

AGM
MIZIWE BIIK
2020



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ALFDC
Service Canada
Employment and Social Development Canada
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development
Ministry of Indigenous Affairs
Employment Ontario
Ontario Trillium Foundation
City of Toronto
United Way

MIZIWE BIIK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jessica Tabak

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Denise Kimewon

PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS & SKILLED TRADES and

NGINDAASMIN ACADEMIC UPGRADING

Special Projects Manager

Vickie Labranche

Academic Upgrading

Instructor

Ruby Dreger

Academic Upgrading

Instructor

Tim Millan

Administrative Assistant

Kachina McCarty

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, Damon Antoine, Operations Coordinator, CIIT

Art Direction/Graphic Design & Photography David Sherry, 2davoonline@gmail.com



**KRYSTAL
ABOTOSSAWAY**
President

Aannii Community members!

This has been an unprecedented year for Miziwe Biik. Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we operate our business, work with clients and support our partners. I am proud of our staff who collectively came up with solutions to some of our operational challenges and worked hard with community partners to adapt quickly to the unexpected shifts in our social landscape. The combined efforts of Miziwe Biik and its stakeholders resulted in an exceptional fiscal year with many new successes and the establishment of a strong online presence that will carry the organization forward as digital technologies continue to influence how we connect and how we do business.

Our federal funding and support programs led to successful job placements and post secondary students being able to complete their studies. Here at the Centre, we focused on innovation as well as the changing future of our work environments. With our Projects team we continuously look for ways to update our programming so that our clients can achieve the best result possible, regardless of the challenges before us.

Unfettered access to the job market and equal consideration for competitive roles for Indigenous workers and entrepreneurs continues to be Miziwe Biik's focus. To support this goal we are constantly searching for the best tools to monitor outcomes and measure impacts in order to assess how well we are delivering on our mandate to support the training and employment needs and goals of our community.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the staff and our Executive Director. As many of you know, Miziwe Biik has a modest sized group of workers whom we rely on heavily on and who's exceptional skills and competencies allow us to carry out the many activities required to fulfill the aspirations of our clients. I am especially indebted to our Board of Directors who continue to support this work on a volunteer basis.

We of course, could not succeed without the engagement of our many organizations and corporate partners. I look forward to seeing all of you at our next AGM accordingly.

Respectfully
Krystal Abotossaway



NANCY MARTIN
Executive Director

With a focus on providing training opportunities that lead to employment, and the combined efforts of clients and staff members, Miziwe Biik once again had a very successful year.

Despite the effects of COVID-19 and to a great extent as a result of how our staff and community rose to its challenges with creativity and innovation, more than 500 community members successfully gained employment under the Federally funded Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) program. For those still on the cusp of turning their academic studies and skills training into meaningful employment, we provided educational supports to more than 160 post secondary students.

Training and employment trends which have guided our Employment Services staff in the last year have included academic upgrading, construction trades, web page design and other technology based programs, and entrepreneurship training. Partnerships that have strengthened Miziwe Biik's ability to provide a variety of opportunities in multiple fields and disciplines include Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), Skilled Trades College, Juno College of Technology, Independent Learning Centre (ILC), Service Canada, Toronto Police Services, and Toronto's Indigenous organizations and businesses.

Miziwe Biik is still in the process of developing its exciting plan to expand programs and services by building a training institute in the West Donlands project along with its partner, Anishnawbe Health Toronto. A state of the art carpentry workshop is being planned with a future training partnership with the Carpenter's union local 27.

Miziwe Biik is proud to have been prepared to meet new realities with online learning programs, and established access to Employment Specialists through email and telephone. Some of our current workshops include resume writing, interviewing skills, goal setting, and decision making. WHMIS and Food Handler certification can also be taken online through our Centre. Miziwe Biik will continue to adapt as the demand for online programs and services continues, striving to creatively meet the employment and training needs of Indigenous people living in the GTA.

Until our offices reopen, you can find all of the information about our programs and services on the website www.miziwebiik.com. Grant applications for ISET training and employment funding are included online. If you are not able to find the information that you require online, will be happy to assist you by phone or email.

We look forward to supporting the community through another productive and innovative year. Please stay safe and well.

