



# Workforce Connex

## Regional Report

**Thunder Bay Forum: Building Strong  
Private Sector and Aboriginal Partnerships**

April 20, 2006

Thunder Bay, Ontario



# Acknowledgement

The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada would like to acknowledge and thank members of the Ontario regional planning committee who dedicated their time and talent to help make the Thunder Bay Workforce Connex forum a successful event.

## **Ontario Workforce Connex Planning Committee**

- Larry Bellerose, Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association
- Marianne Disano, Service Canada
- Caroline Jones, Grand River Employment and Training
- Cyndi King, Métis Nation of Ontario
- Brian Pelletier, Human Resources and Social Development Canada
- Larry Spence, Matawa Employment and Training
- Glenda Restoule, Service Canada
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ABORIGINAL HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF CANADA  
CONSEIL POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DES RESSOURCES HUMAINES  
AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA

Canada

The national Workforce Connex forum series is administered by the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada through funding provided by the Sector Council Program, Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC).

Published: May 2006

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# Message CEO/President

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## **Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada**

**KELLY LENDSAY**

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May 2006

Dear Workforce Connex participant,

It is my pleasure to present the outcomes of the first forum in the national Workforce Connex series, which was held in Thunder Bay, Ontario on April 20, 2006.

The concept behind Workforce Connex came to life when the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, former Minister of State (Human Resources Development), undertook a series of roundtables with stakeholders across the country in 2005. The principal purpose of the tour was to bring together Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders (AHRDAs), private sector and other key stakeholders to discuss better collaborations in Aboriginal labour force development.

Throughout this process the council emphasized the importance of collaboration, coordination and communication. And, to achieve results, the potential partners; government, the private sector, community groups and Aboriginal people, have to be committed to implement sustainable partnership strategies.

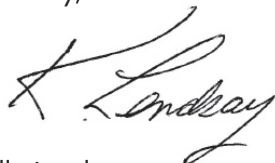
It was rewarding to see this vision unfold through active discussion among all participating stakeholder groups at the Thunder Bay forum. Participants were engaged in discussion and motivated to break down barriers and find solutions to resolve the current training, recruitment and retention issues of Aboriginal people.

It's now critical for the Thunder Bay Workforce Connex participants to continue dialogue and build strong and sustainable partnerships that will encourage and provide training and jobs for Aboriginal people in Northern Ontario and beyond.

The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) will continue its work to facilitate discussion among trades and apprenticeship stakeholders to help build a skilled Aboriginal workforce that feeds the growing need of Canada's Aboriginal people and economy.

We would like to thank you, the participant, for your involvement in Workforce Connex Thunder Bay. The council looks forward to your continued involvement and added value in this multi-dimensional partnership initiative. Your role is critical!

Sincerely,



Kelly Lendsay  
President/CEO  
Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada

# Executive Summary

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## Foreword

This report is a summary of findings from the Thunder Bay Workforce Connex forum that launched the national forum series in April 2006. The findings outlined in this report are representative of the Thunder Bay participants and have not been altered or analyzed in any way.

This summary is focused on the input participants shared during interactive roundtable and plenary discussions. The findings will serve as a starting point for the development of new private sector/Aboriginal employment centre partnerships in the Thunder Bay region, and for the development of the region's go-forward action plans.

The "AS SAID" reports from across the country will be analyzed for trends that will be captured in a comprehensive and integrated national report that will be used to shape initiatives in the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada's (AHRDCC) national Aboriginal trades and apprenticeship strategy.

## Synopsis

Workforce Connex is a national forum series that has been designed to increase Aboriginal participation in targeted trades employment and apprenticeship programs. The intent is for the forums to create, strengthen and leverage regional partnerships and collaborative networks that offer resolve to Aboriginal employment training, recruitment and retention issues.

On April 20, 2006, a group of committed stakeholders representing private sector employers, AHRDAs, government and educators convened at the Thunder Bay Workforce Connex forum to discuss ideas and commitments that will increase Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship in the Thunder Bay region.

The discussion occurred in stages:

### **Part 1: Walk in my Shoes/Moccasins:**

In an effort to better understand each other's challenges, the conversation reversed roles whereby the AHRDAs were asked to walk in the shoes of business and the private sector were asked to walk in the moccasins of AHRDAs.

**Part 2: Supply Side:** Discussion here helped employers understand the foundation, role and employment challenges of the AHRDAs and their clients in the Thunder Bay region.

