The background of the cover is a vibrant blue with a textured, painterly appearance. It features several concentric, hand-painted circles that create a sense of depth and movement. At the center of these circles is a smaller, solid blue circle. The overall effect is reminiscent of a ripple in water or a celestial body in space.

ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT
AND TRAINING

2011 AGM Report

Miziwe Biik

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

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

MIZIWE BIIK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice President Steve Teekens
Treasurer/Secretary Mike White
Board Harry Willmot
Board Valerie John

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Finance Manager
Marina Elliott-Macleod
Special Projects Manager
Jennifer Abbott
Building Maintenance
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Coordinator/Trainer
Denise Davad
Counsellor
Ginny Boissoneau
Counsellor
Sarah Belisle
Counsellor
Brenna LaFrance
Job Developer
Gabe Ermatinger
Job Developer
Wayne Hamilton
Administrative Assistant
Valerie Jacko

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project Officer
Eileen Meawasige
Project Officer
Vickie Labranche
Project Officer
Karine Ottawa

CARPENTRY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

Coordinator
Osborne Farrell
Job Coach
Danbi Cho

NGINDAASMIN

Program Coordinator
Carol White

167 - 169 Gerrard Street East. Toronto, Ontario M5A 2E4 Tel.: 416.591.2310 Fax: 416.591.3602
Registered Charity No. 863056719RR0001

Cover

The cover art is by Amanda Lee Murray
The work is an interpretation of Elder Jim Windigo's statement which compares Miziwe Biik to a body of water with a rippling effect (see page 1). Amanda is an Ojibway artist from Toronto and is a member of the Pine Creek First Nation in Manitoba.
Additional work by the Artist on the back inside cover of the report.

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

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.



From the President and Director

Each and every year, we say, "It has been another busy year at Miziwe Biik." This year has been no exception. AHRDA changed to ASETS, Employment Ontario changed to a full service centre and the staff worked diligently through all of the changes and adapted them to the community needs.

The 6 priorities of ASETS are as follows:

- Demand driven skilled trades and construction
- Employment at community service organizations
- Youth employment and leadership
- Management training
- Self employment assistance
- Literacy, numeracy, basic and essential skills

Information about funding programs and the application form is on the website: www.miziwebiik.com

More than 1,000 clients were served with \$4.2 million in training dollars. Many have gone on to further training, some are employed in community agencies, government, and the private sector.

The Employment Centre served more than 800 clients, using the computers, fax machine, and telephone. Many attended workshops on resume writing, interviewing skills, etc. In addition, job fairs were held with the Post office, C.N. Rail. Overall, Miziwe Biik was successful in helping 467 clients gain employment.

Miziwe Biik is about building bridges to employment opportunities and we can accommodate almost any case scenario thanks to the hard work and dedication of the staff.

As in past years, one of the strong employment trends in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), is in the construction trades. We have offered carpentry and alternative energy installations to meet the ongoing demands in this booming sector.

Miziwe Biik has a strong history of supporting entrepreneurs and we continue to strengthen our self-employment assistance programming in the Aboriginal Business Resource Centre.

Many of these opportunities are available to clients who have their high school diploma; however, to young and old, just starting out in the work world, if it's your high school graduation you require, Miziwe Biik can assist you through our upgrading program in conjunction with Independent Learning Centre (ILC).

We have many challenges at Miziwe Biik however we are not deterred from doing the best possible job, with dedicated staff and a strong and knowledgeable board that has shown commitment to the community goals and aspirations. The rest is up to the individual client and we see tremendous talent and inspirational stories as people use the tools to get to the career they want.

Jimmy Dick, President – **Nancy Martin**, Director

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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reception@miziwebiik.com

SKILLS LINK

“Skills Link gave me my stepping-stone to getting back into the labour force. Miigwetch.”

Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment & Training program delivered a six-month Skills Link program targeted to Aboriginal youth between the ages of 15 – 30 in September 2010 to March 2011. The purpose of the program was to ensure that fifteen Aboriginal participants gain the skills, knowledge and work experience to become employed on a full time basis. Employment counselors delivered courses on:

- Communication skills
- Stress management
- Decision making
- Conflict resolution
- Life skills training
- Employer/employee expectations

Qualified/licensed businesses/trainers delivered courses in:

- First Aid/CPR
- WHMIS
- Canadian Food Safety Training
- Personal Budgeting
- Career Life Plan
- Success Journal
- Networking/Self Marketing
- Traditional teachings
- Smart Serve

In addition, the participants made on-site visits to the following companies for career exploration:

- Canadian Broadcasting Canada
- George Brown College
- RBC Royal Bank
- Wychwood Barns Arts Co-op
- Anishnawbe Health
- Gizhaadaawgamlik Daycare
- Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto
- Native Child & Family Services
- Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

The participants prepared a list of the three careers that interested them the most; found potential employers; prepared resumes, cover letters and were interviewed by employers. The program was successful and as a result:

- Four participants gained full time employment
- One participant enrolled in a three year program at York University
- One enrolled in the pre-apprenticeship carpentry program
- Two participants are enrolling in a Flight Attendant program.
- One person has enrolled in the Ngindaasmin Academic Upgrading Program in order to earn his Ontario Secondary School Diploma. He knows he needs that diploma in order to gain meaningful employment in the future.

The program was challenging and comprehensive for both the participants and the staff. Each participant completed an evaluation of the program and according to one of the participants:

“Skills Link gave me my stepping-stone to getting back into the labour force. Miigwetch.”

A second proposal has been prepared and we are seeking funding sources in order to deliver this course in October 2011.

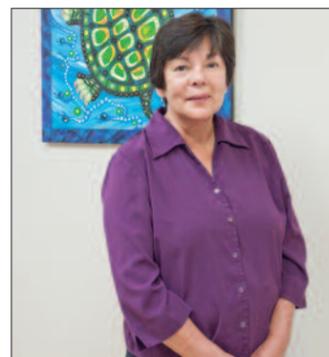


Photo:
Carol White,
Ngindaasmin
Coordinator

EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTRE SERVICES



The Employment Resource Centre has had an exciting year of changes and opportunities. The community we serve continues to grow as the numbers of Aboriginal people relocating to Toronto continues to increase. We are ever challenged with enhancing our services and programs to fit the diverse needs of our community members, many of whom have relocated to Toronto in search of employment and training opportunities that don't exist in their own rural communities.

“Congratulations” to all our clients who were successful in securing meaningful employment in the last year through Employment Ontario incentives. “Thank You” also to the employers who accessed these Employment Ontario incentives to create employment opportunities for our clients. Several Job Creation projects gave our student clients opportunities to gain some valuable skills and practical experience through summer employment opportunities funded through Service Canada’s Aboriginal Skills Employment and Training.

As the skilled mature workers of today continue to retire, we realize that many of our community members may not have the necessary technical

skills education and experience required to meet the demands of a growing urban centre like Toronto. The approaching Pan Am Games in 2015 have also contributed to growth in the number of clients seeking formalized training to enter the technical and construction trades.

Our 6-Week Pre-Employment Skills Development Program and our ½ day Employment Ontario workshops continue to provide clients with the necessary skills, tools and techniques they require to be competitive and successful in their search for employment and training opportunities.

The Team in our Employment Resource Centre include the EOS Coordinator, Employment Counsellors, Job Developers as well as the Administrative Assistant and Receptionist. Each team member brings not only expertise but a passion for helping our clients and community members succeed in achieving all their employment and training goals.

It is the dedication and hard work of our frontline workers that keeps our clients coming back year after year, generation after generation.

The Employment Resource Centre team looks forward to continuing their work with the community while striving towards another year of successes and achievements.

Photo (left to right): Lillian Wesley, Sarah Belisle, Valerie Jacko, Wayne Hamilton, Ginny Boissoneau, Denise Davad, and Gabe Ermantinger.

(absent): Brenna Lafrance

Success Stories

NGINDAASMIN ACADEMIC UPGRADING PROGRAM

The Ngindaasmin* Academic Upgrading Program has over twenty registered students enrolled in the program and we are pleased to introduce you to two of them.

MATTHEW POULIN

Matthew Poulin needed only one compulsory course to complete in order to earn his Ontario Secondary School Diploma. He talked about his future goals; reviewed his high school transcript with the guidance counsellor at the Independent Learning Centre and enrolled in 'Mathematics for College Technology'. Matthew received the course material at the end of March 2011 and completed the course in July 2011 with a final mark of 93%.

Matthew has been accepted into George Brown College and is enrolled in the Computer Systems Technology program starting in September 2011. We wish him every success!

