

2019

AGM

MIZIWE BIIK

Aboriginal Employment
and Training



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ALFDC

Service Canada

Employment and Social Development Canada

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Ministry of Indigenous Affairs

Employment Ontario

Ontario Trillium Foundation

City of Toronto

United Way

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ACADEMIC

UPGRADING

Program Coordinator

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Justin Neegan

Our Vision

Miziwe Biik is committed to assisting all persons of Aboriginal ancestry to attain a better quality of life. We believe that community needs and aspirations are paramount. We are committed to strengthening the community through partnerships that promote equality and self reliance. We will provide training and employment opportunities in a supportive environment in which people can affirm their Aboriginal identities and develop to their fullest potential. We are committed to the belief that it is through traditional and cultural values, practices and resources that we will reclaim our destiny.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide services to the Aboriginal peoples in the Greater Toronto Area; to work with employers to secure employment opportunities; to deliver federal and provincial programs; and, promote Aboriginal entrepreneurship and the development of our economies. We will work with individuals, other agencies and groups to provide these services and achieve our mission.



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 Aboriginal peoples across the Greater Toronto Area

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COVER

One of our featured success stories, Patricia Martin, Human Resources Coordinator at Canadian Roots Exchange

Art Direction/Graphic Design & Photography

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**KRYSTAL
ABOTOSSAWAY**
President

Aanii Community!

This year has been an exciting one for me. Assisted by my colleagues on the Board of Directors at Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training (MB), I have fulfilled the responsibilities of my position as the newly appointed Board President. I look forward to the challenges ahead as we continue to meet community training and employment needs, while implementing the new Indigenous Skills and Employment Strategy (ISETS). Having the privilege of being on the Board at MB for 5 years now, I have witnessed how the Directors and staff adjust with great facility and professionalism to funding and program changes. It is with confidence, then, that I see MB continuing its ongoing development and its process of transitioning into a new era of job training and upskilling to match market trends, meet cultural priorities, and adjust to digitally transforming workplaces.

One of the important elements that has assisted me in my role as a Board member at MB has been my undergraduate degree from York University (2013), along with my subsequent career experience in the financial industry, with a particular focus on talent acquisitions and strategic sourcing. This fall I will be continuing my educational journey, seeking a master's degree in Human Resource Management from York University. I believe these additional skills will enhance my contributions to the Board and to the community, and at the same time leading me on a meaningful career path supported by cultural growth and integrity.

As I noted last year, I believe my true passion lies with Indigenous employment and how organizations can hire and tap into our market more effectively. Our community's increasing youth population, which is growing four times faster than the rest of the country, is a real advantage in a market where change happens swiftly, and training can be re-calibrated based on market trends. We are in an excellent position where we can benefit from social and economic drivers, balanced with the creation of programs that promote and recognize our cultural identity. Alongside these emerging and growing markets, we will continue to maintain services for our entrepreneurs and artists who follow their skills, passions and traditions.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge our partnerships at all levels — government, education sector, private industry, and community. Our associations have never been stronger, and we continue to build momentum in all our good relations.

Chi Mii gwetch,

Krystal Abotossaway



NANCY MARTIN
Executive Director

For those members who are not already aware of the latest changes in program delivery, I am happy to announce that Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training (MB) is in the process of rolling out the new Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET). Under a new 10 year Agreement, ISET replaces the former Aboriginal Skills and Employment Strategy (ASETS). ISET is meant to build on what was successful with ASETS, while reflecting the feedback from the Indigenous community during a number of planning engagements. Still early in its implementation, ISET promises to:

- Co-develop programming with Indigenous partners
- Increase funding
- Provide greater flexibility to design programming to meet the needs of communities: and
- Develop a strategy that reflects Indigenous and urban/non-affiliated service needs

Transitioning to meet the needs of our clients in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), MB staff members have been busy working with all of our existing and new clients to ensure that they continue to find fulfilling opportunities that provide them with training and career success. Our program counsellors and project department assist our clients in taking full advantage of all of the services available to them at MB, including academic upgrading, software testing, construction trades training, business courses, cultural teachings, resume writing, interviewing skills, and referrals to employment.

Under the new ISET agreement, MB has introduced additional supports for clients, such as apprenticeship incentives and increased start-ups. Supporting clients who are training for their futures and seeking to obtain meaningful employment is a priority for MB staff. Another priority is to reach and encourage our youth early on in their development. We do this by providing post-secondary and secondary students with bursaries to support their academic pursuits. Students must demonstrate their commitment to their programs, as well as their contributions to their communities.

