

SUCCESSSES

We had many successes in the last year. Our Employment Counselling Unit served 722 walk-in clients each month. The average number of new clients is 769 with 40% of these new clients securing employment.

The Misquadis case and the subsequent appeal in November 2003 that upheld the earlier decision will impact government policy. The decision will ensure that urban Aboriginal communities derive the same benefits as First Nations communities.

Our Gardening Project undertaken in partnership with Evergreen has provided a wonderful opportunity for volunteers, for bringing back many of the traditional medicines used by Aboriginal people for food and medicine, and as a centrepiece for providing traditional teachings to our community. It's also helped to beautify our neighbourhood.

With the development and establishment of our Aboriginal Business Resource Centre, we have demonstrated our strong commitment to the development of entrepreneurs. We will continue to work with individuals to help them achieve their dreams of self-employment, to provide them with networking opportunities through TABA and to help them learn critical skills through offering business development workshops, seminars and conferences.

The TABA Awards Celebration was one of the highlights of our work with business people. Marie Gaudet, writer and publisher was the Aboriginal Businesswoman of the Year. Fashion designer Ronald Everett was selected the Aboriginal Businessman of the

Year, and the "girls" at Big Soul Productions, Laura Milliken and Jennifer Podemski were the recipients of the Youth Entrepreneur Award. For the first time this year, an award to acknowledge student entrepreneurs was instituted. Felicia Baskatawang, a jeweller and craftsperson was the award's first recipient

In June 2003, we held a special fundraising evening, "Honouring Roger Jones" that included a dinner and Silent Auction. I want to thank everyone - agencies and individuals who came out to honour one of our most respected elders and who made generous donations.

We negotiated a property tax exemption which represents an annual saving of \$50,000.

The Office of Learning Technology is ready for a demonstration of the Aboriginal-friendly GED preparation course developed by Miziwe Biik with our private sector partner Digital Distance.

CHALLENGES

I want to acknowledge some of the challenges that we faced in the 2003/04 fiscal year.

Not surprisingly, funding challenges are at the top of the list!

Several of you attended the community meeting we held on March 22nd around the funding issues that were threatening our community. Many good ideas and suggestions were generated at this meeting.

Homelessness Funding

We did not get a contractual agreement in 2003/04. We spent many hours lobbying and attempting to work with the Homelessness Directorate of HRSD trying to get a contract. At every turn, it seemed we were met with government roadblocks. The issue began to be resolved after a very large public meeting in April 2004, chaired by Frances Sanderson and hosted by Na-Me-Res. The turnout of approximately 150 community members demonstrated to the government the level of caring and concern we have for our members who are homeless.

Employment and Training

When we called the community meeting, we had just been informed by HRSD that our budget had been reduced from \$3 million to \$2 million. Because of the Misquadis case, we had been anticipating an increase in funding rather than a decrease. Our allocation was restored to \$3 million annually, and, we are about to sign an upward amendment for an additional \$1.1 million because of the Misquadis case.

Urban Aboriginal Strategy

Miziwe Biik agreed to sponsor the UAS by undertaking the financial administrative responsibilities. In August 2003, I was appointed as the Chair of the Interim Management Committee. The Committee was able to secure \$75,000 from the federal government for the community consultation, All Voices Heard.

FUTURE GOALS

Post-2004 AHRDA

Our community and our organization have been preparing for this since the fall of 2002. Together with our partner, the ALFDC, we have begun to negotiate a renewed AHRDA with HRSD. This will be a new five-year agreement for the delivery of training and employment services.

Strengthening Opportunities for Youth

In our discussions and consultations with the youth in our community, they have expressed a desire for training opportunities designed on their dreams and needs. They want to become self-reliant.

In partnership with Centennial College, a Youth Entrepreneur Training Program will be offered for youth who are seeking skills to become self-employed.

Youth will also be able to participate in a Pre-Apprenticeship Training to be undertaken in partnership with Local 27 of the Carpenter's Union. This course will give participants the experience and skills to enter the Carpentry Apprenticeship program.