In Friendship
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 SERVICES ERC

The Miziwe Biik Employment Resource Centre (ERC) is the first stop for First Nations/Inuit/Métis clients in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to access a wide range of employment and training services, resources and supports. The ERC was extremely busy throughout 2019 and remained active as it coped with a number of challenges entering into the new fiscal year. in 2020.

Two of our senior staff members moved on to new jobs as they continue on their employment and career paths. The ERC welcomed a new staff member, Lisa Shawana, who is an Employment Specialist. Also coming on board is Justin Neegan, who will take on the duties of the receptionist.

Our services have been in great demand and the Employee Specialists' caseloads of job seekers continued 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 services we offer to our more self-sufficient job seekers are monthly workshops through the Employment Ontario program on topics such as Social Media; Resumes/Cover Letter Writing and Interview Skills. Miziwe Biik's Marketing and Communications Officer Savanna Chiblow and Employee Specialist Jessica Tabak collaborated on a new cellphone workshop that assisted clients with mobile job searches. It was very well received.

Our job seekers have skills that are in demand in today's job market and our Job Developer Brenna Lafrance, leverages new employer relationships and coordinates information sessions to match our clients with the right opportunities. Under the Employment Ontario Program 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 employment through these events.

Brenna also organized two very successful recruitment events with BMO, Service Canada and three information sessions with the Toronto Transit

Commission, Liaison College, and the Hospitality Workers Training Centre. She also held five Soft Skill Series workshops in November 2019 which included Communications workshops, Professional Communication Skills, Public Speaking and Customer Service Skills

Through the ERC, Miziwe Biik runs the Canada Ontario Job Grant Program which is an employer driven program offered by Employment Ontario. This is a cost share program that assists employers from different job sectors to enhance the skills of their existing Indigenous staff. This year we were able to support a number of employers assist their employees with acquiring new skills, that will help them to advance in their current positions.

With the COVID-19 pandemic hitting everyone worldwide, Miziwe Biik was impacted like many other organizations and businesses. We saw ourselves shift from working in the office to working remotely from home, which changed the way we operate. We shifted a lot of our services to email and telephone, we have been holding our workshops virtually via Zoom and we have increased our social media presence in order to stay connected to the community. It has been quite a learning curve for everyone but our staff and our clients have risen to the digital challenge and possibilities.

Ruby Dreger, a long-time community member and former manager of the ERC came back to help us out during these exceptional times. In her position as Academic Upgrading Instructor, she noticed that through the pandemic, many of our clients have taken the opportunity to enhance their skills and training by registering for online workshops and webinars. We congratulate those who were able to obtain employment despite all of the obstacles created by COVID-19 including our summer students who obtained positions with a variety of organizations in the GTA. At the ERC, we are looking forward to the time when we can return to Miziwe Biik to meet in person with all of our great clients.

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND SKILLED TRADES

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP CARPENTRY PROGRAM

The Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program is offered in partnership with the Ministry of Training Colleges & Universities. The program provides 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 in-class training 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 fifteen clients begin the program and eight clients are still in the program completing the in-class training at the Skilled Trades College of Canada in Vaughan, Ontario.

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 we had five clients complete the program.

ELECTRICAL / PLUMBING / INTRO TO HOME RENOVATIONS PROGRAMS

In partnership with the Skilled Trades College of Canada, Miziwe Biik offered apprentice training in Electrical, Plumbing, and Intro to Home Renovations. The programs offered 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 field. Graduates are viewed as qualified, competent and accomplished with the practical hands-on training needed.

We had a few clients complete the Electrical and Intro to Home Renovations Program this year. We currently have a few clients in programs at the Skilled Trades College of Canada

Photos: (top) L.I.U.N.A. Local 183 Training Centre Virtual Classroom **(bottom)** Skilled Trades College



NGINDAASMIN

Academic Upgrading Program

The academic upgrading department at Miziwe Biik has continued to support clients' academic needs throughout the lockdown. Supports include helping clients prepare for the General Education Development (GED) test, registering clients for Independent Learning Centre (ILC) high school credit courses and supporting their academic needs as they work through the course material, helping parents with resources to support their children's learning during the lockdown, and

academic support for clients who are enrolled in trades and college programs. The academic upgrading department was able to transition to a 100% online model. Clients are able to get support from our Ontario College of Teachers certified secondary school teacher from 9 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday through our online academic support portal. Clients have also been provided with the tools they need to be successful including laptops, cell phones and textbooks.

