



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

ANNUAL
REPORT
2022/23

We acknowledge with gratitude that we live, work, and play on the traditional unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

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Canada





Jenna Forbes

CHAIR

Tremendous congratulations to ACCESS for another successful year of operations and celebrating 20 years of dedication supporting Urban Indigenous Communities across the province and Metro Vancouver to gain meaningful employment.

As I reflect on the past two decades, it is a great honour to contribute alongside the tireless staff, managers, CEO and Board Members to the success of so many community members having access to quality education, certification and connections to gain meaningful employment. The ACCESS team have all rallied together to continue our goals of supporting our Urban Indigenous Community members adapt and meet their employment goals and overcome barriers. Our professional staff, partners and stakeholders are truly the foundations of our success- they bring inspiration, creativity, loyalty, resiliency and support to the Board of Directors that enables us to make informed decisions. I have observed them working tirelessly to meet the needs of community and to achieve the mission they are committed to: "To increase Indigenous participation in the labour market". We, as a board, are extremely proud of the ACCESS team, who work together to deliver quality services to our diverse urban Indigenous folks.

I'd also like to honour the memory of the late John Webster, who was the President and CEO for the majority of these two decades. John brought a grass roots vision to fruition from a small team to the 40+ full time devoted employees we have today. John's incredible legacy of increasing Urban

Indigenous folks' participation in the labour market has had immeasurable contributions to community including: keeping families together, single parents being able to provide for their children, increased self-esteem, igniting cultural pride and many many more. Continuing this legacy is our current President and CEO, Lynn White who led many successes of the ACCESS Finance Department prior to stepping up into this position. Lynn's drive and clear vision has led to expansion, increased relationships with funders and stakeholders, and a kind cheerful environment allowing her team to grow.

Congratulations to Employment Services, ACCESS Trades, BladeRunners, Indigenous Skills for Success, ACCESS Programs and Finance!! You make us proud!

I would also like to recognize and acknowledge the Board of Directors past and present who give so willingly of their time to serve ACCESS, they are all very busy individuals who are Executive Directors/ CEOs of their own organizations and yet make time to give back to community by serving on a governing board for ACCESS. Thank you for your commitment, dedication and leadership; it is an honor to serve you.

Hasaqu nm t'oyaxsn da gasgaaw waan (I want to thank you for how much you have done). Congratulations again to all involved, a job well done!

Jenna Forbes

Jenna



Lynn White

PRESIDENT & CEO

It is a great honour that I share with you our annual report for the past year, (2022-2023) celebrating 20 years of service of making a significant impact in our community.

It is with great pride that we share the successes and achievements we have accomplished this year. We were able to increase our outreach and impact by reaching out to our youth and delivering programs to provide opportunity, encouragement, and support. We have re-located our BladeRunners facility to a safer and cleaner location on Commercial Drive and Third Avenue and expanded the BladeRunners Program to our Surrey location. Our Trades Department has secured funding to ensure continued success in Trades training and employment.

We are also proud to share that we were able to increase our funding, and partner with employers and other non-profit organizations to ensure that our funds have been leveraged and spent in supporting our community members. These successes have allowed us to make a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve and have positioned us to continue to make an even greater impact in the years to come.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment, dedication, and wisdom provided by our Board of Directors. They are consistent with their leadership, support, and vision for ACCESS.

Our staff are passionate about creating opportunities and pathways to lead our community to a better tomorrow. Their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to our mission and the desire to uplift our people and make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve are the driving force behind our success.

Looking back, we have been able to lay a solid foundation and to continuously improve and provide services that are relevant and labour market driven. The growth and development that we have experienced has made us stronger and more effective. As we move forward, we remain committed to serving our community in a good way and upholding our reputation of providing exceptional services.

Urban Spirit Foundation continues to build its reputation with donors who believe in our mission and give generously to support individuals with scholarships, and supports for further education, as well as attending our golf tournament and Bannock and chilli day!

All My Relations
Lynn White

Lynn

Background

Aboriginal Community Career Employment

Services Society (ACCESS) began as a venture to meet the employment and training needs of the Indigenous peoples of Greater Vancouver.

A duly incorporated BC not-for-profit society since 2002, we are one of the most comprehensive employment service providers in Canada. ACCESS provides status, non-status, Métis, and Inuit people with access to education and training that leads to

meaningful, long-term employment. Our client-first approach integrates the expertise of six business units to streamline the client's experience with us.

ACCESS signed a 10-year Indigenous Skills Employment and Training Strategy (ISETS) agreement in 2019, securing funding until 2029.