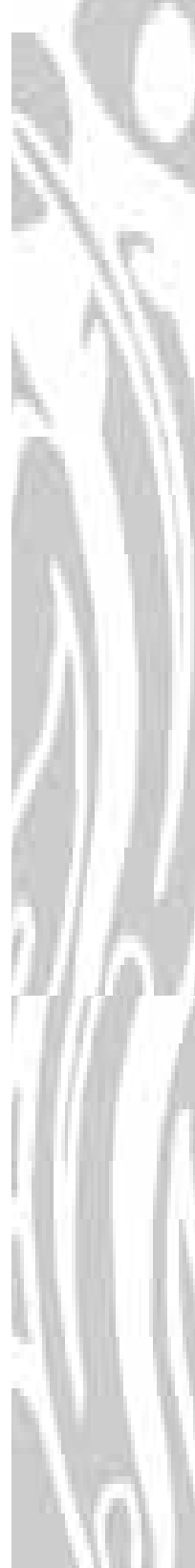
Strengthening Opportunities for Entrepreneurs

A number of months ago, Miziwe Biik offered a Self-Employment Discovery Workshop. An idea for an Arts Cooperative emerged among some of the participants. This group of women have been working with our Partnership Development Advisor to look at how they can advance their business idea. A training program in the coming months will equip them with the practical and technical skills to set up their cooperative.

Pre-Employment Training

Miziwe Biik will be offering a pre-employment training program for those of our clients who have never been in the work force, or who haven't worked for awhile. SCPI - Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative is funding this program.

Strengthening Relationships with Funders
An ongoing challenge for our community is lack of access to funding that comes from the mainstream, even though it may be targeted for Aboriginal people. To assist entrepreneurs or aspiring entrepreneurs, we have been working at strengthening our relationships with Industry Canada and specifically, Aboriginal Business Canada. For agencies in the important business of



providing housing, we have helped them link up with City Housing, the SCPI Program.

Implementation of Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Initiative

We signed a two-year contract (up to March 2006) with the Homelessness Directorate of HRSD for \$2.25 million. This funding will help our agencies meet some of the program and service needs of community members who are homeless.

Forging Relationships with First Nations

The Chiefs of Ontario has long been a strong

and active supporter of the work that we do. Over the past several years, the Chiefs of Ontario have advanced resolutions supporting Miziwe Biik and recognizing the valuable services that the Toronto agencies provide to their Toronto-based citizens. We will continue to work closely with individual First Nations Chiefs as well as the political representatives and staff of the Chiefs of Ontario office, particularly as we negotiate the renewed AHRDA agreement.

Miziwe Biik will continue to work on achieving the goals outlined in our strategic plan of March 2002.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to acknowledge:

- All those who have gone before us.
They continue to give us guidance, wisdom, motivation, inspiration and strength.
- The Elders who guide and teach us.
- Our dedicated and loyal staff - this is not just a job for them. They are people who are committed to the betterment of the community and who never lose sight of the goals.
- The Board of Directors for their dedicated leadership.
- Roger Misquadis Jr. and Dorthy Phipps-Walker who lent their names to the court challenge, now known widely as the Misquadis case.
- Chris Reid, legal counsel for the case.
- Individual community members and organizations who have supported, encouraged and partnered with us to create a better life for our community.
- Our partners at the ALFDC.
- Our professional advisors, financial and legal - Steve Silverberg, Don McDonell, Derek Chum, Kim Thomas, Lori Mattis.
- Our Project Officer Carol Williams, HRSD Toronto Programs Group.
- Our provincial, corporate and municipal partners.

Nancy Martin

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Auditor's Report

To: The members of Miziwe Biik - Aboriginal Employment and Training

We have audited the balance sheet of Miziwe Biik - Aboriginal Employment and Training as at " March 31, 2004 and the statements of revenue, expenses and surplus and cash flow for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

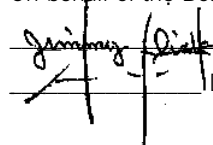
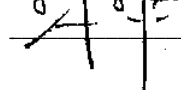
In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization as at March 31, 2004, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles commonly used in not for profit organizations.