CYNTHIA DUGUAY

Cynthia Duguay's career goal is to become a Paramedic. She knows what the college admission requirements are: English 12; Math 12 and Biology 12 and her Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Cynthia enrolled in Grade 12 English in April 2011 and her final mark was 84% in June 2011. Now she is taking Grade 12 Biology and is even closer to earning her OSSD. Cynthia Duguay has shown courage and commitment to achieving her long-term goals.

As well the volunteer tutors have proven to be invaluable. Their expertise in the subject matters is outstanding and we really appreciate their assistance.

We look forward to telling you about the future success stories of our students!

* *Ojibwe word meaning "reading & counting"*

Photo Collage:

(insert): Matthew Poulin

photo by Jason Jenkins

(main photo): Cynthia Duguay



Success Stories

EMPLOYMENT and TRAINING

GABE ERMATINGER

Job Developer - Employment Counselling

Gabe Ermatinger is an Ojibway from the Mississauga Reserve, near Blind River, Ontario. He completed most of his post-secondary education in London, Ontario where he obtained a diploma in Native Journalism from the University of Western Ontario. He also completed his Business Administration (accounting) program at Westervelt Business School and an Information Technology (IT) Project Management program, with a software engineering approach, at the University of Ottawa. Most of his school programs had baseline standards for passing, for example, 70% as a minimum for passing for each subject at Westervelt. He applies that same standard to his work ethic and job performance. After completing his schooling, Gabe moved to Ottawa where he lived for 25 years, working for the federal government, Aboriginal businesses, Aboriginal community service agencies and in the construction sector. Most of his work experience and professional assignments were with the federal government.

Gabe has been living in Toronto for the last year and has been adjusting to the quicker pace of life in the big city while he assists individuals with their employment needs and goals.

DANBI CHO

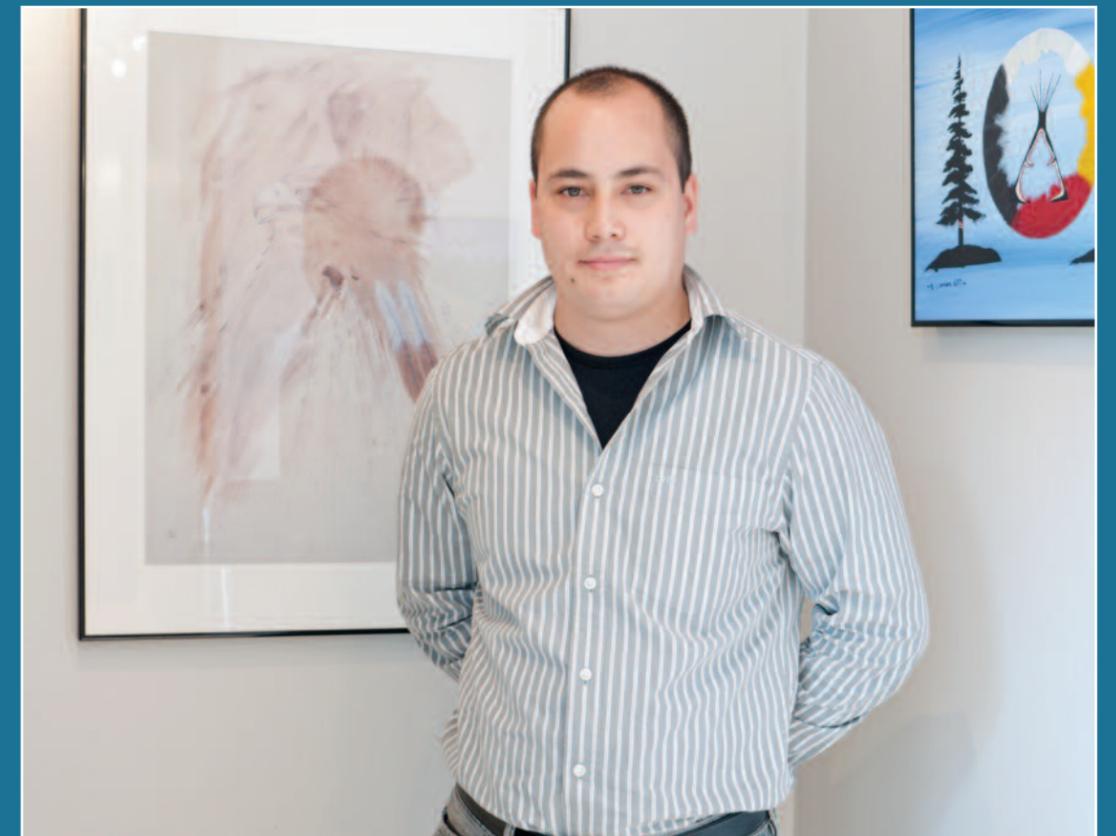
Job Coach - Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Danbi Cho is a Toronto native of Mik'Maw descent. After establishing a number of core values such as honesty, commitment, and loyalty at a private military academy, he explored a variety of training, employment and skills programs. His experiences in the fields of culinary arts, entertainment production (audio & lighting), renovation, heavy equipment operation and heating and air, provide him with extensive information in areas in which many of Miziwe Biik's clients are looking to pursue employment and training.

