



K·K·E·T·S KIIKENOMAGA KIKENJIGEWEN
Employment & Training Services

MEDIA RELEASE

Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services' (KKETS) Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Program Holds First Graduation

Thunder Bay - June 28, 2013 - Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services proudly recognizes approximately 29 adult learners, members of Matawa First Nations communities who completed the Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Program (ASAPP) and many are now graduates with a General Education Development Diploma (GED) or Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

The Ceremony took place today from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm in the Prince Arthur - Provincial Room, Thunder Bay.

Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen means 'Teaching Knowledge.' KKETS was established by the Matawa First Nations to ensure its members receive the training and education they need to secure jobs, and to capitalize on opportunities from the Ring of Fire developments. The Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Program's primary objective is to develop an educated and highly skilled workforce in the north and to structure attainable learning achievements geared to the learner for entry into the labour market, further post-secondary, apprenticeship trades or specialized training that is synchronized with the growth of the mining sector and other supportive industries.

"When an opportunity to improve the quality of our lives presents itself, our people take that opportunity. The KKETS's ASAPP program has been set up to help our community members get the skills and training they need to improve their lives in the new economy that is emerging due to resource development. It is great to see 29 of our community members graduate and move on to more training. I believe the KKETS approach is going to help hundreds, possibly thousands, of First Nation members achieve a better life for themselves, their families and their communities" said David Paul Achneepineskum, CEO Matawa First Nation Management.

"The Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Program is a wonderful example of our government's support and collaboration with Aboriginal peoples to help students obtain the skills needed to support economic development across Northern Ontario. Ensuring all Ontarians get the education and training they need to succeed in the global economy is critical to our province's future, and I wish to congratulate all of these graduates as they embark on the next stage of their journey" said the honourable Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

"Our community members want to improve their lives. They want to share in the benefits and opportunities that will come from development of the Ring of Fire, and First Nation traditional territories. We are proud of our members who are graduating today. This program is changing lives" said Chief Sonny Gagnon of Aroland First Nation.

"This is a proud day for many of us. Ensuring our Matawa First Nation members have the education, training and skills to fully participate in today's economy and labour market is integral to KKETS mission -To provide culturally appropriate opportunities for education, training and employment by providing professional advisory support services, relevant systems and programs to empower individuals to take initiative for change in their own lives. The graduating students will now be ready for whatever comes their way whether it's post-secondary, training and employment. Acquiring a high school diploma is the start of promising life for the student and also brings hope and inspiration to current and future generations to nurture and excel at their hopes and dreams" said Elsie MacDonald, KKETS Board Member President.

"We are making progress to ensure 100 Matawa First Nation members have the necessary education, employability and life skills, and basic training requirements by November 2013. Approximately 29 students out of the 40 have been successful in ASAPP. These great results prove that ASAPP is working and meets the needs of the individual learner in a culturally appropriate manner. It is KKETS anticipation to only see the success numbers continue to increase" said KKETS Program Manager, Morris Wapoose.

"It warms the ASAPP team's heart to see positive changes occurring in each student's lives and each will continue that momentum while pursuing the correct path whether it's post-secondary, employment, specialized training or apprenticeship trades" said ASAPP Project Coordinator, Carolyn Zadnik.

ABOUT ASAPP

ASAPP is an exciting initiative assisting members of Matawa First Nation communities in pursuing their education, employment and career goals. It is innovative, collaborative and integrated approaches with "cutting-edge" practices that will help learners build pathways to positive educational and employment outcomes using a skills laddering approach. This program provides the full scope of skills training required to participate in the mining sector and other supportive industries. The foundational block component includes an innovative approach to the delivery of academic upgrading (Literacy Basic Skills), GED, and/or high school credit accumulation (subject to the learner's needs) by incorporating industrial certifications and ensuring the curriculum is relevant to skills and the labour market to support career and employment choices of the learner. The Cultural/Elder supports are a key factor in the completion rate and retention strategy.

Examples of career/employments choices include entry-level jobs, modular training (Surface Diamond Driller Helper, Truck Driver Training, Heavy Equipment Operator, Underground Common Core, Construction), Apprenticeship Trades, other certifications (e.g. Cook's Helper, Office Admin, Accounting), management positions within the mining sector and/or furthering post-secondary education.

The purpose of ASAPP is to ensure the trainees acquire the foundational essential skills and academic upgrading needed in order to be prepared for entry into the labour market based on individual career planning that is synchronized with the growth of the mining sector and other supportive industries.

It's KKETS goal to educate and prepare 100 Matawa First Nation members by November 2013 through the Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Project. The training is taking place in Thunder Bay, Ontario on 28 N. Cumberland Street, 3rd Floor.

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KKETS is a Matawa employment and training non-profit corporation, supported by our Chiefs, that offers our First Nation members opportunities to advance their skills and employability to get meaningful jobs in all industries, but particularly in the growing resources sector. KKETS will positively change lives and communities through individual skills development and training.



ASAPP is funded by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU)



Lakehead Adult Education provides instructional services for the delivery of OSSD accreditation.

Matawa First Nation Management (MFNM): MFNM is a non-profit corporation and Tribal Council that provides advisory services to its nine member First Nations.

The Nine Member First Nations of MFNM: Remote (accessible by air or winter ice road) - Eabametoong First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, Webequie First Nations. Road Access (accessible by provincial highways and roads) -Constance Lake First Nation, Aroland First Nation, Long Lake # 58 First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation.



Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS) is an Agreement Holder with Human Resource Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) under the Aboriginal employment and training program “Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)”.



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