

AGM 2012 Report



Miziwe Biik
Aboriginal Employment and Training

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Miziwe Biik acknowledges financial and in-kind support and contributions from the following:

ALFDC
Services Canada
Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities
City of Toronto
Human Resources and Social Development Canada
Employment Ontario

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CARPENTRY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

Coordinator
Danbi Cho
Job Coach
Gavin Lawrence

NGINDAASMIN

Program Coordinator
Carol White
Administrative Assistant
Nicole Hare

Our Mission and Vision

The Mission of Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training is manifold to counsel Toronto urban native people on careers and paths and opportunities, to work with employers to secure employment opportunities, to deliver federal and provincial training programs, working with both groups and individuals to achieve these endeavours.

Mission

Miziwe Biik is committed to assisting all persons of native 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 training and employment 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.



Jim Windigo, a respected Ojibway Elder gave us our name. Miziwe Biik is like a body of water where a ripple effect has been created; it is the ability to reach out and make positive change in the lives of the urban native people across the Greater Toronto Area.

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Registered Charity No. 863056719RR0001

COVER

Jesse Darby, one of our Success Stories (see inside)

Graphic Design & Photography
David Sherry, 2davo@rogers.com



JIMMY DICK
President
Miziwe Biik Board of Directors

Wachay Aanii. 2012 was a busy year for us here at Miziwe Biik.

I want to thank our Executive Director, Nancy Martin and all the staff for their hard work and dedication. I also want to thank my fellow Board members for their support and dedication to Miziwe Biik and to the community.

I look forward to the upcoming year and the opportunity to help create more employment and training positions for our community members. I also look forward to further developments to our existing partnerships, the creation of new relationships and maintaining links with the many organizations and agencies in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) that share our commitment to promoting economic growth and well-being.

In closing, I want to wish everyone a prosperous new year with good health to you and your families.



NANCY MARTIN
Executive Director

We have been building momentum. More than 1,000 clients were served in the Projects department this past year and the Employment Centre has enjoyed a steady stream of traffic. They have had tremendous success in assisting clients find employment and in interfacing with potential employers. The Carpentry and Academic Upgrading programs continue to be in demand training options, both responding directly to community needs and market trends.

Each department has provided a separate report for your review, including success stories. These are just a few examples of clients who have excelled in their training and employment programs.

Later this fall, we will announce a call for proposals for the next fiscal year. This funding is available to individual clients, sponsor agencies and training institutes. Miziwe Biik has also connected with the post secondary schools to provide student support. This has resulted in an extended client base for us, one that is pursuing new and interesting employment related avenues.

Thanks to all the clients for making our jobs rewarding. Many thanks, to the board and staff for their commitment to the community and the organization.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Career and Employment Counselling Services

- Resume / Cover Letter Writing
- Interviewing Skills
- Hidden Job Market
- Personality Dimensions
- Self Assessment Tool

Employment Resource Centre Services

- Computers/Internet
- Photocopier / Facsimile
- Telephones / Postage / Mailing
- Toronto Labour Market Information
- Local, National and Native Newspapers
- Local Community Information Resources
- Educational Information / Calendars

Employment Placement Services

- Job Board
- Local Native Organization Postings
- Federal Government Temporary Employment Placements
- National Native Employment Opportunities Newsletter
- Referrals to Employment Opportunities
- Summer Career Placements

Funding Services

- Service Canada / Employment Ontario
- Employment Insurance Funding for Clients
- Client Driven Training Projects
- Community Project Training Available
- Advocacy for Employment, Education, Housing
- Ontario Works

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NGINDAASMIN

Academic Upgrading Program



The Ngindaasmin Academic program continues to offer upgrading to those who want to earn their Ontario Secondary School Diploma. What makes this upgrading program unique is that the students learn

about who they are as First Nations people: the history, treaties and traditions of the Anishnawbek. The course is designed to bring about an understanding of the complex issues facing First Nations people in Canada. A former student related that they couldn't emphasize enough, how much the Native studies, as well as the Ngindaasmin program had helped them. "The Native Studies portion mentally prepares and fortifies you in advance of the Aboriginal classes taught at the university. Our program focuses on the positive aspects of Native culture and its traditional teachings but the university program takes a more conventional approach and is founded on narrow historical concepts. Thanks to the Ngindaasmin program, I can focus on historical reclamation."