As our programming continues to expand to address new skills and accommodate a growing number of clients, we are outgrowing our present infrastructure. We are running out of space! MB is engaged in a campaign to raise capital to build a new training centre for trades, in the West Donlands. We welcome assistance from our corporate and government partners, as well as from our community members, to complete this important project.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their leadership and guidance. I would also like to thank the staff for their energy and enthusiasm to support MB clients in reaching their goals and ambitions!

Sincerely,

Nancy Martin

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training

Miziwe Biik is overseen by an elected Indigenous Board of Directors with the Executive Director reporting to the board. Our current board members are:



KRYSTAL ABOTOSSAWAY

President

Krystal Abotossaway is from Aundeck Omni-Kaning First Nation. She is an urban Ojibwe Anishinaabe. Krystal received her Honours Human Resource Management degree from York University. In her current role with the TD Bank, Krystal helps attract and retain top Aboriginal talent. As an Aboriginal Youth herself her primary focus is to create an environment for Aboriginal youth employees to have the opportunity to be the best they can be. Krystal quickly recognized the need to advocate for equality for Aboriginal people, disabled people, youth, and women. Her passion for diversity and inclusion will

continue throughout her career. She was an award recipient of the inaugural Minaake award where she was recognized in the youth challenger category, Krystal also volunteers for the Aboriginal Professional Association of Canada. Recognized as an expert in the field of diversity, she is regularly called upon by community partners and the media to share her professional insight on topics relating to Aboriginal recruitment and Aboriginal career development.



MICHAEL WHITE

Vice-President

Michael White, Bear Clan, M'Chigeeng First Nation. Michael has served on the Miziwe Biik board for over thirteen years. Michael has his Honours B.A from the University of Toronto and is currently working on his Master's in Education. Currently Michael serves as a Special Projects Officer in the Office of Indigenous Initiatives at the University of Toronto. In his spare time, Michael serves the community as a ceremonial conductor.



JIMMY DICK, Secretary

From Moose Cree First Nation and the community of Moose Factory Ontario, Jimmy is fluent in the Cree language and is a Teacher/Educator on Native Culture and Spirituality. Jimmy has been actively involved since moving to Toronto in 1975. Jimmy is well known as a member of the Eagleheart Singers drum group who have been based in Toronto for the past twenty six years. Jimmy has been a community organizer for many years involved in the Native Rights Struggle. He is an active volunteer in the Toronto Native Community and served as a board member with various agencies.



VALERIE JOHN, Treasurer

An Anishnawbe Kwe and a member of Red Rock First Nation located near Thunder Bay Ontario, Valerie has worked and volunteered in the Toronto Community for 10 years at various Aboriginal Agencies. Her previous experience includes sitting as Secretary Executive Board Member at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Co-Chair for the Toronto Urban Aboriginal Strategy and a Community Council Member for Alternative Youth Justice Diversion Program at Aboriginal Legal Services. Valerie commits and continues her journey with her family through community involvement and assisting members of the community through various capacity. As a decision maker, she is both bold and thoughtful, finding innovative solutions that value the recommendations and goals of her team.



JOSEPH MENZIES, Youth Representative

From Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, Joseph completed his undergraduate Social Work degree at Laurentian University in the Native Human Services program which focuses on Indigenous approaches to health and well-being. He then went on to complete his Master in Social Work at the University of Toronto, with a specialization in mental health and addiction services. Joseph has worked in mainstream and Indigenous mental health services, the youth justice system, and social assistance programs. He now works as Field Support for the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres in Toronto. In his role, Joseph supports Friendship Centres across Ontario in the delivery of various employment, mental health, and youth programs for urban Indigenous people. Upon completion of the program, the students can pursue academic upgrading, post-secondary programs, training or job placements that meet their needs and aspirations.

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
- 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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EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTRE



2018 was an incredible year for the Employment Resource Centre (ERC). We experienced an increase in Indigenous clients seeking employment, skills-based training as well as those looking for assistance in returning to post-secondary studies. Our Employment Counsellors deliver Assisted Services under the Employment Ontario Program. Assisted Services include: Career/Employment Counselling; Assessment Services: Access to E-Blasts; Workshop Participation and access to Skills Based Training programs in a variety of sectors.

Our services have been in great demand and our caseload of job seekers continues to grow from month to month. We provide effective career exploration tools that increase one's employment skills knowledge as well as assist with career decision-making. Some of the assessments we offer include the: Strong Interest Inventory, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Personality Dimensions, Guiding Circles and Career Cruising among others. For our self-sufficient job seekers we offer monthly workshops through the Employment Ontario program on topics such as Social Media; Resumes/Cover Letter Writing and Interview Skills.

Our job seekers have skills that are in demand in today's job market and our Job Developer leverages new employer relationships and coordinates information sessions to match our clients with the right opportunities. Under the Employment Ontario suite of services Miziwe Biik hosts quarterly job fairs that continue to be quite

popular for employers and job seekers alike. These events give the two groups the opportunity to learn about each other through face-to-face networking. Many of our job seekers have secured meaningful employment by attending these events.