Stockhamer Fluss, Chartered Accountants. Toronto, Ontario July 13, 2004

Balance Sheet As at March 31, 2004

	2004	2003
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	\$ 403,351	\$ 523,866
Short term investments	59,098	8,004
Accounts receivable	248,901	393,534
Prepaid expenses	42,135	54,475
	<u>753,485</u>	<u>1,029,879</u>
Capital assets (Note 2)		
Land and building	1,145,294	1,110,981
Computer equipment (Note 3)	165,653	153,565
Furniture and fixtures	45,864	39,093
	<u>1,356,811</u>	<u>1,303,639</u>
Less: accumulated amortization	152,529	103,180
	<u>1,204,282</u>	<u>1,200,459</u>
	<u>\$ 1,957,767</u>	<u>\$ 2,230,338</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Accounts payable	\$ 377,691	\$ 549,533
Deferred revenue	164,850	225,683
Current portion of mortgage payable (Note 5)	27,948	22,936
	<u>570,489</u>	<u>798,152</u>
Mortgage payable (Note 5)	495,140	523,268
	<u>495,140</u>	<u>523,268</u>
SURPLUS		
Surplus	892,138	908,918
	<u>\$ 1,957,767</u>	<u>\$ 2,230,338</u>

On behalf of the Board:

 DIRECTOR
 DIRECTOR

See accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows Year Ended March 31, 2004

	2004	2003
Operating activities		
Cash from operations –		
Net revenue over expenses	\$ (16,780)	\$ 94,133
Items not affecting cash		
Amortization	49,349	40,268
	<u>32,569</u>	<u>134,401</u>
Changes in non-cash components of working capital		
Short term investments	(1,094)	58,722
Accounts receivable	144,633	(128,205)
Prepaid expenses	12,340	228,604
Accounts payable	(171,842)	247,232
Deferred revenue	(60,833)	(65,425)
	<u>(76,796)</u>	<u>340,928</u>
Cash provided by (used in) operations	<u>(44,227)</u>	<u>475,329</u>
Financing activities		
Mortgage payable	<u>(23,116)</u>	<u>546,204</u>
Investing activities		
Purchase of Capital assets	<u>(53,172)</u>	<u>(1,154,057)</u>
Increase (decrease) in cash	<u>(120,515)</u>	<u>(132,524)</u>
Cash, beginning of year	<u>523,866</u>	<u>656,390</u>
Cash, end of the year	<u>\$ 403,351</u>	<u>\$ 523,866</u>

See accompanying notes.

Notes to Financial Statements March 31, 2004

1. Purpose of the organization:
Miziwe Biik - Aboriginal Employment and Training is a local organization operating programs providing training and employment opportunities in a supportive environment in which people can affirm their Aboriginal identity and develop to their full potential.

2. Summary of accounting policies:
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles

commonly used in not-for-profit organizations.

a) Revenues and expenses
Revenue and expenses are accounted for on an accrual basis.

b) Contributed services
Volunteers contribute their services to assist the organization in its service delivery activities. Because of the difficulty of determining the fair value of, contributed services, they have not been recognized in the financial statements.

c) Capital assets
Capital assets acquired in prior years were charged to operations in the year of purchase. These assets have not been capitalized, as the necessary financial information is not readily determinable.

Capital assets have been stated at cost. Depreciation is provided on a declining balance basis at the following rates:

Building – 50 years straight line
Computer equipment – 30% declining balance
Furniture and fixtures – 20% declining balance
Miziwe Biik - Aboriginal Employment and Training

d) Goods and Services Tax
In accordance with the rules regarding the Goods and Services Tax, this organization has claimed a G.S.T. refund representing 50% of the G.S.T. paid for purchases. The remaining 50% has been recorded as an expense.

e) Use of estimates
The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities (if any) at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting periods. Actual results may vary from the current estimates. These estimates are reviewed periodically and, as adjustments become necessary, they are reported in operations in the periods in which such adjustments become known.