Coding Program – Juno College

In collaboration with Juno College, Miziwe Biik developed an entry-level course for clients to attend for 12 weeks. This course covered the foundations of coding and website building to help clients navigate the new terrain of the tech

industry boom that's happening in Toronto. As the partnership has grown over the past year we have now been working with clients to attend classes at Juno College to earn credentials and networking opportunities.

Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship

This is an eight-week program that prepares the learner for independent career development as a self-employed individual, a freelancer, contractor or small business owner. The program covers a variety of subjects including 1) Self-employment readiness, 2) Self-employment training,

3) Business plan writing and completion and, 4) Business action planning and coaching. Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, this course is held entirely online with trainer led instruction and one-on-one virtual coaching.

MIZIWE BIIK ADMINISTRATION

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.



Miziwe Biik SUCCESS STORIES 2020

Toronto Foundation Deacon Legacy Grants

Miziwe Biik participated and won gold at the inaugural Deacon Legacy Grants this year. After being invited by the Toronto Foundation, staff members Nancy Martin and Vickie Labranche worked tirelessly on telling Miziwe Biik's story of impact for the event. Three clients came and spoke at the event to talk about the ripple effect Miziwe Biik has had in their own lives and the lives of the community in Toronto. The proceeds earned from this grant event is going towards the new Miziwe Biik training building

SUCCESS STORIES

JAMIE-LEE

INDUSTRY COORDINATOR

A funny thing happened on **Jamie-Lee Reardon**'s way to Toronto, she became a freight train conductor in the interiors of British Columbia. Not a bad sense of direction or a skewed ambition, just a drive to do what was necessary to achieve her goals. In order to set aside enough funds to support her long term career development plans she traveled out to Revelstoke to work the rails.

Irish-Ojibway and originally from Foleyet, Ontario, midway between Chapleau and Timmins, the traditional territories of Flying Post First Nation, Jamie-Lee went to high school in Timmins then, moved to Sudbury to attend Cambrian College for art and design. She thrived at Cambrian in an environment that she described as being free flowing but with structure and real world deadlines. Those parameters helped her to build a personal sense of professionalism and discipline tempered by a creative passion.

Equipped with freelance graphic design skills and money from her western diversion, Jamie-Lee ended up in Toronto where she connected with Miziwe Biik as an introduction to the city's Indigenous community and economy. The centre offered services for networking, training and employment. Jamie-Lee already an accomplished multi-disciplinary artists ((painter, writer, singer, photographer, illustrator & traditional artist beadwork/rattles/drums/medicine bags), enrolled in Miziwe Biik's Introduction to Business course through George Brown College which reinforced her communications skills and provided additional tools for succeeding in fast paced work environments.

Through Miziwe Biik's social media platforms, Jamie Lee pursued a position at imagineNATIVE, one of the Centre's employment partners, and was successful in obtaining a position as an Event Coordinator. Ambitious and an energetic team player, she moved quickly into the enviable position of Industry Coordinator. Working with directors, actors and screen writers through intensives and master classes and promoting Indigenous films at the Berlinale industry event in Berlin, Jamie-Lee enthusiastically promotes what she describes as a "broadening landscape of Indigenous films."

Jamie-Lee says that she grew up watching Indigenous actors on TV and now it's a thrill to meet and interact with these icons as well as the next generation of artists. Still a personal hobby, she's absorbing everything around her and can foresee a time when she would like to make her own films.





SUCCESS STORIES

DAMON

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR

Damon (David) Antoine is from the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, west of Brandon Manitoba. Although he grew up and went to school in Brandon, after he turned 18 he was quickly on the move. He possesses a creative restlessness and a youthful curiosity. On his own, he traveled with confidence and maturity, settling briefly in a city, finding work to get by and assessing what the new location had to offer. He started out in Winnipeg where he honed his photographic skills as a wedding photographer for a time then, he randomly set off to Ottawa for a brief stay then, onto Quebec City, taking on odd jobs as he moved around.