In addition to relationship management our Job Developer has been busy developing new workshops and programs for the intermediate job seekers. Stay tuned to our web site as we are preparing to announce new programs soon.

The Canada Ontario Job Grant is an employer driven program offered by Employment Ontario. Through this cost-share program, we have assisted seven employers from different job sectors to enhance the skills of their existing staff. As employees acquire new skills, they are able to advance in their current jobs. This creates a positive ripple effect which reflects what Miziwe Biik promotes in its Vision and Mission. Training accessed through this program include, Information Technology, Web Design and Development; Negotiation Skills as well as custom software training.

The Employment Ontario Employment Placement Program allowed us to work with several employers which created ten paid job placements for clients of all ages. Employment opportunities were secured in the retail, judicial and administration sectors.

Photo (left to right): Valerie Jacko, Brenna Lafrance, Christine M. Smith, Denise Davad, Jessica Tabak, Sarah Belisle, Luke George

NGINDAASMIN Academic Upgrading



GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT (GED)

The Ngindaasmin Academic Upgrading continues to offer the General Education Development (GED) program. We provide school supplies, the GED manual and TTC tokens. The course is delivered Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. The course content is taught on a one/one basis by a full time teacher. We also have volunteer tutors available if needed. It takes a lot of courage and determination to go back to school and earn a diploma. We are so proud of our graduates and what they have achieved.

INDEPENDENT LEARNING CENTRE

Miziwe Biik is a facilitator with the Independent Learning Centre (ILC). If the student only needs a few more credits in order to earn their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), the student is encouraged to register at Miziwe Biik and bring in a copy of their high school transcript. The student then meets with the education counsellor at the ILC. Once the courses have been chosen, the student brings the registration form back to our office and we process the application. Once the student completes their courses and earns their OSSD diploma, the student can pursue college and university programs and/or find meaningful employment.

INDIGENOUS SKILLS PROGRAM

This eight week Indigenous Skills Program is targeted to Indigenous people within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The program introduces the students to a wide variety of post-secondary programs; business opportunities; certified

training; job opportunities and to start working on success planning. What makes this program unique is that Indigenous studies are incorporated throughout the program. Indigenous professionals are also invited to share their stories about how they have accomplished their goals. Upon completion of the Indigenous Skills program, the students can make informed decisions about their future.

BUSINESS FOUNDATIONS

In partnership with George Brown College, Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment & Training (MBAET) delivers an Introduction to the Business program. The program introduces the students to different forms of business. They learn about the traits of an entrepreneur; urban and rural business models and identifying the unique qualities of Indigenous business. Upon completion of the Introduction to Business, the students can then decide on continuing the business program at George Brown College or explore business ventures. Upon successful completion of Business Essentials I and II, students earn four credits towards their business diploma.

BUSINESS PLAN PROGRAM

Participants in the Business Plan program will have the tools and/or understanding to: write a business plan; start a business; run a business and know what the basics rights and obligations to planning, starting and running a business and know where to seek resources. This program is designed to empower Indigenous participants to learn about starting a small business and given the tools and confidence to running a business and becoming entrepreneurs, or helping others to do the same.

LEE AWARDS

In partnership with Miziwe Biik Development Corporation, MBAET has delivered the LEE Awards since 2012. The LEE Awards recognizes the achievements of Indigenous high school students in the GTA. Students complete the application and based on a combination of academic merit and community involvement; students are chosen to receive a bursary award. This year there were twenty-nine recipients.

Photo: Carol White, Justin Neegan and Savanna Chiblow.

TRADES DEPARTMENT

CARPENTRY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND SKILLED TRADES



CARPENTRY PROGRAM

The Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program is offered in partnership with George Brown College and the Ministry of Training Colleges & Universities. The program offers unemployed and underemployed Aboriginal people extensive training in General Carpentry to meet and surpass the trades' requirements. As a part of the program, trainees will complete academic upgrading and job readiness training. They will receive certification in health and safety which will include First Aid & CPR, WHMIS, and Working at Heights. Clients then move on to George Brown College for their Level 1 General Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship training, which consists of ten weeks of carpentry and two weeks of drywalling. The final part of the program is an 8-week paid work placement. This year we had sixteen clients begin the program and four clients completed all components of the program.

CONSTRUCTION CRAFT WORKER PROGRAM

In partnership with LIUNA Local 183 Training Centre, Miziwe Biik offered an 8-week program. The Construction Craft Worker (CCW) Program is an extremely versatile program that offers the trainee the capacity to work in a variety of sectors and construction fields. The program covers a broad base of skills, including form setting, scaffolding, and concrete placement. Some of the tasks completed by CCW trainees included: erecting and dismantling concrete forms, scaffolding, ramps, catwalks, shoring and

barricades, all of which are present on small and large construction sites. This year, four clients completed the program.