3. Computer equipment
Over the past few years computer equipment totaling \$103,323 was purchased through funding provided by Community Access Programming. Consistent with generally accepted accounting principles, these assets were capitalized and will be amortized in accordance with the rates as noted in note 2(c).

4. Concentration of credit risk:
Cash and investments are on deposit with a Major Canadian Bank. Management does not believe that the organization is subject to any significant credit risk in this regard.

5. Mortgage payable
The organization entered into a long-term mortgage in 2003. The term is for 5 years at 7% per annum. The monthly payments of \$5,100 include both interest and principal repayment.

Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Surplus March 31, 2004

	2004	2003
Revenue		
Grants	\$ 3,782,678	\$ 4,881,061
Interest	9,266	3,892
Subscription fees	-	700
Other income	32,086	218,310
	3,824,030	5,103,963
Expenses		
Program expenses		
Community access programming (Note 3)	3,105	5,208
Consolidated revenue funding program	100	215
Employment insurance program	2,509,277	2,965,134
Homeless initiative	23,404	771,583
On Line Learning Technology	141,674	-
Ontario Works Skills Development		
Summer career placement	89,201	82,039
	2,819,874	3,857,841
Administrative Expenses		
Advertising and promotion	13,852	26,510
Amortization	49,349	35,196
Bank charges	1,105	3,555
Capacity building	91,778	38,852
Employment costs	101,842	81,906
Insurance	16,916	13,580
Office and general	12,085	52,289
Office rent and occupancy cost	81,511	180,361
Office supplies	19,642	24,197
Professional fees	22,510	33,864
Repairs and maintenance	18,696	19,309
Salaries	547,223	578,953
Staff training	5,880	4,225
Telephone	21,541	21,763
Travel	17,006	25,457
	1,020,936	1,151,989
Total expenses	3,840,810	5,009,830
Excess revenue over expenses	(16,780)	94,133
Surplus, beginning of the year	908,918	814,785
Surplus, end of year	\$ 892,138	\$ 908,918

See accompanying notes.

Message from Manager of Employment Services – Ruby Dreger

Employment Services here at Miziwe Biik has had a significant increase in the number of clientele using its services monthly. Our numbers have increased from 600 to an average of 800-900. The significant increase of clients requesting assistance in their job searches is challenging, however, we are accommodating requests for assistance as best we can.

The employment counsellors and staff are always excited for clients who have managed to obtain employment during the year (A total of 400 clients who were assisted in their job search by Miziwe Biik found employment).

Along with providing the client with an individual employment counsellor, we offer assistance and support throughout the year by providing half-day workshops designed to enhance the skill sets of the client. For example, workshops were offered in the areas of: resume building, cover letter writing, interview skills, Internet usage and basic computer skills.

Most of our clients who attend our workshops find the employment they are looking for upon the completion of a series of these workshops. I fully encourage anyone who is interested to participate in these workshops. Along with increasing your self-esteem, you will enhance your ability to do an efficient job search and accelerate the possibility of obtaining the employment of your choice.

Meegwetch to all of our many loyal clients who are employed or are registered for other types of training or education. Whatever your goal is, we are here to assist and encourage each and every one of you to pursue your goals and dreams. Take action and just do it! If you need a little help, schedule an appointment to discuss your present and future employment goals with an employment counsellor.

Best Regards,

Ruby Dreger



Employment – Success Stories

Ray Maracle

Ray was contemplating a career change, possibly into the transportation, supply chain and logistics industry. An employment counsellor introduced him to some Internet sites with information specifically related to truck driving, Ray successfully marketed himself and landed a position as an AZ truck driver with O'Connor Distribution.