OUR MISSION

To increase Indigenous participation in the labour market.

OUR VISION

ACCESS envisions an urban Indigenous community empowered through culture, wellness, achievement, and self-sufficiency.

OUR MANDATE

ACCESS serves to enhance human resource development and the sustainable capacity of the urban Indigenous population in Greater Vancouver through the provision of employment and training.

OUR CORE VALUES:

Honour
Kindness
Respect
Sharing

Then and Now

In 2022, ACCESS proudly marked its milestone 20-year anniversary.

ACCESS began as a cooperative venture of the urban Indigenous community of Greater Vancouver when its founding partners entered into a five-year Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement (AHRDA) with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) in 1999. This urban AHRDA provided the means and framework for the creation and implementation of labour market development initiatives customized to the needs of urban Indigenous people in Greater Vancouver. The agreement launched a new era, placing urban Indigenous people in control of the

design and management of their own education and employment requirements and objectives. Out of this agreement, ACCESS evolved into a duly incorporated BC nonprofit society in January 2002.

Since then, ACCESS has continued to operate successfully across successive Indigenous labour market program agreements with the Government of Canada including the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy II (2004 – 2010) and the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (2010 – 2018). In April 2019, ACCESS signed a 10 year Indigenous Skills Employment and Training (ISET) Program agreement securing its core funding until 2029.

20 Years of Success

JENNIFER HAGGERTY
METIS

Jennifer endured multiple traumas as a youth which led her down the wrong path until she realized what the future was looking like. One day, she spoke to her Uncle Dale and told him she was trying to figure out what she wanted to do in life, and he suggested ACCESS.

When she made an appointment with ACCESS it was as if fate was falling into place. An ACCESS funded program called Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers was about to start up. It allowed Jennifer to explore the different health career programs at Vancouver Community College.

This program changed her life. In high school, she gave up the dream of Nursing, but with the support of ACCESS and VCC she overcame the challenges that stopped her from pursuing her dream. The program taught her how to set short and long-term goals so she could successfully achieve her childhood dream of becoming a Registered Nurse.

She graduated from VCC in 2016 with a BSc in Nursing and is a Registered Nurse at Ridge Meadows Hospital. She has now transitioned to Patient Care Coordinator as head nurse of the unit. She plans to pursue a master's degree and continue to climb up to a management role.



LYSSA MORRISON
SECWEPEMC

Lyssa completed the Administration and Clerical training program in partnership with ACCESS, the City of Vancouver, and the City of Surrey in 2012.

Upon completion of the program, the City of Vancouver hired Lyssa as an auxiliary employee for the first year. In the 11 years that she has been employed with the City of Vancouver, she was an office support clerk III, a clerk III training coordinator and Human Resource Associate. Her interest in Human Resources led her to complete the Human Resource Management Certificate from BCIT while employed fulltime.

Lyssa joined the Recruitment Team and during this time she created a work plan for the new Indigenous Recruiter position. Lyssa is now the Indigenous Recruiter in Human Resources for the City of Vancouver.

Across its more than 20 year history, ACCESS has provided employment and training supports to nearly 35,000 program participants resulting in 10,793 employment outcomes and 2,799 participants returning to school.

ROBERT HAMILTON
MI'KMAQ ELSIPOGTOG FIRST NATION

Robert completed the ACCESS funded Digital Film Making Program at Native Education College in 2003. As a writer, Robert mostly focuses on screenplays, so he wanted to learn how to use a camera, which was part of the Digital Film Making course curriculum. The program provided Robert with further insight into film making and better awareness and confidence on using a digital camera and editing software.

Since completing the Digital Film Making Program, Robert has written three feature screenplays for which he is currently seeking producers and directors to bring them into production, written a full-length stage play, had a ten-minute stage play produced as part of a National Playwriting competition, and published his memoir through Renaissance Press, OUR STORY: Coming Out in the Time of HIV and AIDS, about going through the AIDS crisis with friends in Vancouver in the 1980s and 1990s.



Building Capacity by Training the Leaders of Today

BUDDY CARDINAL CREE, SADDLE LAKE CREE NATION

In 2007, after a decade of uncertified employment in the Carpentry trade, Buddy met with an ACCESS Employment Advisor to learn about challenging the Red Seal Carpentry certification. Buddy enrolled in the ACCESS funded Red Seal Challenge program with the goal of securing employment on major infrastructure projects and increasing his earnings potential.