ELECTRICAL / PLUMBING / INTRO TO HOME RENOVATIONS PROGRAM

In partnership with the Skilled Trades College of Canada, Miziwe Biik will offer apprentice training in Electrical, Plumbing, and Intro to Home Renovations. The programs will offer both theory and hands-on installations and processes.

Electrical Program outlines: Basic Electrical Theory, Intro to Electrical Safety Code, Intro to Blueprint Reading, and Residential, Commercial, & Condominium Installations.

Plumbing Program outlines: Intro to Plumbing Code, Intro to Blueprints, Fixture Installation, Maintenance Repair & Procedures, and Installation Procedures for Different Types of Pipe.

Intro to Home Renovations outlines: Work Site Safety, Intro to Concrete and Forming, Framing Insulation and Drywall, Electrical and Plumbing, Flooring Installation, and Tools, Measurements, Prints, and Intro to Ontario Building Code.

Graduates of these programs receive the skills, training, and experience needed to make them the most sought-after apprentices in their fields. Graduates are viewed as qualified, competent and accomplished with the practical hands-on training needed.



Photos: Vickie Labranche and Carpentry Program

MIZIWE BIIK ADMINISTRATION



Miziwe Biik SUCCESS STORIES

2019

The administrative department functions internally at Miziwe Biik as a support to the Employment Resource Centre, the Projects department, Academic Upgrading Program, and Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship and Skilled Trades Program.

Its primary responsibilities include:

- maintaining and fostering positive, productive and respectful working relationships within Miziwe Biik
- supporting and promoting the goals set out by the mission and vision statement
- ensuring that the goals and objectives of the organization are followed
- ensuring the growth and success of Miziwe Biik

Executive Director. The Executive Director manages the overall operation of Miziwe Biik. Under the direction of the Board of Directors, the ED manages the operations in a manner that promotes positive relations within the organization.

Human Resources. The Human Resources Manager is responsible for providing support in various human resources functions, which include

recruitment, staffing, training and development, wellness, safety and performance monitoring. The Human Resources Manager oversees all aspects of the human resources practices and processes that contribute to the efficient operation of Miziwe Biik.

Finance. The Finance Manager ensures that the financial health and well-being of the organization is maintained. The Finance Manager administers the organization's annual budget and ensures compliance with spending guidelines by all staff. She is responsible for overall financial planning and cash flow and financial management of the organization. The Finance Manager prepares all financial documentation for the Annual Audit, and Annual General Meeting.

Maintenance. The Building Manager oversees all maintenance and janitorial functions to keep the services and structure of Miziwe Biik operating efficiently and safely. The Building Manager verifies payments for maintenance and cleaning contractors. She oversees catering duties, and catering payments.

Photo (left to right): Lillian Wesley, Carol Barker

SUCCESS STORIES

JOEL

LAWYER

Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP

JOEL MORALES is a member of the Cowichan Tribes, located on Vancouver Island. He grew up in an urban environment with the Trans Canada Highway cutting a swath through the Reserve. When it was time to complete his university studies, Joel set off across Highway 1, accompanied by his sisters. Ending up in Ottawa, he entered the law program at the University of Ottawa. In his final year, he completed a one month Indigenous specialization unit at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto which included a one week session in Belize studying the Indigenous Rights of the Mayan people.

After law school, each student is required to work for 10 months in a legal setting in order to get licensed to practice law. Joel settled in Toronto where he was able to find an articling position with Aboriginal Legal Services. There he was informed that Miziwe Biik funded positions at the agency. Douglas Varette, an ALS staff lawyer and a previous Miziwe Biik Success story, had previously received funding for his articling position at ALS. Cultural Rights and community legal services are essential in a complex urban environment such as Toronto where the Indigenous community is diverse and growing. Support for training and employment in the legal and social sectors contributes to the well-being of our youth, individuals, families, and organizations.

While articling at ALS, Joel was able to gain experience in a number of areas of law. He was able to work with numerous clients, and had the opportunity to appear at different tribunals to represent them. Tribunals are dispute resolution processes where an arbiter or judge reviews evidence to determine rights solutions between the parties. ALS represents clients in a number of Ontario tribunals which cover a broad range of issues such as Child and Family Services and Human Rights.

After completing his articling position at ALS, Joel received his license to practice law and was called to the Bar of Ontario. Soon after, he accepted a position at Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP, a Toronto firm focused on Aboriginal rights. ■

Photos: Front Entrance of Osgoode Hall / Law Society of Ontario, 130 Queen St. W. and the Superior Court of Justice at 361 University Ave.