**Part 3: Demand Side:** Discussion helped the AHRDA community get to know various employment trends and challenges that face business and industry in the Thunder Bay area.

**Part 4: Connections:** Supply Meets Demand: After both the supply and demand side of the labour market experience was revealed, the conversation focused on what works, what doesn't work and how to improve future engagement between the supply side providers and the demand side employers.

**Part 5: Go Forward Commitments:** Participants built a list of commitments to ensure the value of the day would be captured in ongoing dialogue that would help sustain long-term partnerships.

Through the facilitation of local professionals, participants were able to share their ideas and help each other increase mutual understanding about the challenges and successes to increase Aboriginal participation in the Thunder Bay region labour market. There was a consensus in the room that increased momentum is required to drive the connections between the supply side (AHRDAs and Aboriginal organizations) and the demand side (employers).

It was recognized that the forum was a beginning; an opportunity to actively and consciously begin to propel the agenda forward in the Thunder Bay region. As a starting point, the following go-forward commitments were made at the forum:

- Engage the Chamber of Commerce.
- Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario (OETI) will:
  - host an information sharing session for AHRDAs to increase the understanding of unions and their operations.
  - try to attend Niigantige Job Fair (November 1 - 3, 2006)
- Aboriginal Employment Resource Committee (AERC) Chair (Corey Lynn McGuire) to investigate the single window of access.
- The Thunder Bay organizing committee will convene to drive future action started by this forum.

The work done in Thunder Bay will be integrated into a single report that will be used to shape initiatives in the overarching Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada's national Aboriginal trades and apprenticeship strategy.

# The Discussion

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Participants discussed and shared ideas about how to increase Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship in the Thunder Bay region. The dialogue and deliberations at the session are contained below.

## **PART 1: WALK IN MY SHOES/MOCCASINS**

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### **Purpose**

Role reversal: Understanding both sides of the private sector/Aboriginal partnership equation.

### **Dialogue**

#### **Aboriginal Community in Business Shoes**

What barriers exist that prevent connections with the Aboriginal community when it comes to attracting workers?

- Do not know who to contact
  - Who do I contact first?
- Do not fully understand the terminology.
- AHRDAs responsibility to train clients.
- Policies and procedures.
- Cost of recruitment.
- Training.
- Relocating.
- Clients do not have the needed experience.
- Racism.

- Time and energy.
- Who is who?
- Clients don't know where to start.
- Union access: have to adhere to the collective bargaining terms.
- Acknowledgement of the system on both sides.
- Lack of commitment.
- Need to establish networks.
- Relocation barriers: they won't relocate to the work site.
- Childcare/transportation/housing.
- How do we overcome these barriers?
- Contact employment offices directly.
- Job fairs and networking.
- Designate a person to do follow-up.
- Go on Human Resources and Social Development (HRSDC) website.
- Contact AHRDAs.
- Re-vamp policies and procedures.
- Review the application process to ensure it does not have unnecessary barriers.
- Develop relations with Aboriginal people.
- An advertising campaign.
- Examine your diversity policies.
- Change practices or hiring/hire externally.
- Use AHRDAs for hiring (i.e., office space, interviews).

## Business in Aboriginal Shoes

What barriers exist that prevent connections with the private sector when it pertains to creating employment opportunities for Aboriginal people?

- Lack of information – starting point, who to contact in the business.
- Understanding career options.
- They don't have the required education.
- Geographical location – are they prepared to move to the job?
- Lack of opportunity.
- Aboriginal contractors are not getting contracts.
- Acceptance from co-workers.
- Society.
- How to get a job – what is the recruitment and selection process?
- There is a notion of fear of the unknown.
- Union access – how do I get my clients into a unionized shop?
- Acceptance from community.
- Members – moving on to better yourself.
- Education – do they have the necessary technical training?
- Minimum requirements – what do you need?
- Target – youth at grade 9 and 10 levels – apprenticeship.
- Lack of resources in AHRDAs to capitalize on all the opportunities.
- Lack of information – programs not good for Aboriginal people.
- Lack of employment in First Nations communities (i.e., carpentry).
- Training – needs to be accelerated to build trades people faster.
- People are not trained.
- No employment opportunities.