Eventually, Damon made his way to Toronto where he has been anchored for a while, focusing on education and career development. Initially he returned to his passion for photography, working as a freelancer and a camera operator for little over 3 years. Through Miziwe Biik, he then moved into a full-time position as Operations Coordinator at the Centre for Indigenous Innovation and Technology (CIIT). CIIT was created in response to the under-representation of Indigenous people in the technology and innovation sectors in Canada. Their Mission is to provide programming that provides excellence in technology training, increases Indigenous representation in the tech industry in Canada, and promotes problems solving using technology with an Indigenous lens. The Centre offers a combination of independent and team work environments and Damon just happens to have a facility for the applications that the office uses for scheduling work and activities. He has become a reliable and valuable resource in a busy and rewarding creative office. Through the encouragement of the company's owner, he has enrolled in the GED program at Native Child and Family Services.

Damon has developed somewhat tenuous ties to the Toronto area where he attends bi-weekly meetings at the The ENAGB (Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying) Youth Council which focuses on providing cultural, employment, life skills, holistic wellness and recreational opportunities to youth. He is also looking at the possibility of taking culturally grounded post secondary business courses at Kenjgewin Teg in M'Chigeeng (Manitoulin). Another goal that he has may get him back on the road again at some point though is his dream to become a National Geographic type photographer and travel for his art and personal development.





SUCCESS STORIES

MEGAN

MARKETING & OUTREACH ASSOCIATE

A member of the Moose Cree First Nation, **Megan Ross** left Timmins the year after she graduated high school with honours. The youngest of three children, it is an achievement that she mentions not to highlight her own accomplishments but because it is something that made her Dad proud.

It was with the support of her family, a desire to further her education and a love for old black and white movies that she would share with her film teacher Booth Savage, that helped her take her first steps towards a larger urban centre. On April 23, “the day Shakespeare was born,” she noted, she left for a 2-year theatre arts program at Canador College in North Bay. There, she delved into theatre and performance studies and she furthered her interest in movies with more artsy selections than the modern horror classics that she loved. Following the completion of her program, Megan put some of her skills into practice by sharing songs, stories and games with the multicultural youth at the Timmins Friendship Centre. She found that through drama she was able to help the youth as well as herself to open up more.

When it was time to venture out again, Megan enrolled in the Theatre arts program at the University of Ottawa but only stayed for 1-year. She felt anxious in an environment that lacked the cultural supports that made her program in Timmins less stressful and more manageable. But then, in a surprise next move, she travelled to Toronto after becoming aware of the Toronto Film School through watching YouTube audition tapes. Moving to and even larger city with potential for a more frenzied existence seemed to defy logic but Megan was reassured by the fact that the City had an established network of Indigenous friendship centres that provide a variety of services and cultural programming. Megan successfully graduated from the Toronto Film School’s 18-month

intensive program in film and theatre with a sense of accomplishment and unexpected calm.

Megan believes that working towards your dream involves a more arbitrary route towards your goals, one where you leave space for giving back to the community and acknowledging the people that supported you along the way. Following film school, rather than immediately seeking out industry jobs, she registered with Miziwe Biik and absorbed all they had to offer. She took CPR classes, received a food handling certificate, attended a variety of job fairs and enrolled in Improv classes at Second City, which the organization funded. In-between all of that, Megan attended Aboriginal Month events, attended pow wows, visited the library at the Native Canadian Centre and went to hear Thomas King (Inconvenient Indian). Megan was working on her own writing during this period so meeting the author was inspiring.

After a short period of exploration and at least one visit to a Sci-Fi/Horror Con, Megan was connected by Miziwe Biik with the Centre for Indigenous Theatre (CIT). She successfully interviewed for the position of for a Marketing and Outreach Associate centre. CIT is a national Indigenous post secondary theatre training program that bases its 3-4 years of study on the belief and ideal of “*Our Stories, Our Voices.*”

Megan is enjoying her placement with CIT where she is building her social media skills, working on outreach and assisting the next generation of Indigenous performers who will inspire the community. She also continues to audition for her own roles and she is currently trying to find a publisher for her now completed trilogy of young adult novels entitled Timothy Mahkesis (“Fox” in Cree). Containing talking animals, the story deals with real issues faced by Indigenous youth today.