SUCCESS STORIES

PATRICIA

Human Resources Coordinator
Canadian Roots Exchange

PATRICIA MARTIN is from M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island. She grew up in Toronto, Ontario and completed high school at William Lyon Mackenzie Collegiate Institute. Following graduation, a family member recommended she go to Miziwe Biik to help her with resume writing and finding a job. She connected with employment counsellor Sarah Belisle, and recalls the Career Assessments they did to be especially beneficial. The Strong Interest Inventory, SkillScan and Values Card Sort were helpful to reflect on her values and passions in terms of employment. It gave her a better idea of potential career paths.

Patricia completed training at Miziwe Biik for First Aid/ CPR, Mental Health First Aid, WHMIS and Food Handlers certifications. She found employment funded by Miziwe Biik, at Aboriginal Legal Services as their Administrative Assistant Trainee. Working at ALS, she gained administration, human resources, and reception skills. She also learned how to write funding proposals and reports for Miziwe Biik. Patricia reflects that ALS was an amazing place to work and her manager Edith Moore was the best. "It was amazing to see a strong Indigenous woman at the heart of an organization."

Currently, Patricia is the Human Resources Coordinator at Canadian Roots Exchange, a non-profit organization that seeks to develop relations between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population in Canada through dialogue, understanding and relationship building. CRE convenes meetings of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth across Canada for exchange programs, youth leadership development, educational workshops and national gatherings. The National Indigenous Youth Network will launch soon, stay tuned!

Patricia's long term goal is to be able to give back to the community by providing mental health and wellness services. In the next five years she hopes to be enrolled in university for Counselling Psychology. ■

Photos: College and Bathurst neighborhood near Canadian Roots Exchange Offices





SUCCESS STORIES

RICHARD

Intern - Engineering and Design Standards - Metrolinx

RICHARD PETERS is from two different areas, Tadoule Lake, Manitoba and Chimnissing, Ontario (Beausoleil First Nation). He grew up mostly in Ontario so, he self-identifies as belonging to the latter land base. Or rather, he prefers to say, "I identify as a Free Range Anishnabek...not a person of Off Reserve Status which would be the colonial designation"

Richard has been a client at Miziwe Biik for many years, first noticing the Centre when he was accessing services next door at Anishinawbe Health Toronto. Prior to moving forward with his training and career goals, Richard realized back then that he had personal work to do through counselling and ceremonies. He had to overcome a past affected by intergenerational trauma and addiction. Once he built a strong cultural foundation he was able to start a healing process that allowed him to transition into a demanding post secondary program. This was a challenge that would prove to be less intimidating after facing the steps to recovery.

Once he was ready to move forward with his studies, Miziwe Biik helped him by supporting his schooling through funding for books, supplies, and transportation and the provision of post secondary bursaries. The Centre also provided funding for an application for a Records Suspension (pardon) and driving lessons so, he could continue to advance without apprehension or impediments.

Currently, Richard is working as an Engineering and Design Standards Intern at Metrolinx. He was hired on for a one-year contract one month after graduating from a Civil Engineering Technology program. The majority of his work is more theoretical than the hands on tasks that his program prepared him for. But acquiring all of the important on-the-job training helps brings him closer to his original goal of being able to build water treatment plants for Indigenous communities. He has the technical know-how and after five years or so in the industry, he will gain the necessary experience in the areas of Site Supervision and Project Management that will him to undertake such a culturally significant and important community project. ■

Photos: Union Station train platform with Metrolinx GO trains





SUCCESS STORIES

LYNN

Four Winds Program Support Worker Parkdale Community Health Centre

LYNN PAULA MAHMOOD was born and raised in Southampton Ontario by her Grandparents. She is a intergenerational Indian Residential School and Sixties Scoop Survivor from the ages of one to six years old. Lynn is from Saugeen First Nation and a member of the Bear Clan. Her traditional name is Mskom Gizi Kwe that translates to Strong Eagle Woman. Lynn is a proud Ojibway Woman whose cultural traditions, language and teachings from elders and healers have inspired her growth, learning and her spirit as a traditional dancer.

After becoming a young mother at the age of 15, Lynn was unable to continue her formal education. She chose to raise her four children with success and welcomed two granddaughters to the family. Throughout her years as a parent she continued to take advantage of programs that would eventually allow her to fulfill her long term educational goals. In 2004, she returned to Toronto, a place where she visited her family during the summers. Lynn was ready to pursue work and more serious academic challenges.