Another major highlight of the program was again having a number of volunteer tutors on site. They are an invaluable program resource. In 2011, Ms. Leilani Morales, math tutor, was nominated and chosen as a Volunteer Toronto Legacy Award Winner. Rogers TV produces a program called "Introducing Toronto" that tells compelling stories and helpful information about settling in Toronto and learning about the journey of recent immigrants to a city they now call home. In 2012, Ms. Morales was interviewed because of her background and being a Volunteer Toronto Legacy Award Winner. Leilani stated that she, "honors the courage and commitment of Ngindaasmin students." Ms. Morales provides one-on-one tutoring in an effective and encouraging manner and she is an outstanding and gifted teacher.

LEE AWARDS

Born just after 1900, both Louise and Walter taught in Ontario high schools and practiced a quiet generosity. They believed that all human beings belong to one family. In 1989 their four children set up the Lee Awards both to honor their parents and to assist Aboriginal students with continuing their studies. Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment & Training with the Miziwe Biik Business Resource Centre were asked to manage the awards in 2011.



Brochures were distributed to high schools and Aboriginal service agencies in Toronto and students were asked to complete an application form. Applications were reviewed and based on a combination of academic merit and community involvement; ten high school students were chosen to receive awards. Family and friends were invited to attend the Lee Awards ceremony in May 2012. Each student was introduced to the audience and highlights of their achievements were announced. They each received a Certificate of Achievement and a bursary cheque. We wish them continued success in all aspects of their lives and we look forward to meeting next year's Lee Award winners!

Photo: (top left) Carol White, Ngindaasmin Coordinator

(right) Lee Awards Ceremony 2012

EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTRE SERVICES



The Employment Resource Centre has had another exciting year of growth. As more and more Aboriginal people continue to relocate to Toronto in search of Employment and Training opportunities, the number of clients using Miziwe Biik services continues to grow.

"Congratulations" to all our clients who were successful in their pursuit of meaningful employment in their fields of expertise. Our job developers worked hard to create several new Employer partnerships using the "Employer Incentives" available through our Employment Ontario Program.

In response to our expanding client base, we have hired a youth employment counsellor to support our dedicated team of frontline workers. She has been working hard managing our student support program. This program provided financial assistance to over 30 post-secondary students to purchase text books and transit passes. In addition to the above successes Miziwe Biik also funded several summer employment opportunities for students using Service Canada's Aboriginal Skills Employment and Training fund.

Building partnerships continues to be a focus as we move into 2013. The approaching 2015 PanAm

games have brought forth several new partnerships with organizations like Waterfront Toronto, Infrastructure Ontario as well as a number of trade associations and union offices. These partnerships will provide clients with the tools they need to pursue careers in the technical and construction trades. Miziwe Biik has also been working closely with the City of Toronto to increase the number of Aboriginals working within the various departments within the City of Toronto.

Our 6-week Pre-Employment Skills Development Program continues to assist Ontario Works recipients with the skills and experience they need to determine their path to either academics, skills based training or employment. The number of clients who completed the program and reached their goals in academics, skills based training or employment was impressive.

Lastly, thank you to our Team of dedicated frontline workers in the Employment Resource Centre who continue to be one of our greatest resources and assets to both the Toronto Aboriginal community in general and to our clients at Miziwe Biik specifically.

We look forward to another successful year working with our Aboriginal community members as well as with employers and partner agencies in order to achieve all our goals and our employment and training targets.

Photo (left to right): Valerie Jacko, Denise Davad, Sarah Belisle, Brenna Lafrance, Lillian Wesley, and Chris Trudeau.

(absent): Stephanie Pangowish and Osborne Farrell

Success Stories

ERC

Employment Resource Centre

NICOLE HARE

Nicole Hare had been conducting an independent job search in Toronto for 7 months after relocating from her home community of M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island. Though determined, Nicole had no luck securing a position as an Administrative Assistant during that period. She then remembered several years earlier when she was living in Toronto that Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training had assisted her in securing a position at the Native Canadian Centre in Toronto.

Nicole re-registered with Miziwe Biik, met with an Employment Counsellor with whom she worked one-on-one to prepare a resume and cover letter and to brush up on her interviewing skills and job search strategies. The counsellor also connected her with numerous job opportunities that otherwise she would not have heard about. Nicole also attended Miziwe Biik's Employment Workshops on Interviewing Skills and Self-Marketing, Networking and LinkedIn. Nicole used what she learned to create a LinkedIn account and followed up on a referral to Dress for Success to acquire a professional interviewing attire.