A recent graduate from Miziwe Biik's Green Energy Program, earning a certificate at George Brown College, Danbi was identified as an ideal candidate for the vacant Job Coach position with the Pre-Apprenticeship Carpentry Program. Adapting quickly to his new position, he has become an effective liaison between participants seeking opportunities in the carpentry and construction trades and the education and employment groups who provide training, placements and work positions. Alongside his co-worker Osborne Farrell, the Pre-Apprenticeship Co-ordinator, Danbi provides important services and direction to Toronto's Aboriginal Community ■



Gabe Ermatinger
Job Developer - Employment and Counselling



Danbi Cho
Job Coach - Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP CARPENTRY PROGRAM

2011 has been a successful year for our Carpentry Training Program, 16 participants have graduated and continue to strive forward through their work placements and the continued support and compassion of Miziwe Biik. The work placements have been secured with the efforts of Miziwe Biik staff, participants and partners. A few participants have been placed with a general contractor with terms of employment leading to entry of L.I.U.N.A. (Laborers' International Union of North America) Local 183, while others enhance their Carpentry skills through a project development of Regent Park through Dixon Hall. The program continues to create positive changes in the lives of the urban native people across the Greater Toronto Area. The need for trained Carpenters is on the rise, carpentry skill is gained through experience and study, both of which Miziwe Biik is proud to offer through our partnership with Dixon Hall and George Brown College.

The eight month program consists of five components; Academic Upgrading, Job Readiness Training, Level One Training, Secondary Trades Training, ending with a transitional work placement.

The Academic upgrading which takes place at The Mill Centre (A Dixon Hall Affiliate) offers a great place to study; having a woodworking workshop on site is what gives the site a great balance, preparing the participants to receive both theory and practical lessons through George Brown College. Theory preparation in both Math and English had significant results; their mathematics instructor offered a great curriculum to prepare the participants for the math involved within Carpentry, the lessons instill a sense of confidence preparing the participants for College. In addition the participants also acquired the necessary preparation skills while learning valuable lessons in the woodworking workshop. Participants were ambitious while working in the woodshop; their projects provided them with the option of building a Muskoka chair,



Photo (left to right): Danbi Cho, Job Coach and Osborne Farrell, Coordinator

patio swing or picnic table, which they then had the privilege of taking home once completed.

Prior to the participants starting their Level One Training at George Brown College one week of Job Readiness Training was provided through Miziwe Biik's Employment Services Facilitator. The training consisted of a Life Skills workshop; resume building, cover letter breakdown, interview preparation and a variety of culture and team building exercises.

This program is a great stepping stone to employment opportunities, providing participants with the necessary employability skills to obtain a position within the Trades. Statistics Canada (Construction) predicts that within the next several years as baby boomers are facing retirement, over 300,000 positions within the Construction Industry will be in demand. In addition preparation of the Toronto 2015 Pan-Am Games is underway, creating a wide variety of employment opportunities.