Buddy successfully challenged for his Red Seal, which changed the trajectory of his life. After receiving his Red Seal certification, Buddy secured employment as a foreperson on three major infrastructure projects in both BC and Alberta.

Buddy was then able to use his skills and experience as a Red Seal Carpenter to give back to the community. In 2015 he began working for ACCESS as a Trades Training and Employment Coach and since 2021 he has been ACCESS' Director of Trades. Buddy enjoys helping people, so working with ACCESS is a great fit. He cannot think of a better community of people to work with as he contributes to helping Indigenous people do better for themselves and their families.



DESTINY WELLS DENE (CHIPEWYAN, SLAVEY) AND CREE, K'ATL'ODEECHE FIRST NATION

Throughout Destiny's academic and professional journey, she has discovered a passion for helping others and making a difference, particularly in the Indigenous community. As a high achieving student in school, Destiny learned that her hard work and dedication paid off in the form of success.

After graduation from high school, Destiny sought guidance from ACCESS for exploring her career goals. She discovered her passion for social work and pursued the Career Development Practitioner program at Douglas College. After completing the program, Destiny was thrilled to join the ACCESS team in support of the Indigenous community. Having been in the shoes of her ACCESS clients, Destiny has a deep understanding of their perspectives and needs.

Destiny indicates that ACCESS is a great place to work as she is part of a team that shares a common vision for clients and staff to succeed and reach their goals.

JASON WATT INTERIOR SALISH, SKATIN FIRST NATION

Jason was introduced to the ACCESS BladeRunners program at a time in his life when he lacked structure and felt uncertain about his career direction. He had heard stories of youth achieving success through BladeRunners and saw it as an opportunity for positive change.

Jason successfully completed the BladeRunners program and pursued further training in First Aid Level 3 and volunteered as a first aid attendant at a homeless shelter in the Downtown Eastside. At the end of his first day of volunteering, Jason was offered a job as a shelter worker, and fell in love with working in the DTES.

Since his time in BladeRunners, Jason has achieved many significant milestones including obtaining a degree in youth justice, a Bachelor's in Criminology, and becoming a licensed Cyber Security Analyst. His most noteworthy accomplishment is becoming a Program Coordinator at ACCESS BladeRunners and then later being promoted to Director. Jason credits ACCESS BladeRunners as the foundation of his success, and he is incredibly proud to give back to the community that started him on his journey.



ACCESS

Board of Directors

JENNA FORBES
ACCESS CHAIR

Vancouver Aboriginal
Transformative Justice
Services Society



OLIVIA JIM
ACCESS SECRETARY
-TREASURER

Helping Spirit
Lodge Society



LOU DEMERAIS
ACCESS DIRECTOR

Community Leader



MERV THOMAS
ACCESS VICE CHAIR

Circle of Eagles
Lodge Society



SUSAN TATOOSH
ACCESS DIRECTOR

Vancouver Aboriginal
Friendship Centre Society



NICK CALLA
ACCESS COMMUNITY
DIRECTOR

Calla Financial



Governance

A volunteer Board of Directors, representative of the needs, interests and diversity of the urban Indigenous population of the Greater Vancouver region, guides the growth and direction of ACCESS. The Board of Directors establishes policies and strategic direction for ACCESS and entrusts daily operations to a capable staff and management team. All authority is delegated through the President and CEO. The Board meets ten times per year and as required to address issues and opportunities. Timely responsiveness is a key to professional and needs-directed human resource development.