Lynn heard about Miziwe Biik from family and friends who had accessed employment training and skills certification services at the Centre. She reached out to staff to get assistance with developing her own career path. At Miziwe Biik, Lynn was able to access services that included certifications in First Aid & CPR and Smart Serve, attend training programs like the Small Business Certificate and Healthy Culinary program at George Brown College, access assistance with the Post-Secondary Bursary and Transportation Allowance, and attend other opportunities like Dress for Success. More importantly, Miziwe Biik helped Lynn to connect with school programs and work placements that would help her attain her employment goals. "Miziwe Biik has great employees who help you to succeed. They have taught me how to thrive by taking my education as far as I can go."

Lynn's first big step towards a career came through the Community Health Worker training program at Anishnawbe Health Toronto, a program funded by Miziwe Biik. Lynn's passion for social work revealed itself through

her growing interest to serve her community and help those who shared a difficult path towards healing and fulfillment.

Through a partnership with George Brown College, Lynn attended culturally based training with college certification and admittance into the school's Community Worker Diploma Program. The program offers an excellent foundation of on-the-job-training and course work covering four main areas: Traditional Health, Community Development, Communications, Presentation Skills, Health Promotion, and Advocacy and Counselling.

Having successfully completed the George Brown program, Lynn was able to leverage her Diploma, entering the Bachelor of Social Work at Ryerson University into the second year with advance standing. She is currently in the fourth year of the program, working on her practicum hours at Anishnawbe Health Toronto. Lynn's current placement is at Four Winds as a Program Support Worker at the Parkdale Community Health Centre. The Four Winds program is focused on providing culturally specific Indigenous supports and access to healing ceremonies, health education with a focus on diabetes (prevention & education). Lynn also focuses on case management supports, access to primary care and harm reduction supports, and social recreation activities to build social connections and support after her placement.

Once she completes her degree, Lynn sees herself continuing her training and employment journey by entering a Masters program in Social Work at the University of Toronto, specializing in Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency. Beyond that, a goal she has set out for herself includes working in mainstream support systems such as Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). Lynn wants to ensure that there is Indigenous representation within the institutions that determine how the needs of our community are identified and how they are met. ■

Photo: Pow Wow Regent Park. Next Page: Medicine Garden at Parkdale Community Health Centre







SUCCESS STORIES

CODY

Intern

Electrical Apprentice

CODY ISERHOFF CASTONGUAY is originally from Timmins Ontario. He self-identifies as non-status Cree.

Cody learned about Miziwe Biik from a family member who had used its services in the past. She saw a Facebook posting that Miziwe Biik had placed regarding its General Education Development (GED) program and encouraged him to enroll. Believing that the best experiences come from taking risks and knowing that if you're not happy, you can change your path by putting your best foot forward. Cody immediately enrolled in the program and within months obtained his GED Certificate. He then quickly moved into an internship position after being referred to a posting for a computer technician and sales associate.

During his placement at the not-for-profit computer company, Cody's work with small circuits sparked his passion for electrical work. That was all it took to reignite his desire to take a risk and change directions. After some assistance and a recommendation from Miziwe Biik, he entered an apprenticeship program at the Skilled Trades College of Canada. Not long after graduating, he was hired as an Electrical Apprentice with a good company and is in the process of completing a journey that can take up to five years.

In the future, Cody is looking to start his own electrical company which will offer training opportunities in the trades to Indigenous apprentices. He hopes that the path that he has taken to success and the help that he has received from Miziwe Biik, will inspire other Indigenous youth to start their own paths and follow their own passions.

Miziwe Biik provides support for skills training and upgrading through the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program. Under a new 10-year agreement, the Centre hopes to assist existing clients and our next generation, to find fulfilling employment and careers in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), or return to their home communities to support social and economic development programs and projects. ■

Photos: One of many construction sites in the explosion of large projects being developed around the GTA





SUCCESS STORIES

SACHA

Entrepreneur

Digital Marketing and Social Media

SACHA GENDRON is young Métis woman from Etobicoke, Ontario

Sacha first learned about Miziwe Biik a couple of years ago from a friend who successfully found employment through one of the programs offered at the Centre. Of her own experience, Sacha stated that, “working with the staff at Miziwe Biik to secure meaningful employment was one of the best opportunities that I have had in my life.” She didn’t have any connections in the community, had raw and undeveloped skills to bring to a place of work, and was unsure about what type of work was best suited for her.

Sacha was provided with the opportunity to explore her interests and abilities while furthering her professional growth in a supportive environment. The experience allowed her to find previously unknown skills and talents while developing self-confidence, self-awareness, strengths and career goals.

While employed at the Small Arms Society (SAS) Creative Hub 1352 through Miziwe Biik, the staff at the multi-disciplinary creative hub supported her efforts to grow, to learn and to develop as a person. From their support, she learned that she loved photography through attending art events. Sacha loved capturing performers in action and it propelled her to buy her first camera. Afterwards she was given the opportunity to film and photograph at every event that was held and use the images online with photo credit for marketing. This encouraged her efforts, increased her confidence, and inspired a passion that she didn’t realize she had.