Since Ray started his employment with O'Connor, he has been making steady deliveries into the USA. Ray says he is very happy because with Miziwe Biik's help he was able to find what he was looking for in a short period of time.

Lawrence Keeshig

Lawrence Keeshig was seeking employment and thought one of our employment counsellors could be of assistance.

Lawrence had past employment experiences he could draw upon including construction and security.

Upon seeking employment information related to his experiential background, Lawrence found that there was a potential security position available at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto. His application was successful but he did not have certain attire required for his new job. We were able to direct Lawrence towards an organization that helped him with his security clothing needs.

Today, Lawrence continues to work as a Security Officer at the Native Canadian center and, on occasion, he assists in maintenance duties as well.

Robert Beaudry

Robert Beaudry registered as a client at Miziwe Biik seeking assistance to market his maintenance and engineering background.

A counsellor assisted Robert in creating a resume that specifically highlighted his experiences and skills. Shortly after, through

networking and hard work, Robert located a potential position at Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre. Robert's interview was successful and he obtained the Engineering Maintenance position. Congratulations Robert on your successful job search!

Marilyn Lamorandiere

Writer/consultant Marilyn Lamorandiere officially registered her business Aboriginal Write Consulting Services on Aboriginal Day, June 21st, 2004. Marilyn is a member of the Chippewas of Nawash band, Cape Croker Reserve, near Owen Sound.

Currently, Marilyn is writing articles for Toronto independent newspaper. Marilyn's plans for her first year in business include: building a clientele base, taking advantage of the workshops and conferences that relate to her business and networking to explore the possibilities of expanding her services and writing presentations for clients.

Marilyn intends to complete her studies and obtain a B.A. from the University of Toronto with a major in Aboriginal Studies. She has gained valuable experience in administrative offices over the past several years... which she says is a natural extension to managing her business.

Raquel Madahbee

Raquel Madahbee registered as a new client with us in April 2004. At that time, Raquel was unemployed and was having some difficulty figuring out how her current skills could mesh with potential employment opportunities.

An employment counsellor worked with Raquel to develop a resume and source a training program that would enable her to obtain her dream job (working with people in an office environment of a large organization).

After flawlessly completing a telephone screening and three panel interviews, Raquel was accepted into a major Bank Call Centre Training

Program for Aboriginal people.

Upon completion of the training program, the major bank hired Raquel as a full time Customer Service Representative in their Contact Call Centre. Congratulations Raquel!

Faith Chisolme

Faith, an accomplished professional dancer (jazz, ballet, tap) was unemployed and unsure which direction her job search should take.

After registering in July 2004 as a new client with us, an employment counsellor reviewed Faith's resume and discussed with her some alternative employment options that she might want to consider.

At this point, Faith was looking for a position that would provide her with steady income and job security. With Faith's approval, the employment counsellor submitted her resume to a major bank for consideration.

Faith's first interview was scheduled within 24 hours of submitting her resume. Two weeks and two interviews from the date Faith registered as a new client, she was offered a full time position as a Customer Service Representative for this major bank.

Dorothy Phipps-Walker

"The first step in my journey towards my current career took place in 1996. I was a single mom of four beautiful children. I participated in the Skills Development Training Program offered at Miziwe Biiik. The program helped me recognize the skills I already possessed as well as the skills that I would have to obtain in order to be successful in obtaining my career goals. I highly recommend this program, particularly the True Colours workshop.

Armed with my resume and top-notch interview skills I attended an information session at Miziwe Biiik. At this session I learned of an available position for an Aboriginal Community Nutrition Assistant. Excited and confident I applied. After a lengthy interview process –including the preparation of a home cooked meal for the interview panel –I was offered the job.

The long-term continuous support of Miziwe Biiik's staff (and the fact that they did not stop believing in me) has made it possible for me to reach the high career goals that I had set out for myself.

This is truly my dream job. I get to do community outreach. I love cooking and I know what its like to feed a family healthily on a shoestring budget. I couldn't be happier!"