Leadership

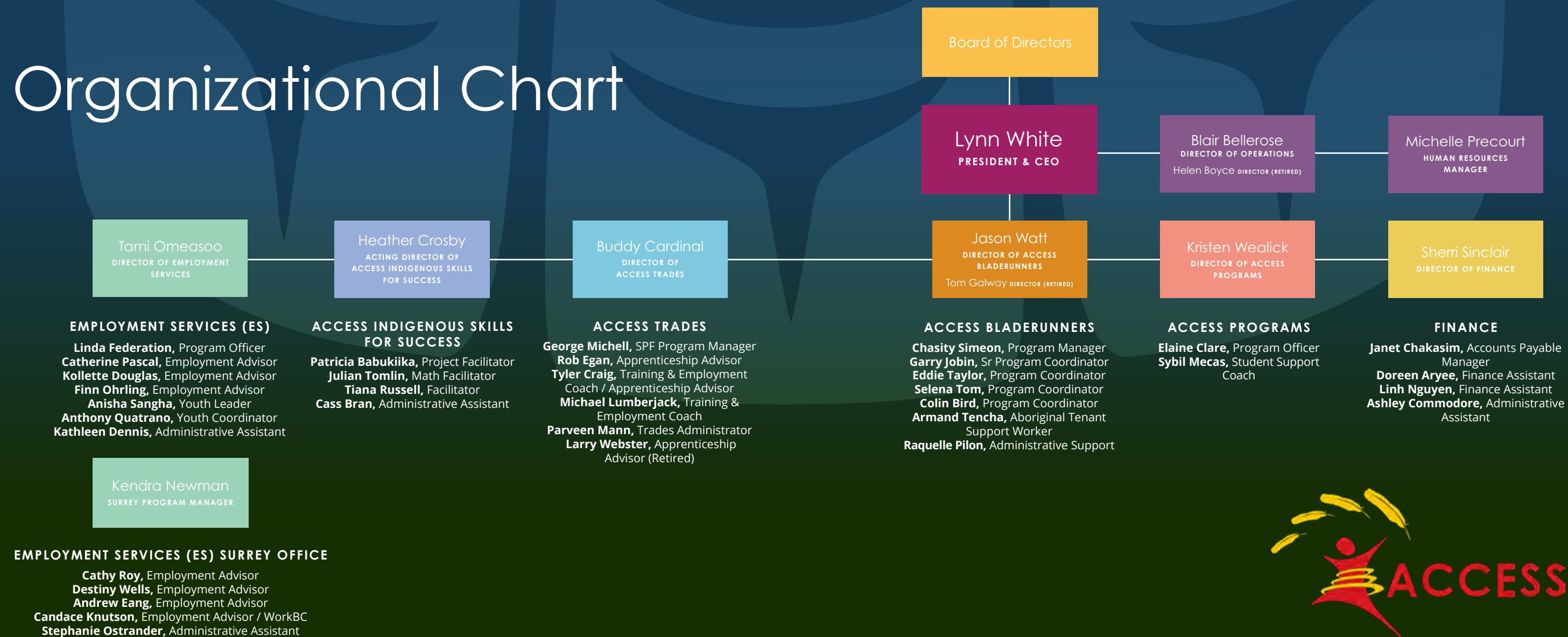
The President and CEO is the official ACCESS representative to the Board of Directors, the community and the media. The President and CEO provides leadership consistent with Board approved ACCESS policies, goals, and objectives. Specifically, this includes the development and implementation of the ACCESS strategic business plan and annual operating plans, as well as fiscal planning and accountability, asset protection, and maximization of human resources. Reports and recommendations that analyze progress, measure success and identify hurdles are provided to the Board on a regular basis.

Management Team

The President and CEO oversees a management team comprised of Directors and Managers who work together collaboratively to ensure the successful delivery of the strategic goals and priorities of ACCESS. These individuals are responsible for the operational success of their departments, which is achieved through outstanding management practices including team leadership, ensuring accountability with thorough reporting, developing capacity through funding proposals, and building and maintaining partnerships with industry partners, training institutions and all levels of government.

