

Media Advisory

For Release: Monday, March 24, 2008 - 4:30 CST

Sell Out Forum Connects Saskatchewan Employers to the Aboriginal Workforce

Saskatchewan Workforce Connex - (Wednesday/Thursday) March 26-27, 2008 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Who/What/Why

Saskatchewan's booming economy and skilled labour shortage has motivated over 250 employers, educators, government officials and First Nation and Métis employment centres/communities to meet at *Saskatchewan Workforce Connex*, an interactive and results-driven forum designed to create training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan, with a specific focus on trades and apprenticeship.

As Saskatchewan's economic prosperity experiences growth, 48 per cent of the province's First Nation and Métis people living off-reserve are not employed, while many more on-reserve Aboriginal people look for training and employment opportunities. An anticipated increase in the unemployment rate is likely to intensify as the projected growth of the province's Aboriginal population is expected to represent almost 40 per cent of the province's youth within 10 years. Saskatchewan's economic players are now in an ideal position to do the work that is necessary to advance a skilled Aboriginal labour resource that can accelerate economic prosperity throughout the province for years to come. *Saskatchewan Workforce Connex*, with a program-base built on group conversations, will establish partnerships between labour demand and Aboriginal supply that are founded on mutual understanding, respect and progress.

Where

Delta Bessborough
601 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon

When/Speaker Highlights

Wednesday - March 26th - 1:00 - 4:30 pm

- Honourable June Draude, Minister of First Nations & Métis Relations.
- Honourable Rob Norris, Minister Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.
- Robert Doucette, President, Métis Nation - Saskatchewan.
- Vice Chief Guy Lonechild, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.
- Kelly Lendsay, President and CEO, Aboriginal Human Resource Council.
- Labour Market Overview - Skills Shortage, Kevin Kowalchuk, Director for Strategic Partnerships, Service Canada.
- Promising Practices Panel (Aboriginal Workers Supply) featuring Keith Conn, Director General, Aboriginal Affairs Directorate, Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

5:00 pm (Reception)

- Welcome - Pat Lorje, Saskatoon City Councillor. Entertainment by the Mykal Gambull Band.

Thursday, March 26, 2008 - 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

- Promising Practices Panel (Employer/Training).
- Four Aboriginal worker/education success stories.

Saskatchewan Workforce Connex is hosted by the Aboriginal Human Resource Council in cooperation with the Saskatchewan regional advisory committee. The forum is funded by the Sector Council Program, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, with support from Service Canada, Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations, Office of the Treaty Commissioner and Health Canada.

Media are welcome to visit the forum. Telephone and on-site interviews will be made available upon request.

Peggy Berndt
Director, Communications and Marketing, Aboriginal Human Resource Council
780.720.1118 e:pberndt@aboriginalhr.ca w: www.aboriginalhr.ca