- There is racism on both sides.
- Stereotyping (i.e., not reliable).
- Unknown quantity.
- Lack of human resources at the band level.
- Our clients are trained but business is not willing to hire them.
- Lack of knowledge to form partnerships.
- Need to form connections.
- No pre-employment skills.
- Mentoring.

## PART 2: SUPPLY SIDE

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### Barriers to Employment

What barriers exist for Aboriginal people wanting to secure employment with the private sector?

- The traditional application/interviews and recruitment process is unknown, complex and perhaps biased.
- Stereotypes/negative perceptions of work ethics of Aboriginal people.
- Lack of advertising of positions in Aboriginal publications.
- Leaving community is difficult (where ever it may be: urban/reserve).
- Developing transferable skills.
- Culture – need policies and procedures to be more flexible to meet the culture uniqueness of Aboriginal workers.
- Culture shock – both sides.
- Workplace environment; is it ready for Aboriginal workers?
- Human resource departments/staff need education on cultures.
- Try to diversify your human resource departments/staff.

- AHRDAs can help prepare clients for interviews.
- Long-term planning – AHRDAs will train skills needed by business, but business has to provide the skill requirements.
- Lack of connections/network.
- Grade 12 – education/level.
- Need to build life skills (i.e., time management).
- Need to prepare clients to be ready to work.
- AHRDAs are unaware of industry expectations.
- It takes time/resources to train the unprepared and inexperienced.
- There is a lack of experienced, certified people to train trainees.
- Need pre-employment training skills.
- Outside support mechanisms.
- Need mental/spiritual/physical emotional supports.
- Few opportunities to engage with employers (show off your stuff).
- Getting foot in the door of employers is difficult.
- Need better awareness of qualifications.
- Need better understanding of job requirements.
- Corporate awareness.
- Fear of unknown.
- Racism (real or perceived).
- Breaking the cycle of poverty – clients have financial barriers.
- Single moms – need for childcare during training, employment.
- Support networks.
- Leaving home.
- Criminal reference checks are a barrier because they will cull Aboriginal people faster than non-Aboriginal.
- What's next after the current contact?
- Grievance leave.
- Hunting season/blueberry picking.
- New technology.
- Will the employer understand?
- Not knowing who to contact.
- How the process works.
- How do you find a job.
- How do you know what you want to do.
- Self-confidence.
- Awareness of communication patterns among cultures/individuals.
- Need to find how to:
  - operationalize training plans
  - build internal knowledge of forecasting
  - build human resource capacity and meet business needs
  - augment pooling of resources
  - get (instill) commitment from clients
  - develop good work ethics
  - develop long-term/future career expectations
  - creative motivation in youth to stay/keep jobs
  - identify strengths and nurture them into a successful career
  - balance family responsibilities
  - find qualified childcare.

### **Overcoming Barriers**

What could be done differently to overcome these barriers?

- Create community-based opportunities.
- Consider all trade paths (i.e., gardening/organic, landscaping).
- Private sector – maximize existing opportunities.
- Partnerships with external expertise industry.
- Career fairs/trade shows (sharing knowledge).
- Going into the schools – take people who are doing the jobs not just the human resource people.

- Teaching people what will be expected of them.
- Be truthful about the reality of the position.
- Improve matching of client to position.
- Provide/build co-op programs.
- Develop a marketing plan.
- Do/share strategy planning.
- Develop a communications strategy.
- Common definition for partnership.
- Do outreach – go directly to the communities/AHRDAs.
- Help to bridge AHRDA capacity limitations.
- Need job and partnership developers
  - funds to do this.
- Conduct/attend career fairs.
- Information sharing on jobs and on skilled clients.
- Need more forums like this?
- Having respect for other healing methods.
- Educational process for everyone involved
  - AHRDAs, Local Delivery Mechanisms (LDMs), and employers.
- Need clarification of roles – who is doing what for who?
- Need better understanding of the labour movement – How do we access unions?
- Need a website for employers to post jobs, mass mailings to AHRDAs, LDMs etc.
- Be more community based, client based.
- Get Aboriginal clients to consider self-employment.
- Undertake program development.
- Provide employment and counseling.
- Need a community resources inventory.
- Need to market successes.

### **Current Success Stories**

- Kenora and Weyerhaeuser – pre-apprenticeship.
- Aboriginal Employment Resource Committee (AERC).
- Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association (OMAA) and Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) partnership – exchange of information.
- TJW Management – new mill in Kenora
  - 150 new jobs
  - 30 per cent aboriginal
  - Provided cross-cultural training.
- Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

### **Building Partnerships**

What should be done first to build the partnership?