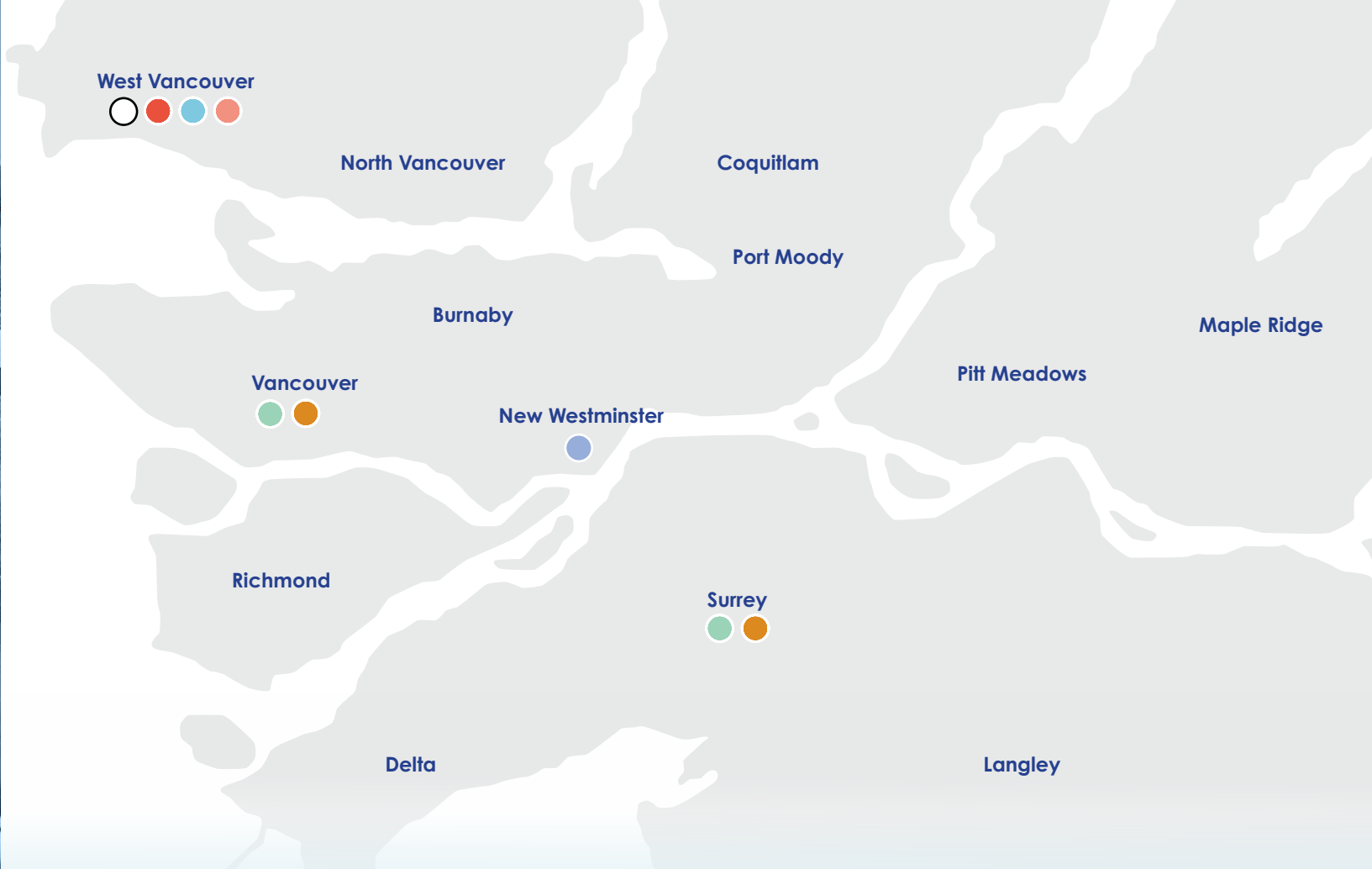


Organizational Chart



ACCESS Locations

Serving the urban
Indigenous community
of Greater Vancouver
for 20 years



ACCESS Head Office
108 - 100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2
TEL: 604 913-7933
FAX: 604 913-7938

**Indigenous Skills
for Success**
201 - 681 Columbia Street
New Westminster, BC V3M
1A8
TEL: 604 521-5929
FAX: 604 521-5931

**BladeRunners
Provincial
Management**
1848 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC V5N 4A5
TEL: 604-688-9116
FAX: 604-688-9146

ACCESS Trades
108 - 100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2
TEL: 604 922-4077
FAX: 604 922-4088

ACCESS Programs
108 - 100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2
TEL: 604 913-7933
FAX: 604 913-7938

**ACCESS BladeRunners
Vancouver**
1848 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC V5N 4A5
TEL: 604 688-9116
FAX: 604 688-9146

**ACCESS BladeRunners
Surrey**
10708 136A Street
Surrey, BC V3T 5G9
TEL: 778-395-0385
FAX: 604-581-0944

TWO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES LOCATIONS

**ACCESS Employment
Services**
110 - 1607 East Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V5L 1S7
TEL: 604 251-7955
FAX: 604 251-7954

**ACCESS Employment
Services**
10708 136A Street
Surrey, BC V3T 5G9
TEL: 778 395-0385
FAX: 604 581-0944

Employment Services (ES)

While the Urban Indigenous employment and training landscape is changing, one thing will always remain the same; our dedication to helping our Urban Indigenous community be successful through wrap around services that enhance employability. ACCESS meets our Urban Indigenous community where they are at to support them through their employment journey.

ACCESS's Employment Services (ES) manages two offices located within Greater Vancouver, each strategically located to ensure accessibility for our urban Indigenous clients. These offices are located in East Vancouver (Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre) and Surrey (near Gateway sky train). Not only are these locations strategic in location, but they meet very unique clientele needs.