Phil Williams

Phil Williams is a unique inspiration to all those around him. You see, Phil is legally blind but he does not consider this to be a disability. Phil sees his blindness as motivation to constantly succeed.

Phil has been a client with us over the past few years at varying times. He constantly strives to advance himself through activities such as taking computer courses, volunteering, acquiring new skills through enhancement programs and even training towards running a marathon.

Phil sees no barriers in his quest for personal and professional growth. He motivates others around him to succeed through his actions. Hats off to you Phil and keep up the great work!

Michael Gow

In March of 2004, Michael Gow became a registered client with Miziwe Biiik, hoping to secure some training funds to assist him in the first step towards obtaining a long-term dream. Michael's dream was to become a certified stunt performer.

Michael's case for funding was managed by one of our counsellors and was submitted to Kagita Mikam.

Michael eventually received approval for his training funds and went on to complete a stuntman training program. Michael will pursue a career in stunt performance in California or Toronto. Best of luck Michael!

Miziwe Biik and the ALFDC

Miziwe Biik is a member of the Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle (ALFDC).

The ALFDC is an umbrella organization for member First Nations and urban boards. The ALFDC is the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement holder between the First Nations and the Federal Government.

The ALFDC administers the funding, reports to Human Resources Development Canada, develops programs, policies and procedures for members, and lobbies for funding. The Board of Directors of the ALFDC is made up of representatives of the member First Nations and urban boards. Membership of the ALFDC is comprised of twelve First Nations and two urban boards. The ALFDC is chaired by Steve Williams.

ALFDC Programs and Services

The programs and services offered by Miziwe Biik are similar to existing Human Resources Skills Development Canada programs. These programs and services focus on both groups and individuals by providing training to Aboriginal people

seeking to enter the workplace after periods of education/training or periods of unemployment.

Training for groups or individuals is generally sponsored by community based Aboriginal organizations or private sector businesses.

Individual training is eligible to be taken at any recognized training institution/organization or delivered by an employer with on-the-job experience.

The type of programs and services offered are able to be adjusted to local situations and requirements, yet they must relate to both, a) the skills development interests of the individual and b) current labour market needs.



Project Budgets

CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUNDS \$ 636,741 TARGETED WAGE SUBSIDY \$ 402,488

Breakdown by Program:

Employment Assistance
Support Measure 532,289

Job Creation Partnership 37,820

Targeted Wage Subsidy 66,567
Purchase of Training 65

Sponsors:

Spirit of the people
Native Canadian Centre
ANDPVA
Native Men's Residence
Anishnawbe Health
Native Skills Centre
Evergreen
Metro Toronto Métis & Aboriginal Historical & Education

Sponsors:

Native Canadian Centre
Wash 21
Ontario First Nations Technical Services
Digital Distance
Big Soul Productions
Infinity Heritage Technologies
Johnston Research
Spirit Magazine
Kaizen Health & Rehab
Native Men's Residence
Nishnawbe Homes Inc
Knapp Publishing
Lucy's Hair Design & Spa
Tribal Customs Insurance
Invert Media

YOUTH \$ 325,554

Breakdown by Program

Job Creation Partnership 88,729
Employment Assistance
Support Measure 234,581
Stay In School 2,244

Sponsors:

Native Canadian Centre
Stock Options
Blue Dawn Consulting
Jeffrey Hewitt
Native Child & Family Services
Council Fire
The Art of Healthworks

CLIENT BASED TRAINING

(Individual Client Requests)

Purchase of Training 32,913
Self Employment Assistance 3,880
Stay In School 53,589
Mobility Assistance 2,925
Economic Enhancement Program 11,238
Local Labour Market Partnership 35,000

TOTAL ALLOCATION \$ 139,545

TOTAL ALLOCATION COMMITTED \$ 2,933,228

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Support Measure \$ 1,278,672

Sponsors:

Knapp Publishing
Spirit of the People
Aboriginal Legal Services
Native Canadian Centre
Anishnawbe Health
Council Fire
Community Information Toronto
WEAL Consulting