- A good partnership requires:
  - time and energy
  - good team
  - employer commitment
  - meeting the employers' needs.
- Long-term partnership career moves.
- More/deeper contact.
- Find an employer who is good to work with.
- Client needs to self-declare
  - what do they want?
  - what are their dreams?

## **PART 3:**

### **DEMAND SIDE**

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#### **Barriers to Recruitment & Retention**

What challenges and frustrations do companies face with regard to the recruitment and retention of an Aboriginal workforce?

- AHRDA – challenges with engaging businesses.
- Finding clients willing to relocate.
- Having the knowledge from companies of what type/how much mobility is required.
- Clarity on how to apply to different companies (i.e., online, in person, etc.).
- Online recruitment:
  - communities don't have access to reliable Internet access/phones (how do you contact the client?).
- Develop a system to keep regular contact with clients.
- Alternative methods of interviewing a candidate other than traditional face to face.
- Small to medium sized employers have jobs but do not have the time/resources to do the extra work perhaps needed to hire an Aboriginal worker.

- jobs, planning, employees
- time to do follow-up
- lack of funding; need human resource resources
- it deterrent due to lack of face-to-face contact
- lack of reliant internet access
- lack of future planning on the employer side
  - makes choosing which training to fund/promote more difficult
- lack of exchange of information
- employers' reluctance to share due to competition from other companies
- lack of professional development for AHRDA staff
- acquiring skilled people – AHRDAs need skilled people as well
- fit in and be employed
- work ethic; willingness to work
- how to integrate persons with disabilities
  - o challenge to fit employee in safely
  - o determine limits of disabilities
  - o make training available
  - o determine if person is capable of doing job despite disabilities
  - o understand limitations and work around them
- AHRDA needs to know job requirements to better determine suitability
- AHRDAs call human resource department to determine these requirements
- employment application process is challenging – see only paper application
- getting client to understand:
  - o importance of interview
  - o selling yourself to employer
  - o show up on time.
- make interview flexible and Aboriginal as possible

### **Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders (AHRDAs) Role**

How can AHRDAs help employers recruit and retain Aboriginal workers?

- If the requirements are fully known/understood they can begin to screen candidates.
- Spread the word (i.e., websites that have jobs posted).
- Let employers know what other publications/websites are available to advertise (Wawatay, inclusionnetwork.ca).
- More communication with contractors, union reps, understanding processes better.
- Enforce agreements.
- Challenges facing AHRDAs today include:
  - seriousness of employers
  - attitudes
  - commitment

- AHRDA resources dedicated to employers
- dedicated contact person at employer's end
- small employers – no head office capacity
- employers need larger number? Difficulty and employment practice timeframe
- finding the people to fulfill opportunities
- stigma of working for government
- different skill set needed
- lifestyle issues – knowledge of workplace conditions
- seniority issues cause retention issues
- not all players at the table
- federal, provincial, employers, trainers
- perceived barriers (or) real barriers
  - o human resource people are not aware of their own workforce
  - o racist remarks within corporation
  - o language problems (French/English)
  - o what opportunity do you have for employment?
  - o Vancouver – Fort McMurray – mobility
  - o retirement – mines
  - o construction industry
  - o saw mill needs men
  - o barrier – living accommodations
  - o travel (no cars)
  - o opportunities are not only in big big companies
  - o lifestyle choice
  - o overcome barriers
  - o isolation pay-free housing
  - o recruit home grown workforce
  - o right person for right skills set
  - o if the work is not in heart and soul, it won't work
- o need to do screening and assessments
- o pre-employment training
- o not enough hours in a day
- o accountability paperwork not enough people, money time.

## Overcoming Barriers

What could be done differently to overcome these barriers?

- Aboriginal person promoting the corporation/business but do not promote token Indian syndrome.
- Hire more than “one” Aboriginal worker at a time.
- Provide cross-cultural training.
- There are no overnight cures.
- Provide long-term planning management training for employers.
- Look at actual requirements for the job (i.e., criminal check, height requirements, etc.) and remove systemic barriers.
- Provide training for human resources staff on legal requirements.
- Educational process communication.
- Help small businesses with human resource needs.
- Advice from business to AHRDAs:
  - forum is awesome start
  - need more business presence
  - create accelerated program for aboriginal people
  - act
  - work together
  - network
  - communicate.

