



Media Release

For immediate release

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Aboriginal Participation in Canada's Workforce Increases

Montreal... Human resource practitioners from the public/private sector and Aboriginal communities have gathered at the Delta Centre-Ville in Montreal (April 23-24, 2008) to celebrate successes and share Aboriginal recruitment, retention, advancement and career development practices at the second annual National Aboriginal Human Resource Conference; *Advancing Aboriginal Inclusion*.

"This conference services the grassroots perspectives of Aboriginal Inclusion, said Kelly Lendsay, President and CEO of the Aboriginal Human Resource Council. "The unique group of practitioners attending this conference are so important to Canada because they are doing what so many others across the nation just talk about... closing the socio-economic deficit by accelerating employment opportunities for Aboriginal people."

Canada's employment gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people grew smaller by 3.3% between 2001 (19.1 %) and 2006 (15.8 %). Employers that have awakened to the business opportunities available through Aboriginal inclusion in their workplace have helped close the Aboriginal employment gap and raise the bar for other businesses to follow. But more needs to be done.

"The reality for Aboriginal people in Canada is best described as two polar opposites, said Lendsay. "Many First Nation, Métis and Inuit people in Canada have an engaging career that gives them a rewarding and independent lifestyle, while others are ready and waiting for training and employment opportunities. More and more Aboriginal people are achieving success in school and in the workplace. Unfortunately far too many must deal with Third-World health and social barriers that limit their ability to receive education, employment and independence -- a life many Canadian's take for granted."

Employers want and need practical solutions that will help them transform their workplaces into welcoming, creative and productive work environments that are inclusive of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal communities are looking for solutions that will help them transform their communities into healthy environments that breed opportunity for hope and employment... *Advancing Aboriginal Inclusion* will address both issues.

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