ACCESS's ES supports the one stop model as each office is equipped with a multi faceted resource lab, and our Indigenous clients have options to book one-on-one time with an Employment Advisor who can provide support in the form of employment, training, referrals, and funding opportunities. As employment and training experts, ACCESS collaborates with the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre and provides referrals to their life skills pre-employment program. Our Surrey location partners with the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre, to meet the needs of the ever-growing Indigenous population

in the Surrey catchment area. Whether a client is ready for employment or needs assistance for other services to support them on their pathway to gaining life skills, employability skills or confidence, we are here to support our urban community.

ACCESS incorporated a youth leadership HUB located at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre. This location offers services beyond the typical drop in youth resources. Leadership development is supported throughout all aspects of a person's career, employment, and life skills, which will assist with the expansion of indigenous representation across our entire economy. The Leadership Centre strives to assist Indigenous youth in graduating grade 12 in meaningful ways by building a solid foundation to further their curiosities and career path.

ACCESS's Youth Leadership Centre provides great opportunities to the youth to explore various career paths via volunteer experiences, and opportunities to attend the Outward Bounds Adventure Journey, Coding Program, Vision Quest Gap Year program, Girls Canoe Leadership Program, spring and summer STEAM Programs, and incorporating culture in all that we provide. ACCESS continues to work with the Duke of Edinburgh program and feels this platform leads to better post secondary opportunities whether it be academics or employment.



1,045
CLIENTS FROM
250+
COMMUNITIES

57%
EMPLOYED OR
RETURNED TO
SCHOOL

In 2022-23, ACCESS's ES has had an incredible year, transitioning back to in person appointments and larger in person training programs, and ensuring that more than half of our clients have obtained employment. I am very inspired by what I see happening in our department. I want to thank all our clients for meeting the challenges, overcoming challenges and succeeding in their endeavors.

ACCESS Youth Leadership HUB

ACCESS's Youth are our leaders of tomorrow and ACCESS strives to support them on their career path. Through our partnership with the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society's (VAFCS) Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) program, young Indigenous leaders are gaining valuable experiences, opportunities and mentorship. The Duke of Edinburgh program is based on **Service, Skills, Physical Recreation and Adventure Journeys**. As well, the connection to the elders at the VAFCS enriches the lives of each youth that walks through the doors.

Along with the DoE program, ACCESS supports Indigenous youth with high school graduation and the transition to a career or further education and training opportunities. Meaningful graduation ensures that our urban indigenous youth have exposure to greater opportunities like STEAM, Pre-University Programs, Equestrian Leadership

programs, driving programs and tailored support that will ensure that Youth have opportunities after graduation and not just a piece of paper. With tailored supports, our Youth can help fill the labour markets gaps in industries that are lacking indigenous representation such as IT, Accounting, and Engineering to name few. ACCESS strives to increase indigenous participation in these ever under represented careers.

In 2022-2023, our partnership with the Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week Youth program supported and enhanced our Youth's goals in the Fashion Industry. Whether as a designer or a model, Youth were provided with opportunities to build stepping stones in achieving a goal that may have otherwise been out of reach. Thank you VIFW 2022...Till we meet again next year!

KEVIN GOSNELL NISGA'A

Kevin started with ACCESS as a Youth Summer Student at the VAFCS and soon became casual as a recreation worker during the pandemic and Spring break. During this time, he enrolled into the fashion design program at Eric Hamber Secondary school. ACCESS was able to cover tuition, supplies, transportation and an incidental allowance to ensure that they graduated with as much support as possible. This program provides very intense hands on and deadline focused training, and through hard work Kevin was nominated to be on Team Canada for fashion design. When ACCESS partnered with Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week 2022, Kevin was recommended through the youth leadership program to participate as a mentee. Kevin was able to support the fashion shows backstage as well as having an opportunity to do a runway. Kevin has a great fashion career ahead of them creating designs and representing the LGBTQIA2S+ community.

TAIGAN ALFRED CREE, KWAKWAKWALA, CHINESE

Taigan has been participating in the ACCESS and VAFCS Duke of Edinburg program since he was 13 and loves giving back to the Urban Indigenous community. He is thankful for all the opportunities that ACCESS has provided to him.

Taigan is currently attending Capilano University One, where his long-term plan is to become an Indigenous legal advocate. In the meantime, he is doing modelling under Supernatural's Indigenous Modelling Agency working with labels such as Section 35 Clothing, and NTVS Clothing as well as appearing in Woman's Wear Daily wearing Jason Baerg. He has also participated in Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week and the Sante Fe Indigenous Fashion Show.

Taigan sits on the Provincial Aboriginal Youth Council as a general committee member and supports the BC Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society with initiatives like the Gathering Our Voices Conference.