## Current Business Opportunities

Current employment opportunities in the Thunder Bay area include:

- Home Depot
  - hiring 60 new associates in Thunder Bay this spring
  - used Wawatay news for posting.
- CPR
  - has 500 mechanical opportunities
  - secondary small contracts
  - contact web page/human resource
  - engage at upper level of company and then downward to service area – regional/local.

## PART 4:

### CONNECTIONS: SUPPLY MEETS DEMAND

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What are some possible strategies/ideas to increase better connections between the supply and demand sides of the labour market?

- Connect with Chamber of Commerce.
- Inform community of our Aboriginal newspapers
  - do article in business papers about AHRDAs.
- Speak at service group functions.
- Conduct employer luncheons.
- Sit on and be active participants on diversity committees.
- Local unions – connect and speak to groups (i.e., AHRDAs).
- Consider holding a recognition event for employers who are leading in the area of Aboriginal employment.
- Use as many resources as possible – look to leverage provincial resources.
- Business host tours/open house for AHRDAs to understand various jobs for clientele.
- Create a job line (1-800) for employers to post job openings.
- Regional platform for large employers (local for small).
- Do an advertising campaign to increase awareness.
- Better engage media channels.
- Ensure attendance at building trades meetings (with AHRDA).
- Employer – Ontario Power Generation – seeking on-site tours.
- Marketing of AHRDAs to all sectors.
- Increase funding to address the marketing needs of AHRDAs.
- Conscientious effort to market on the premise of a “new” initiative.
- Promotion of various successes by all parties
  - share templates and best practices.
- Targeted recruitment of youth, Aboriginal development program for recent graduates (national programs).
- Learn process of government to bring back expertise into communities.
- Address disconnect within each employer’s department, geographic issues.
- Liaison with head offices.
- Utilize the processes in place (i.e., chamber of commerce, job fairs, employer networking locally).
- Build on existing organizations.
- AHRDA interaction processes
  - need to better communicate internally and across the system.

- Inter-cultural barriers need to be broken down.
- Identify existing associations to utilize and bridge the divide.
- Investigate who's out there and how to gain access to the groups
  - could be as easy as ASKING.
- Bring in the training institutes, colleges, universities, and governments.
- Address internal political policies that inhibit full participation on various organizations.
- Ensure a full understanding of government policies to best influence change.

## **PART 5:**

### **GO FORWARD COMMITMENTS**

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#### **What do people who need mentoring require in order to move forward?**

- Explain the Ontario AHRDA map.
- Explain acronyms.
- Make access easy.
- Identify local websites.
- More information on the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada's (AHRDCC) Aboriginal job board, the Inclusion Network ([inclusionnetwork.ca](http://inclusionnetwork.ca)).

#### **Items to quickly advance the Thunder Bay region agenda**

- Exchange business cards right now!!
- Visit the employer – ask for a tour, market potential employees.

- Follow-up, measure success.
- Establish realistic goals.
- What programs were utilized?
- Encourage clients to self-identify Aboriginal status.
- Mentorship programs/services.
- Stats from AHRDAs about referrals and placements.
- Follow-up with the employer.
- Privacy Act
  - may be unable to provide information on 'follow-ups' without a legal form allowing information to be released.
- Local initiatives – employers out networking 'we are here'.
- Employers need to be more educated on the area NW Ontario.
- Involve youth.
- Community involvement partnerships.
- Capacity building.
- Design our own curriculum.
- Identify potential trainees.
- Identify skills in community.
- Long-term goals to train people in community to replace workers hired in five or six major communities utilities approach them.
- Work with the union.
- Take pride in our communities.
- Bring back trades teaching in schools.
- Help Aboriginal people get jobs.
- All Aboriginal organizations – (i.e., AERC).
- Take lead – chamber of commerce.