SUCCESS STORIES

DARNELL

TRADES - CARPENTRY & CONSTRUCTION

Darnell Clobie Collins grew up in Montreal but his family is from the East Coast. He has a mixed heritage of Mi'kmaq, Cherokee and Black. His name sake is Clobie "Jet" Collins, his grandfather, a black hockey player from Truro Nova Scotia who played in the Senior Leagues in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Syracuse NY in the 50s and 60s. In 2014, he was inducted into the Newfoundland and Labrador Hockey Hall of Fame.

Interested in carpentry and construction when he lived in Montreal, Darnell began to pick up trades through on the job training and mentorships but struggled making inroads into the profession because he was unilingual. In a province where the largest labour union, the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ), fights to strengthen legislation to compel builders to operate in French, it was not an environment in which he was able to continue his studies or thrive.

Construction and the trades were booming in Toronto and Indigenous agencies such as Miziwe Biik work with the trade schools and the unions in order to create training and employment opportunities for the community so, it was an easy decision for Darnell to make the move to a new city.

Connecting with Miziwe Biik after he moved to Toronto, he was able to easily register for training through their Pre-Apprenticeship and Skilled Trades department. He has since graduated with his Electric Pre-Apprenticeship and his Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship. He must still put in the long hours to achieve his Electrician 1 License and his Journeyman Carpenter designations but has already found steady employment through the Employment Resource Centre. Darnell is currently working as a carpenter with the company Just Be Woodsy. The company works with waste wood and trees from the urban forests of Toronto. They imagine a smarter, greener and healthier city by producing stylish furniture from century-old oaks, maples, ashes and walnuts which would have ended up in landfills or as landscaping mulch. Darnell works in every facet of the operation from sawing and planing logs, kiln drying the wood, to assembling and refining designer quality furniture for boutique hotels, homes and offices.

Next steps for Darnell might include construction work to continue his trade requirements for licensing but he also envisions running his own business, investing in and building new homes, remodels and flips and eco-friendly steel container structures.





SUCCESS STORIES

SHANEL

GRAPHIC / WEB DESIGN & CODING

Shanel Beebe grew up in Calgary, Alberta and is of Blackfoot Confederacy and Mormon descent. After studying communications at the University of Calgary, Shanel moved to Toronto where she acquired a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a specialization in Photography Studies from Ryerson University.

Although she has an extensive background in sales and retail management, her studies and career path categorize her as an ardent designer, photographer and media artist. Her leadership and management skills and her professionalism which she honed through sales, team building, marketing and customer service do inform her detailed-oriented creative work which relies on social and market trends and customer satisfaction.

Shanel returned to school after a number of years in the workforce and enrolled at the Toronto Film School to refresh and expand her fine arts background and enhance her skill set with commercially more viable graphic design, marketing, media, editorial and digital tools. Taking advantage of this intensive period of study and personal development, Shanel connected with Miziwe Biik to then enroll in a web building and coding bootcamp program that they offer in partnership with Juno College of Technology. The market now demands that designers possess a full array of creative skills and knowledge and employment ads usually display an extensive list of software requirements as well as experience in all areas including video, photography, web, motion graphics, and graphic design for print and media. Individual disciplines no longer really exist as marketable positions.

The Miziwe Biik Juno College course provided Shanel with a foundation in HTML5, CSS3, responsive design and web accessibility requirements. There was also a focus on a variety of popular coding languages and rich application development. Shanel gained valuable experience with paired programming and working in teams in a remote work setting. The current pandemic has forced many companies and organizations to remotely deploy their workforces and self-disciplined workers who are able to productively work from their home or other locations are valued. As long as she can work in a supportive agency environment Shanel will be content. She prefers contact and interactions with co-workers and clients as opposed to the lone freelancer existence.







SUCCESS STORIES

JESSE

INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Jesse Steckley is the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Coordinator at the Canada Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB). In his position he says that he has the fortunate task of, “growing opportunities for Indigenous people and companies within the City of Toronto’s Social Procurement program.” Similar to Miziwe Biik, he makes important connections between people and jobs. A self-proclaimed “Data Guy,” his love for analytics and technology is well suited to his current project which involves the development of a digital procurement platform. The resulting app will allow businesses to socialize with each other, creating a fertile environment in which new business connections and opportunities will be created.