In closing a yearly graduation ceremony is held in honor of the students in which they are catered to and recognized for their efforts and completion of the Carpentry Training Program. Certificates are issued by both George Brown College and Miziwe Biik ■

PROJECT BUDGETS

**CONSOLIDATED
REVENUE FUND \$1,258,671.86**

Breakdown of funds by Program:

Targeted Wage Subsidy
\$684,616.54
Direct Course Purchase
\$232,361.34
Employment Assistance Support
Measures \$308,145.48
Local Labour Market Partnerships
\$18,460.50
Self Employment Assistance
\$15,088.00

SPONSORS:

- Aboriginal Business Resource Centre
- Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto
- Association for Native Development & the Arts
- Evergreen
- Anishnawbe Health Toronto
- Miziwe Biik Development Corporation
- Big Soul Productions
- Nishnawbe Homes Ltd.
- Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
- Native Women's Resource Centre
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Toronto
- John Howard Society of Toronto
- Harbourfront Centre
- Native Men's Residence
- Toronto Council Fire Cultural Centre
- Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives
- ImagineNative
- Reel World Film Festival Inc.
- Canadian Mothercraft Society
- Amberlight Productions
- Peel Aboriginal Network
- Niagara International Children's Society
- Law Office of John Rowinski
- YOUTHLINK
- The Brow House
- First Nation Tel
- First Nation House
- Stone Artisan Studios
- Individual Client Requests

**EMPLOYMENT
INSURANCE FUND \$1,368,752.34**

Breakdown of funds by Program:

Targeted Wage Subsidy
\$797,202.49
Self Employment Assistance
\$63,684.84
Skills Development
\$58,053.74
Employment Assistance
Support Measures
\$419,561.27
Local Labour Market Partnerships
\$30,250.00

SPONSORS:

- Anishnawbe Health Toronto
- Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives
- Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto
- Aboriginal Business Resource Centre
- Native Men's Residence
- Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
- Native Women's Resource Centre
- Aboriginal Business Resource Centre
- Miziwe Biik Development Corporation
- Niagara International Children's Society
- Nishnawbe Homes Ltd.
- Kaha:wi Dance Theatre
- Food Share
- Thunderbird
- Digittransformations
- Peel Aboriginal Network
- Boudewyn Training & Consulting
- Association for Native Development & the Arts
- The Dundurn Group
- Aboriginal Voices Radio
- Native Child and Family Services
- Individual Client Requests

YOUTH FUNDS \$558,908.58

Breakdown of funds by Program:

Individual Skills Enhancement
\$113,521.47

Work Experience
\$445,387.11

SPONSORS:

- Native Child and Family Services
- Native men's Residence
- Toronto Council Fire Cultural Centre
- George Hall Centre
- Noojimawin Health Authority
- Gaa Dibaatjimat Ngaashi
- ImagineNative
- Harbourfront Centre
- Big Soul Productions
- Individual Client Requests



Project Staff (left to right): Vickie Labranche, Karine Ottawa, Eileen Meawasige

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.



Feature Program

MIZIWE BIIK GREEN ENERGY PROGRAM

Miziwe Biik's Green Energy Program was the first of its kind and has since been in great demand from the Aboriginal Community. The program consisted of Level One Refrigeration and Air Conditioning at George Brown College followed by Green Energy focus at the Kortwright Centre.

George Brown College is a multidisciplinary trades college and one of the courses provided is Level One Refrigeration and Air Conditioning. Miziwe Biik's Green Energy participants were taught the functions of air conditioning units and refrigeration units for the purpose of connecting them to the realization of where Green Energy would be going in the near future. Participants were afforded the opportunity to work closely with a Licensed Heating and Air Conditioning Specialist, with his knowledge and expertise participants now have a better understanding of electrical, hydro, welding, reading of temperature gauges and conversions from Fahrenheit to Celsius (to learn more about George Brown College and courses offered please visit their website; www.georgebrown.ca).

The Kortwright Centre is the leading technologist within Green Energy and the professors who

teach there, are currently undertaking scientific studies which include solar panel energy, bio-thermal technologies, wind and hydro turbines, recycling and bio-degradable technologies and much more (to learn more about the Kortwright Centre visit their website; www.kortwright.org).

Participants are now exposed to the rigors of Green Energy Sector and the importance of this "Emerging Sector" to the Aboriginal Communities to commit to these types of training ventures due in-part, the fact Green Energy will be everywhere in the next five to ten years. The Ontario Government has committed to these changes with the "Green Energy Act" and the job creation from this "Emerging Sector" will no doubt benefit Aboriginal Communities across Ontario and Canada.

As a result of such training Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training was able to hire one of the top graduates (Danbi Cho/Job Coach) within their own Trades Department to further enhance and understand where this "Emerging Sector" will be leading all communities.

<http://www.miziwebiik.com>



Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
www.miziwebiik.com