When Sacha first started her employment placement, it was just another marketing job and she had difficulty envisioning a career path but knew that she liked social media. After several months passed, still supported by Miziwe Biik and the SAS team, her career path was being shaped without her knowing it. Her work became much more than just a job and she understood the value of choosing a career she loved. “I have passion and the drive to work hard, enjoy the company of people I work with, and most importantly, I have learned the

value of contributing to society and having impact with the work I do.”

Through the help of Creative Hub 1352, Sacha learned priceless life and work skills, found her passion, inner strength and confidence, and used it to open a local small business called Social Vibes. This past year she was awarded a Community Leadership Award by Mississauga MP Sven Spengmann which was acknowledged by Justin Trudeau for her effective use of social media that brings awareness to needed causes that increase the well-being of people and the planet. Through her new digital marketing business, Sacha uses both photography and social media for social good and brings awareness to impactful initiatives that she believes in. Creative Hub 1352 inspired her to change her life and for the first time, she looks forward to her new career and everything it will bring. She also looks forward to continuing her relationship with SAS and running their social media through her new company. “I will always be grateful for what the SAS board has done for me and for the Miziwe Biik program that made it all possible.”

As a part of a five-year plan, Sacha hopes to be operating her company on a larger scale by running a digital marketing agency that helps to support business in the local area. One of the biggest assets of her company is that it provides photography services, specializes in social media growth and online ads, provides on-site live tweeting, and builds community support all in one package. Her goal is to keep offering quality services and packages that are unique and highly effective in this field of work. ■

Photo: Shared office space on Lakeshore Rd. East in Mississauga and outside the Port Credit Library



@cuttingedgesacha



@CuttingedgeSacha

BURSARIES AND AWARDS

POST SECONDARY / APPRENTICESHIP BURSARIES



Carol White (left) presents a Post Secondary Bursary Award to Jake Kakegamic



Carol White (left) presents a Post Secondary Bursary Award to Amy Hall

LEE AWARDS – SECONDARY SCHOOL



Group photo of the secondary students that attended the 2019 Lee Awards Ceremony at Miziwe Biik

PROJECTS DEPARTMENT



The Projects team builds relationships with a variety of organizations across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), works with individual funding supports, manages certified workshops, and supports job-training opportunities for clients.

Aanii! The 2018/2019 fiscal year has brought forward many accomplishments for the Projects Department with clients completing training programs, workshops and securing employment. The department consists of three Project Officers and an Assistant who work diligently as a team to ensure client needs are consistently met and ongoing budgets are continuously maintained.

We have a Project Officer who works with the Project Officer Assistant to support individual requests such as Employment Assistance Support Measures (EASM) and Purchase of Training (POT). Through individual requests clients are supported in education, skills development and employment. Additionally, our other Project Officers are designated to building relationships with organization located within the GTA. In partnership with these organizations, Miziwe Biik

is able to support employment opportunities for clients through Miziwe Biik programs (Target Wages Subsidy, Self-Employment Assistance and Local Labour Market Partnerships). It is through working together as a community that Miziwe Biik is able to fulfill our vision and prepare clients for their journey into the workforce.

Photo (left to right): Ashley Boakye, Denise Aquash, Christy Martin

ANNUAL ASETS FUNDING

Miziwe Biik is funded through the Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle (ALFDC) to provide employment and training services through two funding streams: Employment Insurance (E.I) and the Consolidated Revenue Fund (C.R.F).

There are six community driven priorities which guide the funding.

Priority One – Demand Driven Skilled Trades and Construction

During the period of April 01, 2017 – March 31, 2018 Miziwe Biik provided clients with skilled trade services, including training in areas such as apprenticeships in heavy equipment operation, carpentry, general Labour, and horticulture. Some of our clients secured employment while a number returned to full time studies in related fields.

\$480,963.54

Priority Two – Community Service and Private Sector Organizations

Working with community agencies in the GTA, Miziwe Biik was successful in providing clients with opportunities in sectors such as health, law, culture, and finance.

\$833,980.53

Priority Three – Youth Employment and Leadership

Miziwe Biik is committed to providing supports to youth in an effort to secure employment or, if they decide to return to school, to enhance their skills and education. They do this through a number of areas, including their Youth Employment and Leadership Activities. Miziwe Biik provided clients opportunities that build on their skills, and provide employment and training options. A large number of our clients returned to school full-time.