- Set up Aboriginal labour pool database.
- Tell chamber of commerce about AHRDAs.
- AHRDAs join chamber of commerce.
- AHRDAs attend networking events.
- On business side, can businesses meet with Aboriginal groups?
- AHRDAs invite business to their communities to talk about emerging opportunities.
- Connect students of essential skills programs with business.
- Help in building interview skills with companies and other resources.
- Mock interviews.
- Information on job requirements.
- EXPO.
- Get knowledge out that AHRDAs exist (i.e., use chamber of commerce).
- Build demand side.
- Need a web site.
- Direct contact.
- AHRDAs need to re-strategize, get out of crisis response mode.
- AHRDAs need to be more pro-active.
- Training, human resources.
- Send out Aboriginal Employment Resources Committee (AERC) brochure to small/medium enterprises.
- Create incentive for employers (beyond wage subsidy).
- Employment counselors.
- Look at steering clients to jobs that provide 'livable' income, education, and skills.

- Skilled trades.
- Employment assistance services.
- Placement of clients in private sector.
- Attached to AHRDAs and private sector at same time.

## COMMITMENTS

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### The following 'go-forward' commitments were made at the session:

- Engage the chamber of commerce.
- Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario (OETI)
  - will host an information sharing session for AHRDAs to increase the understanding of unions and their operations
  - will try to attend Niigantige Job Fair (November 1 – 3, 2006).
- AERC Chair (Corey Lynn McGuire) to investigate the single window of access.
- The Thunder Bay organizing committee will convene to drive future action started by this forum.

## THE NATIONAL TRADES PROJECT

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The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) is responding to Canada's growing need for skilled trade and apprenticeship workers through a new national trades and apprenticeship project. This three-year initiative, designed to develop new partnerships and employment strategies, will give employers and trainers enhanced access to Canada's largely untapped and existing human capital of Aboriginal people who are eager to fill the employment gap.

This innovative initiative will create, strengthen and leverage partnerships with private-public sectors, Aboriginal employment organizations, learning institutions and government stakeholders in an effort to collaborate on methods to recruit and retain Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship.

Members of the AHRDCC trades and apprenticeship team have been actively supporting the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holder (AHRDA) community with current projects and future initiatives that will successfully advance Aboriginal interests in trades and apprenticeship.

The forum series, Workforce Connex, is the first of many trades and apprenticeship initiatives to link national and regional employers with opportunities to connect to provincial Aboriginal employment training, recruitment agencies and associations. The work done in Thunder Bay will be integrated into a single report that will be used to shape initiatives in the overarching national trades and apprenticeship project.

Ultimately, the project is designed to link people and ideas. The project will provide regional and national links to groups involved in trades and apprenticeship across Canada. Initiatives will increase skills, learning and employment opportunities and open doors for stakeholders to work together on local and regional projects and initiatives.

The trades and apprenticeship project is administered by AHRDCC and funded through a \$2.9 million contribution from Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC).

AHRDCC is a not-for-profit public-private organization with the mandate to increase Aboriginal participation in Canadian labour markets.

For further information on the national trades and apprenticeship project contact a team member:

- Sandra Stevens, National Director – [sandra.stevens@ahrdcc.com](mailto:sandra.stevens@ahrdcc.com)
- Peggy Berndt, Manager, Communications & Marketing – [peggy.berndt@ahrdcc.com](mailto:peggy.berndt@ahrdcc.com)
- Victoria LaBillois, Eastern Trades Liaison – [victoria.labillois@ahrdcc.com](mailto:victoria.labillois@ahrdcc.com)
- David Lindley, Western Trades Liaison – [david.lindley@ahrdcc.com](mailto:david.lindley@ahrdcc.com)
- Colleen Ostlund, Administrative Coordinator – [colleen.ostlund@ahrdcc.com](mailto:colleen.ostlund@ahrdcc.com)

## FORUM AGENDA

## Appendix 1

### Workforce Connex Thunder Bay Forum April 20, 2006

Agenda:

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:30 AM	<b>Registration</b>
9:00 AM	<b>Introductions</b>
9:05 AM	<b>Opening Ceremony</b> Opening Prayer Opening Remarks Opening Addresses From Dignitaries
9:25 AM	<b>A Conversation About Connections</b> Table Discussions Business – AHRDAs Debrief
10:00 AM	<b>Business Case for Partnership: Connecting on all Levels</b> Unique Requirements of Partnering With Aboriginal Communities What is my Readiness?
10:30 AM	<b>Nutrition &amp; Networking</b>
11:00 AM	<b>Supply Side Issues Roundtable</b> Presentation Conversation Sharing the Conversation