Nicole took advantage of the many services offered at Miziwe Biik and shortly thereafter became successfully employed as the Administrative Assistant and Receptionist for the Ngindaasmin Academic Upgrading Program and the GTA Aboriginal Housing Program.





Success Stories

Pre-apprenticeship CARPENTRY Training Program

JESSE DARBY

Toronto born urban Ojibway belonging to Serpent River First Nation (Cutler, Ontario).

Jesse Darby exemplifies the Teachings of the Seven Grandfathers; a set of teachings on human conduct towards others. (Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility and Truth)

A recent George Brown College graduate, Jesse successfully completed his first term of apprenticeship through our 2012 Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program. Throughout the program Jesse acted as a peer mentor, encouraging participants to succeed while offering his industry expertise, overall laying a foundation of acquirable skills. Graduating top in his class has given Jesse confidence to set out and accomplish any goals that he sets for himself. It was our pleasure having Jesse in the program; he is an individual who is too positive to be doubtful, too optimistic to be fearful and too determined to be defeated. Ambition, dedication and hard work have paid off for Jesse; recently he became registered as an apprentice with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU). As an apprentice Jesse will work full time under the supervision of a Journeyman earning hours towards completing his apprenticeship to become a Journeyman himself.

An entrepreneur at heart, Jesse will strive to complete his apprenticeship so that he may become a General Contractor and own his own business. At that point in time his goal will be to give back to the Aboriginal community by hiring on apprentices through the referral services at Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training.

Success Stories

NGINDAASMIN Program

SYLVIA PLAIN

Sylvia Plain, Anishinabe-que, is from Aamjiwnaang First Nation in Sarnia, Ontario. Sylvia is a former student of the Ngindaasmin Back to Basics/Native Studies program and she is entering her second year at the University of Toronto.

Sylvia worked as an administrative assistant for the youth coordinator at the Chiefs of Ontario Office this past summer and currently she is a research assistant – Department of Geography – working on a First Nations Water Governance research project focusing on Traditional Knowledge and Youth Perspectives.

In 2011, Sylvia participated in the Mother Earth Water Walk, where she was the lead walker for the west direction. Her journey took her across Washington State, Idaho, Montana, Ontario, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota to raise awareness about water protection. The walk has inspired a Mother Earth Water Walk documentary, produced by Urban Rez Productions.

This summer, Sylvia Plain, was a part of the Tribal Canoe Journey hosted in Squaxin Island, using an Anishinaabe Ciimaan (birch bark canoe). The canoe is named “Anishnaabewin” meaning everything that the Anishinaabe have - medicines, teachings, songs, the plants, animals and people. According to Sylvia “it was great building the canoe, paddling on the ocean and meeting people from 100 different tribes from the west coast – Alaska to New Zealand”.

Sylvia Plain is a member of a national student-lobbying group, and she is contributing her experience into launching a National Water Campaign for Safe Drinking Water in First Nations and the campaign will highlight the importance of sustaining water for the future.

Mural: 7th Generation Image Makers - Water Teaching Wall)





Success Stories

ERC

Employment Resource Centre

MARY JACKO

Mary Jacko is from Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve. She relocated to Toronto several years ago and worked for awhile as a school bus driver. She enjoyed the job, but felt she wanted more. Mary was seeking a career.

She came to Miziwe Biik and met with an employment counsellor then, took part in the six week Aboriginal Pre-Employment Skills Development Program. Mary enjoyed the daily workshops and along the way, she made some new friends. Her son, Jesse, referred her to an info session in Construction Technology and so she decided to attend. Mary was impressed with what she learned and decided to go for a tour of the training centre. After the tour Mary was excited and motivated.

Mary returned to Miziwe Biik later that week with all the information she needed to set the process in motion to pursue her new career path. The employment counsellor worked with her to source additional funders who could share the cost of her training and everything snow balled from there.

Within a few weeks, Mary was busy enjoying the new course which she completed successfully. The training provider was so impressed with her skills and determination that they referred her immediately to several potential employers. Soon thereafter, Mary was hired as a technician with a well known telecommunications company.