Jesse is Anishinaabe from Wasauksing First Nation but he spent most of his formative years in Barrie where he also completed high school. In school, he had supportive peers and encouraging teachers who motivated him to continue on to college or university. He completed a Diploma in Aboriginal Community and Social Development at Georgian College where he experienced a re-awakening of sorts, reconnecting with his Indigeneity and then, continued his academic pursuits at Trent University. Enrolled in the Business Administration and Indigenous Studies program, he was impressed by the Indigenous professors such as David Newhouse who’s focus was the emergence of modern Aboriginal Society and who lectured on Economics on First Nations. This was a prime motivator for Jesse’s pursuit of a business career.

Moving to Toronto for the potential and excitement of a larger city, supported by numerous friendship and cultural centres, Jesse was directed by a number of friends to contact Miziwe Biik for assistance in planning his next step. Through the Centre, Jesse enrolled in a Web Development, Computer Technology/Systems course at Juno College of Technology.

Upon completing his Juno College Diploma, Miziwe Biik provided Jesse with a referral to CCAB for a position as a Marketing Assistant. In July 2019, he ended up with a 1-year placement as a Membership Assistant instead then, moved on quickly to a longer term position as the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Coordinator. Jesse is extremely happy in his role at CCAB and sees real career potential within the challenging and supportive work place. Once he has made a significant contribution to the organization and the community, he can see a point down the road where he would like to start up his own business. “Toronto is a major technology hub and Indigenous people are severely under represented in the industry. That is something that I would like to explore at some point.”



PROJECTS DEPARTMENT

Aanii! The 2019/2020 fiscal year has brought forward many accomplishments for the Projects Department with clients completing training programs, workshops and securing employment. The department consists of four 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.

ANNUAL ISET 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, 2019 – March 31, 2020 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

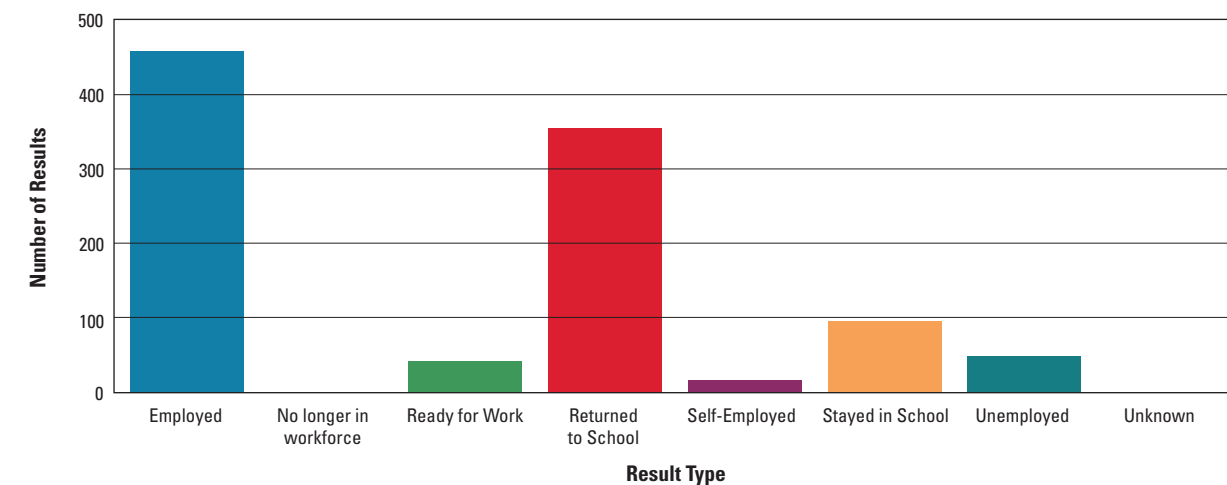
Priority Six – Literacy, Numeracy and Basic Skills

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

ISET Results Report 2019-2020

Results	Clients
Employed	461
No longer in workforce	0
Ready for work	44
Returned to School	354
Self-Employed	18
Stayed in school	97
Unemployed	46
Unknown	1



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 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