DIERA GUTOWSKI

SWAMPY CREE

Diera has been doing retail jobs since graduating high school in 2021. She has worked for Chloe Angus, mentored on how to run a retail business from designing, patterning, commissioning artists and preparing the clothing for mass production which led her to attend The Sewing Academy to help master her sewing skills. At this time, an opportunity came up to participate in the 2022 Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week as a mentor and model. This was a great opportunity to build more skills, learn how the backstage works, and network with people in the industry. Diera shared that this exposure to the fashion industry confirmed that she was going into the correct career. She will continue her studies in the Blanche McDonald Fashion Design program in the fall and would love to see her designs at VIFW in the near future.

MADRID ALFRED

CREE, KWAKWAKWALA, CHINESE

Madrid is a Duke of Edinburgh program participant and he has enjoyed volunteering at the VIFW in both 2018 and 2022. He volunteered as an elders helper both years, which involved seating elders, bringing water, and answering any questions that elders may have. During this time, he met people from various backgrounds and learned a lot about what goes on at a fashion show from start to finish. In 2022, Madrid had an opportunity to model for Jason Bearg. Madrid intends to continue volunteering and will enroll into the fashion design program at Eric Hamber when he reaches grade 11.



MACE CALLAHAN

METIS

It has been my goal to become a lifeguard since I was a kid, and I would like to thank ACCESS for giving me the funding and support to help me on that path. I've lived in the Mount Pleasant area all my life and I started swimming at Britannia when I was 6 months old. I've always loved swimming and being in water and it's always where I've been at peace. I loved swimming so much that when I started doing triathlon in grade 6 the swim was the only part I really loved. Biking was tolerable and I hated running. Ever since I was a kid though I looked up to lifeguards. I always saw them as this cool inspiring figure, and I decided that I wanted to become one. I have completed all my other courses before ACCESS funded the last two which were my National Lifeguard Course and my Swim for Life Instructor Course.



Duke of Edinburgh Participants

We are Dukes and we support each other in all the adventures that come our way. From going in helicopters, travelling to Ottawa, participating in Gathering our Voices and volunteering at events, to traveling on the VPD Marine Unit boats up the Burrard Inlet, seeing an Indigenous Play and finding employment and volunteer opportunities together. We encourage cooperation and success through support of one another.

MENTORS

Fabian Hackett (19)
Kwakwaka'wakw, Dakelh

Nathan Humchitt (19)
Heiltsuk

Omer Yucesoy (19)
Nisga'a,

Taigan Alfred (18)
Kwakwaka'wakw, Cree

Michael West (18)
Heiltsuk

Alex Hunter (20)
Oneida

Wilson Dixon (21)
Squamish

Jayla Hunter (20)
Oneida

MENTEES

Baris Yucesoy (15)
Nisga'a

Kevin Gosnell (17)
Nisga'a

Mace Callahan (17)
Metis

Justin Joe (15)

Ethan Charleson-Hayes
(15)

Ethan Sound (15)

Myles Cardinal (15)

Madrid Alfred (15)

Keona Charles (15)

William Rosso (16)



ACCESS Driving Program

Our ACCESS Drivers program is a true example of meeting our clients where they are at and supporting the clients throughout their drivers' journey. These clients are prime examples of persistence, dedication and having the focus to see the end results. The BC Driver's program is a 3-year process: you need to obtain your "L" (pass a knowledge test) wait one year to do your "N" (Road Test) and then practice for 2

years to be able to do your Class 5 (road test). This requires a lot of communication, coordination, one on one support and most importantly patience, as it is a long process. This is one of the biggest barriers to employment and ACCESS partners with the Needs of Our Community Society to remove this barrier for Indigenous peoples to be able to get their license, and better their chance at employment.



"Literally it has driven me, changed my thoughts and how I see life, and what it will do for me to succeed even more."

— **TREVOR VENOS**



"I can reach more families, run errands for the HIPPY Program and encourage the mom's to get their license as well, it gives you more opportunities."

— **STACY PASCAL**

ACCESS Trades

The ACCESS Trades department is made up of an Indigenous-led team of staff, each with an extensive background in the skilled trades. Our team provides wrap around support, removing barriers for our apprentices in the skilled trades from starting an apprenticeship to reaching their Red Seal and beyond with additional training to support their growth as leaders in the industry. This vision is realized through collaborative efforts with our partners in the education sector such as BCIT, EJTC, and UAPIC; our industry partners such as Seaspan, IBEW 213, Saam Smit Towage, Bosa Construction,

and Warrior Plumbing to name a few; the provincial governing body for apprenticeship in British Columbia, Skilled Trades BC; and our funders, the Province of BC and Service Canada. The Trades department works closely with 670 apprentices, which includes over 170 journey people in 45 trade designations with a collective goal of ensuring they are receiving the support to develop lasting careers in the industry. We fill gaps and eliminate barriers to employment, which provides the urban Indigenous community with opportunities for lasting careers they can be proud of.