TIME	ACTIVITY
12:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 PM	<b>Demand Side Issues Roundtable</b> Presentation Conversation Sharing the Conversation
2:00 PM	<b>Conversation About Connection Strategies</b> Supply Meets Demand: Path Forward Sharing the Conversation
3:00 PM	<b>Nutrition &amp; Networking</b>
3:15 PM	<b>Conversation About Connection Commitments</b> Commitment: A Two-way Path Sharing the Conversation
3:45 PM	<b>Sustaining Connections: Closing Statements</b> Intention for Follow-up Sharing Contact Information
4:00 PM	<b>Closing Prayer</b>

# Appendix 2

## ATTENDANCE

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
1. Adams, Ryan	Thunder Bay Friendship Center	Thunder Bay
2. Banning, Kelly		
3. Charron, Nichole	Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives	Timmins
4. Disano, Marianne	Aboriginal Liaison Unit, Service Canada	Sault Ste. Marie
5. Fortier, Ron	Abor-Ron Construction Services Inc.	Thunder Bay
6. Gasser, Tina	Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario	Morrisburg
7. Haften, John	Confederation College	
8. Jones, Pam	Métis Nation of Ontario	Sudbury
9. Keon, Dorothy	Naadmaadniuk LDM	Blind River
10. Kelly, Shirley	Shooniyaa Wa-Biitong	Kenora
11. Krause, Linda	Métis Nation of Ontario	North Bay
12. Langdale, Sharon	Home Depot	Thunder Bay
13. Madigan, Brian	Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario	Thunder Bay
14. Mair, Kathy	O.F.I.F.C. - Great Initiative	Toronto
15. Maness, Sherman	O.F.I.F.C. - Great Initiative	Toronto
16. Manitowabi, Sam	Sioux Lookout Area Aboriginal Management Board	Sioux Lookout
17. Martens, Karen	Thunder Bay Television	Thunder Bay
18. Mayer, Debbie	North Shore Tribal Council	Blind River
19. McIlwain, W. James	Canadian Pacific Railway	Thunder Bay
20. McGuire, Corey Lynn	Aboriginal Employment Resource Committee	

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
21. McIsaac, Darlene	Métis Nation of Ontario	North Bay
22. Miller, Micheal	Mamo	
23. Moulton, Doug	Human Resources and Social Development Canada	Vancouver
24. Ogima, Vernon	Yes Employment Services Aboriginal Programs	Thunder Bay
25. Page, Al	Construction Sector Council	Victoria
26. Pittman, Fay	Canadian Pacific Railway	Thunder Bay
27. Ralph, Clayton	Anishinabek Union of Ontario Indians	North Bay
28. Restoule, Glenda	Aboriginal Liaison, Service Canada	Toronto
29. Rinne, Gary	CBC Radio Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay
30. Risewich, Colette	Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives	Timmins
31. Seymour, Marie	ARC-Yes Employment	
32. Smith, Gail	Ontario Native Women's Association	Thunder Bay
33. Smith-Baxter, Sharon	ARC-Yes Employment	
34. Spence, Larry	Matawa Employment and Training	Thunder Bay
35. St. Germain, Jen	Métis Nation of Ontario	Ottawa
36. Stewardson, Jessica		
37. Veal, Nancy	Ontario Power Generation	Thunder Bay
38. Vermett, Bonnie	Matawa Employment and Training	Thunder Bay
39. Wassegijig-Migwans, Colleen		Wikwemikong
40. Zimmer, Wayne	Seven Generations Education Institute	Kenora
41. Zoccole, Carmel	Canada Revenue Agency, Tax Services Office	Thunder Bay

# Appendix 3

## EVALUATION SUMMARY

### Thunder Bay, Ontario - RESULTS

#### Summary

The Thunder Bay Workforce Connex forum attracted delegates from Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders (AHRDA), private sector organizations and government. In total, 41 participants were in attendance. 21 evaluations were received; representing a participant return rate of 51 per cent. Response sector demographics are broken down as follows:

Private sector delegates .....	6
AHRDAs .....	9
Unknown .....	6

#### General Questions and Responses

1. Please forward me a copy of the forum report as follows:

Email .....	20
Canada Post .....	0
Email & Canada Post .....	2
No Indication .....	1

2. Did the Workforce Connex forum meet your expectations?

Yes .....	16
No .....	3
No Indication .....	2

3. Were the information materials you received at the forum valuable to you?

Yes .....	16
No .....	4
No Indication .....	1

4. Did you visit the Workforce Connex ([www.workforceconnex.com](http://www.workforceconnex.com)) website prior to the forum?