SUMMER CAREER PLACEMENTS (2003)

TOTAL ALLOCATION \$ 89,201

Sponsors:

Native Child and Family Services
Gizhaadaawgamik Daycare
Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services
Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association
Centre for Indigenous Theatre
ANDPVA
Nishnawbe Homes
Native Men's Residence
Gaa Dibaatjimat Ngaashi
Toronto Council Fire Cultural Centre
Anishnawbe Health Toronto

JOB CREATION PARTNERSHIP \$ 150,228

Sponsors:

Native Canadian Centre
ANDPVA
Native Women's Resource Centre
University of Toronto

Projects – Success Stories

Rachelle Arbez

Sole proprietor of White Wind Spa on 721 Queen Street East in Toronto, Rachelle Arbez is a multi-talented woman who specializes in hair, make-up and massage services for the movie and television industry. Miziwe Biik has been working with



this dynamic woman through her education, training and business start up in this area. Ms Arbez's extensive film industry experience, her reputation for providing "head-to-toe service" and her bilingualism (English and French) are White Wind's unique selling points," states Alissa Marshall, Project Officer at Miziwe Biik. Rachelle is of Ojibway/Cree/Scots ancestry.

Rachelle says, "When I first arrived in Toronto, I attended an acting school for 5 months. When I graduated I found it hard to make auditions, so since I had been a licenced hairstylist and cosmetologist since 1997 and worked in spas in Lake Louise and Canmore, Alberta, I really wanted to be self-employed." Rachelle goes on to relate that she applied for the Self-Employment Assistance program with the encouragement and support of Miziwe Biik. She learned how to start a business after first going back to school to get a diploma at Ryerson University, specializing in FX make-up and artistry.

Rachelle officially launched White Wind Spa, as a traveling spa, in February 2004. She says, "There's not too many spas that will cater to the client. I find most people are very busy with life and work these days." With the traveling spa, Rachelle provides her clients with the opportunity and luxury of saving time—an hour or two—out of their busy schedules.

She is still looking forward to adding "Make-

overs for Mothers" to her business, but is still trying to get it going in the near future because she feels it "could help change women for the better in all aspects." You can find information on White Wind's website at www.whitewind.ca. Here you can catch a glimpse of how she promotes her business by viewing a "before and after" makeover. Rachelle says, "So hire me people, I do great work!"

Shannon Olson

Shannon Olson's dream has finally come true – to work at Big Soul Productions, a Toronto-based Aboriginally-owned production company. She firmly decided while attending the Native American Indian Film Festival last year that she admired and wanted to work for one festival participant in particular, Big Soul Productions. After completing a Miziwe Biik funded Producer-Trainee program at the production company, she says she was approached by co-owner and partner of Big Soul Laura Milliken (Jennifer Podemski is the other owner/partner of the company). Millken asked Shannon to come and work with them on a permanent basis. "We like each other," says Shannon.

Shannon is Cree, thirty-three years old and from Saskatchewan. She says her interest in the arts and writing began in elementary school when she remembers being the winner of speaking and writing contests. Now, in her position of Administration and Project Management at Big Soul, she has taken over many duties of the owners, enabling them to spend time on other projects.

Shannon's appreciation and enthusiasm for her current involvement and employment in the arts industry is evident. She happily reports that in the near future she will be applying to attend a screenwriters lab in Utah where she will participate in intensive writing and filmmaking workshops. She will also have the opportunity to meet with producers and others from Sundance Films, where films such as *The Doe Boy* and *Smoke Signals* were born.

Shannon attributes much of her good fortune to the association and support provided by Miziwe Biik and Arlene Caribou. Specifically, she says Arlene helped her with the educational DVD and speaking with the National Film Board on her behalf. Shannon is pleased to have an ongoing business relationship with Arlene and Miziwe Biik as a result.