\$1,289,025.06

Priority Four – Community Capacity Building - Management Training

This priority includes activities that facilitate access to management training for individuals, assistance to community organizations for succession planning, and preparation of Aboriginal people for management positions in government and the private sector. Miziwe Biik’s Employment Centre performs an assessment and recommends appropriate training. The community capacity – management training prioritizes Aboriginal clients with skills development in areas such as Office Administration and Management Training. Thirty percent of those completing their training have secured employment.

\$139,327.55

Priority Five – Economic Development and Self-Employment Assistance

Many urban Aboriginal people lack the skills and resources to succeed economically and to realize their dream of self-sufficiency by establishing and operating a viable business. We assisted a number of clients with their economic development and self-employment goals through business plan assistance and access to workshops.

\$142,703.48

Priority Six – Literacy, Numeracy and Basic Skills

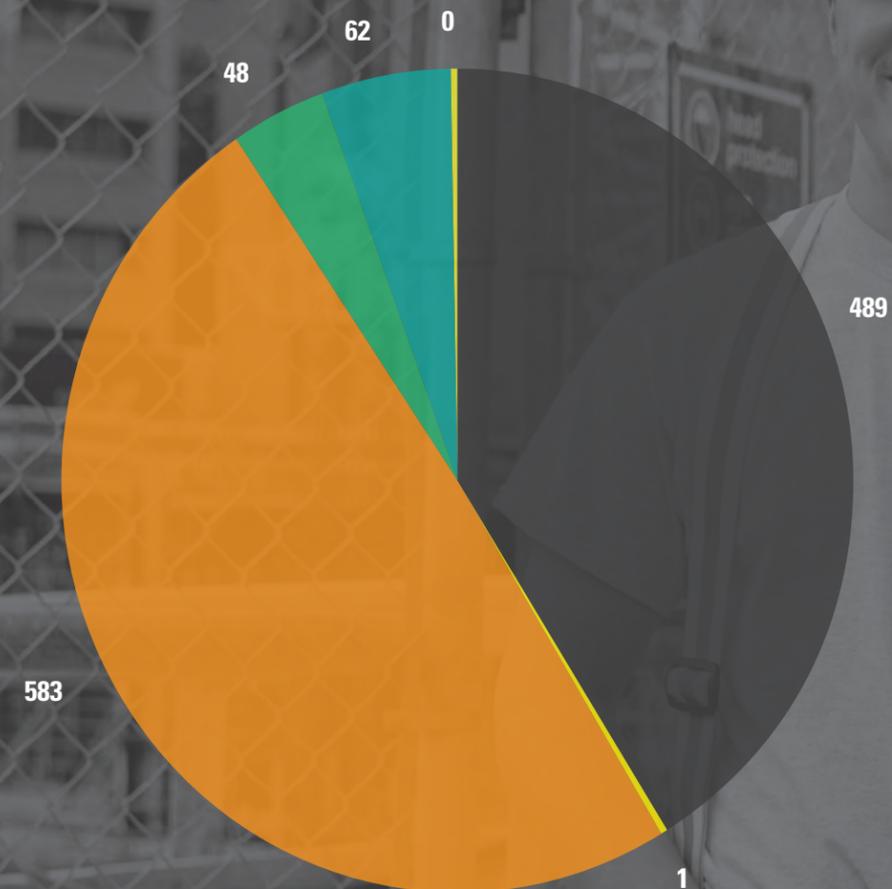
This final priority is aimed at increasing the community’s skills in Literacy, Numeracy, and Basic Skills training. Miziwe Biik funds Literacy and essentials skills programming for those who do not have a Grade 12 education and/or those who are seeking general upgrading to make them job-ready. This priority is also used to meet Labour market demands.

\$1,136,799.08

ASETS RESULTS REPORT

Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training

April 2018 to March 2019



Results	Clients
Employed	489
No Longer in Workforce	1
Returned to School	583
Self-Employed	48
Unemployed	62
Unknown	0

ROOM RENTALS

Miziwe Biik Presentation / Workshop Space



ROOM RENTAL: Suited to workshops, classes, presentations and small community awards events, the lower level conference space at Miziwe Biik is available for weekday, evening and weekend rentals. Approximately 1200sq ft. the space is able to accommodate a number of table and chair arrangements to suit your function. Included is a small hallway area outside the room for breaks, food and beverage service or event sign-ins. For pricing and to plan your next event, please contact us at (416) 591-2310 **SEATING:** 60 people seated in chairs (no tables) 48 people using six round tables with 8 people at each table. **CATERING:** Light snacks, coffee and meals are available through our in-house catering. Clients also have access to a full kitchen for meal preparation and outside catering.

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 Indigenous Skills Employment Training (ISET) Agreement holder between the First Nations and the Federal Government.

The ALFDC administers the funding, reports to Employment and Social 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