Yes .....	9
No .....	11
Indicated Yes & No .....	1

5. Did you have sufficient advance notice about the forum?

Yes .....	17
No .....	4

6. One thing I liked about the forum...

- I liked to find out about what business needs are and how we can meet them.
- Networking opportunities.
- Networking & awareness of specific programs.
- Informational – created awareness of issues faced by aboriginal peoples entering the workforce and the issues faced by potential employers.
- Breakouts – interaction of all participants.
- Hearing from the employers that were there. I was surprised there weren't more (i.e., banks?).
- Good group for the first forum.
- The honesty of the employers who were present.
- The interaction.

- Meeting with other AHRDAs again & meeting some employers.
- Reinforced the importance of creating linkages with business/industry – work on marketing plan.
- Opportunity to hear from employers.
- The sharing of ideas/problems/solutions between employers & service providers.
- Now know how to tap in to the Aboriginal workforce.
- Information sharing.
- Excellent networking opportunity. Provided me & my organization with resources for future hiring needs.
- Group workshops.
- It was engaging. Began a dialogue between businesses and AHRDAs.
- Mingling with businesses, unions & other AHRDAs.
- Contact names/organizations for Aboriginal organizations.

7. *One thing I would change about the forum...*

- More employers need to be involved.
- Create more awareness of the benefits of the event.
- More employer participation.
- Muffins to fruit in the morning – 8:30. Attach another day for more mini presentations from major employers, best practices, unions, apprenticeships, options to attend.
- Include a cross-cultural presentation. AHRDA structure explanation.

- Have a wider range of employers present. How were employers invited? (i.e., banks, outside of Thunder Bay).
- More employers from the forestry & mining sector.
- Use correct Métis Nation of Ontario information for contact sheets. Would like an agenda before hand. Stop segregating us in the literature by saying “First Nation and Aboriginal”. We’re all Aboriginal.
- Facilitators should not be participants – too easy to lead & direct the discussions.
- Felt there was a lot of repetition in how the breakout sessions proceeded. Better questions at breakout would be helpful.
- More handout information.
- More business/employer participation. Perhaps advertise more.
- More marketing.
- Need better advertising (not many employers present). Need better explanation of AHRDA structure & key players.
- More information prior to meeting about your business.
- More employers-organizers ensure participation.
- Receiving advanced notice about forum.
- Explain the hierarchy of service providers up front to give better perspective.

8. Participants were asked to rate the following questions using the following scale:

<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
STRONGLY AGREE						STRONGLY DISAGREE				

**PRIVATE SECTOR**

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- a. Prior to attending this Workforce Connex forum I had a high level of awareness about the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders (AHRDAs).
  - Strongly agree ..... 3
  - Strongly disagree ..... 9
  
- b. As a result of this forum I am coming away with a better understanding of the constraints and impediments that Aboriginal people face in their efforts to work with companies and secure employment.
  - Strongly agree ..... 9
  - Strongly disagree ..... 1
  
- c. I intend to develop a plan to increase my organization’s recruitment and retention of Aboriginal people.
  - Strongly agree ..... 9
  - Strongly disagree ..... 0

**ABORIGINAL HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT HOLDERS (AHRDA)**

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- a. Prior to attending this forum my AHRDA has experienced many challenges developing relationships with businesses.
  - Strongly agree ..... 12
  - Strongly disagree ..... 1
  
- b. This Workforce Connex forum has helped me to better understand the issues and constraints that businesses face in their efforts to recruit and retain Aboriginal people.
  - Strongly agree ..... 11
  - Strongly disagree ..... 2

# Glossary Of Terms

<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
AERC	Aboriginal Employment Resource Committee
AHRDS	Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy
AHRDCC	Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada
AHRDAs	Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreements holders
CAF	Canadian Apprenticeship Forum
HRSDC	Human Resources & Social Development Council
LDM	Local Delivery Mechanism
MNO	Métis Nation of Ontario
OMAA	Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association
SME	Small to Medium Sized Enterprise
TJW	TJW Development – a project sponsored by the corporation of the City of Kenora
HR	Human Resource



**ABORIGINAL HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF CANADA**  
**CONSEIL POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DES RESSOURCES HUMAINES**  
**AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA**

**Canada**

This project is funded by the Government of Canada, Human Resources and Social Development.