Marsha Pruitt

“The whole of society is more technology-oriented, so my business fits like a hand in a glove,” says, Marsha Pruitt, sole proprietor of Mskwa Giizis Virtual Accounting/Administration Services. Marsha has over ten years experience in bookkeeping and other administrative services in Toronto. A non-status Ojibway from the Chaplain region, she has three children -her youngest is 18 years of age.

The Team at Miziwe Biik, has been working to assist Marsha in two specific areas: getting her business plan together; and keeping her focused on what it takes to maintain and operate a successful and functioning business. Marsha has

been working since January of 2004 to start her business and just this July has officially registered Mskwa Giizis Virtual Accounting/Administration Services. She is currently working with her first client.

Marsha says she attends various business strategy workshops because she says it “helps as a refresher, even for people with a lot of business experience.” She has determined that the next phase in developing her business will require more financial input. In the meantime, Marsha is in the process of moving to a more spacious location and continues to maintain a positive outlook for her future.

Partnership Development Advisor – Dan Shaule

Our Partnership Development Program is a provincial initiative with funding provided by the Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat Working Partnerships Program. The Working Partnerships program is the centrepiece of the Building Aboriginal Economies Strategy.

The Strategy and its associated programs primarily focus on promoting economic partnerships between Aboriginal communities and the corporate sector. Partnerships are key to providing long-term jobs and economic stability for Aboriginal peoples. The Working Partnerships Program includes various initiatives designed to address a wide range of recognized barriers and constraints inhibiting Aboriginal economic development.

The Building Aboriginal Economies Strategy is a coordinated framework of multiple Ontario government programs and services. It is designed to benefit all Aboriginal people in Ontario –including First Nations, Métis, Urban Aboriginals, women and youth.

The Strategy identifies four key approaches towards promoting Aboriginal economic development:

- increasing Aboriginal partnerships with the corporate sector;
- removing barriers to Aboriginal business development;
- improving access to government services; and
- creating opportunities for Aboriginal economic development to occur.

Through the Partnership Development Program Miziwe Biik offers new development opportunities for new businesses and already established Aboriginal businesses. We also offer programs and services to entrepreneurs through our Aboriginal Business Resource Centre.

Whether you are a new entrepreneur or have an already established business, I would encourage you to speak with us about potential opportunities.

Miigwetch!

Dan Shaule





Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Community Garden in the Spotlight

Miziwe Biik's Community Garden Project is in the spotlight this year. On October 2nd a tour will take place for the members of the First Native Garden conference, which is part of a Municipal Training Day for City of Toronto employees. Walter Lindstone, Miziwe Biik's Aboriginal Community Garden Coordinator, and Sarah Brierly, Evergreen's Community Gardens Coordinator, will be presenting on the topic of "First Nations Gardens," in partnership with Elaine Cote, Community Garden Coordinator for the Tumivut/Na-Me-Res Garden. The garden is meant to provide linkages between the neighbourhood and other community gardens. The partnerships are listed at www.evergreen.ca.

The project also provides a focus for training and skills development for staff, volunteers and a client hired to be the Garden Coordinator, at Miziwe Biik.

The location of the garden is on the east side of Miziwe Biik property (at Gerrard Street East and Pembroke). A Project Summary/Overview of the design of the garden by Evergreen states: "Planted in June and early July 2003, the garden improved the look and feel of the Miziwe Biik property and the public's perception of the facility. A space formerly occupied by red gravel, litter and weeds now supports two beds of vegetables and a bed containing native plant species." The traditional "three sisters" – corn, beans and squash are also incorporated into the garden. The "sisters" represent staple foods from several of the agriculturally

based First Nations traditions of Turtle Island such as the Haudenosaunee.

Learn more about the garden and conference at www.communitygarden.org/. The conference is free and you may contact Rhonda at 416-652-8767 about earning volunteer points.



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ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

167-169 Gerrard Street East.
Toronto, Ontario M5A 2W4
Tel: 416.591.2310
Fax: 416.591.3602

WWW.MIZIWEBIIK.COM

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