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP CARPENTRY PROGRAM

The 2012 carpentry program has reached a successful conclusion with another group of eager participants entering the labour force. Our students have accomplished many of the tasks required of them to complete the program but more importantly, have accomplished many of their own personal goals. These goals range from gaining the Level 1 Carpentry Certification, being the first in their families to attend college or simply earning credits towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Either way the general consensus is that there was positive change and personal growth throughout the project with an end result of employability; reinforcing our belief that this program promotes constructive transformations within our urban Aboriginal population. With new confidence, skills and an understanding of the industry our participants are an asset for builders and renovators across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

During the 27 week program our participants divided their time between three facilities. The first phase of the program took place at The Mill Centre. Operated by our partner Dixon Hall, this facility provides the classroom setting for the Academic Upgrading portion of their training and is where the participants earned their WHMIS, Fall Arrest and First Aid/CPR Level C Certificates. The Facility also boasts an enormous, fully functional wood-working shop which the students use under the supervision of a licensed carpentry instructor to familiarize themselves with the tools and materials of the trade. Students then had the opportunity to put their new skills to use building planter boxes and Muskoka Chairs which they were able to keep upon completion.

Job Readiness Training is the second component of the program which is delivered at Miziwe Biik. This training consisted of a Life Skills workshop, resume cover letter and interview preparation, delivered by Miziwe Biik's Employment Services Facilitator. Our participants also had the privilege



of hearing the teachings and wisdom, as well as participating in an open forum discussion with one of our local elders.

George Brown College is the final stop before entering the labour force. Here they work towards achieving their Level 1 General Carpenter Certification. The participants were trained on both the theory and practical applications of carpentry, utilizing their skills acquired during the academic upgrading phase as they attended daily classes. Upon completion of this phase the participants and Miziwe Biik's program staff worked together to secure work placements tailored to the individual's strengths and abilities with the purpose of obtaining a ministry approved apprenticeship agreement.

With a skilled labour shortage looming as the baby boomers approach retirement, there is no better time than now to take action in securing a place for Toronto's emergent urban Aboriginal community within the lucrative construction industry. Miziwe Biik is focused on ensuring continued support for past participants as well as progressing forward with this program and exploring future training programs in the construction trades.

Photo (left to right): Danbi Cho, Coordinator and Gavin Lawrence, Job Coach

PROJECT BUDGETS

SPONSORS

Native Child and Family Services
 Native Men's Residence
 Big Soul Productions
 Nishnawbe Homes
 Native Women in the Arts
 Centre for Indigenous Theatre
 imagineNATIVE
 Indspire
 Chiefs of Ontario
 Anishnawbe Health
 Council Fire
 Native Canadian Centre
 Food Share
 Forbes Wild Foods
 Aboriginal Legal Services
 Reel World Film Festival
 Kevin Boudewyn Consultants
 Working Skills Centre
 Law office of John Rowinski
 Carousel Hairstyling
 Kahawi Dance Theatre
 Gaa Dibaatjimat Ngashi

Ever Green
 Big Brothers and Sisters of Toronto
 Amberlight Productions
 Harbourfront Centre
 Coco Fashion Designs
 Vtape
 ANDPVA
 Indigenous Decals and Designs
 John Howard Society
 Native Women Resource Centre
 Law office Tolullope Adewumi
 Aglukark Entertainment
 Noojimawin Health Authority
 Thunderbird
 Miziwe Biik Development Corporation
 Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
 Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres
 Seventh Generation Midwives
 Modern Personnel
 Individual Requests

Priority 1 – EI - \$434,500.00
 Priority 2 – EI - \$758,971.00
 Priority 3 – EI - \$87,816.00
 Priority 4 – EI - \$67,000.00
 Priority 5 – EI - \$224,000.00
 Priority 6 – EI - \$356,600.00

TOTAL - \$1,928,887

Priority 1 – CRF - \$187,000.00
 Priority 2 – CRF - \$252,924.00
 Priority 3 – CRF - \$350,964.00
 Priority 4 – CRF - \$100,000.00
 Priority 5 – CRF - \$96,000.00
 Priority 6 – CRF - \$832,860.00

TOTAL – 1,819,748.00

Project Staff (left to right):
 Angela Boyer, Project Officer Assistant,
 Eileen Meawasige, Project Officer,
 Marcel Benegas, Project Officer



PRIORITIES

- Priority 1: Demand Driven Skilled Trades and Construction
- Priority 2: Community Service Organizations
- Priority 3: Youth Employment and Leadership
- Priority 4: Community Capacity Building - Management Training
- Priority 5: Economic Development and Self-Employment Assistance
- Priority 6: To increase client employability by providing training in Literacy, Numeracy, Basic Skills and essential skills to enhance their employability.

Miziwe Biik and the Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle 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.

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 interest of the individuals and b) current labour market needs.





Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
www.miziwebiik.com