486 ACTIVE APPRENTICES

143 RED SEALS

45 SINGLE SEAT PURCHASES

41 CERTIFICATES OF QUALIFICATION

23 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TRADES

670 ACTIVE TRADES CLIENTS

IN 45 TRADES 15% WOMEN IN TRADES!



ALEXA ENG
SAULEAUX, RED SEAL ELECTRICIAN

After being in academia and learning about ACCESS training programs, Alexa soon realized she wanted to explore a career in the skilled trades. The ACCESS process was seamless with training and union employment, which would normally be a year or more, but only took a short time for the initial onboarding. Her experience of going through ACCESS for her apprenticeship has been positive, with ongoing support for her progress over the last 5 years to achieve her Red Seal. Now, Alexa is entering the next stage in her career as a journeyperson and understands there is still so much to learn in the electrical trade. In the future, she would like to explore opportunities that allow her to give back to communities in need.

“ACCESS made sure that I had the best chance of success particularly during the school component.” – ALEXA ENG

DANTE MADDALOZZO
METIS, RED SEAL PLUMBER

Prior to reaching out to ACCESS to pursue a career in the trades, Dante had researched several trades with the goal of one day becoming a Red Seal journeyperson. ACCESS sponsored Dante throughout his four year apprenticeship and he is extremely grateful for the support that he received from both his family and ACCESS. The employment piece of his apprenticeship has been self reflecting as he matured over the years as a trade's person. Being a new father, he has new aspirations to provide for his family that include having his own business or being a lead hand/foreperson. During his training, ACCESS provided Dante with tools, a laptop for his studies, and a list of employers. He is currently employed.





BRENNAN REHLAU

OJIBWE

Brennan approached ACCESS to enroll in the Welding Foundation program being offered at BCIT. While having some knowledge of working in the trades, he wanted to make a change to live a stable life by enhancing his skills in technical training. The training added certainty to his career path, providing him the opportunity to hone his skills in the welding craft. ACCESS staff incorporated program supports, Indigenous learning, peer support, and employment opportunities, which introduced new experiences and bonds to Brennan that felt like a family support network. After successfully completing the program, Brennan changed his mindset and has acknowledged his resilience from working hard through his struggles. Brennan was approached by Seaspan during the ACCESS Foundation grad and was asked to submit his resume for an employment opportunity, which was soon realized.

KATHLEEN NATRALL

SQUAMISH, LEVEL 1 ELECTRICIAN

During her senior year in high school, Kathleen was exposed to the Electrical trade and she knew this was a career she wanted to pursue. Kathleen learned ACCESS was offering an Electrical Foundations training course and registered immediately. Although her initial entrance assessment was lower than ideal, she took advantage of the support ACCESS provided throughout her programs and attended all tutoring that was offered after school. Being the youngest student in her cohort, Kathleen's work ethic was evident, and she was quickly hired on by Seaspan, who typically hire the top apprentices of their class. "The skills that I've gained are life skills that I will have for the rest of my days and the tools to help me pave my career path."



RESPONSIBLE FOR **41%** OF ALL INDIGENOUS APPRENTICES IN BC'S LOWER MAINLAND

"To say that this opportunity has changed my life is an understatement. The training I have been provided sets me up for a bountiful career in the electrical trade. I simply couldn't pass on the opportunity when I saw ACCESS was accepting applications." – KIEFER VOIGT



Indigenous Skills for Success

Indigenous Skills for Success develops and delivers innovative programming which incorporates the building of an individual's nine Skills for Success, allowing students to participate in lessons and activities designed to enhance their workplace skills. The programs delivered this year include the following:

Indigenous Tourism of BC collaborated with ACCESS to deliver the Indigenous Ambassador program. This program provided a wealth of First Nations tourism knowledge and experience with traditional teachings for our students. This provided opportunities for the students to participate in several cultural workshops and field trips to build knowledge of the area's First Nations related tourism offerings and prepare for interacting with tourists and guests.

ICBC in collaboration with ACCESS created two programs to provide our clients with opportunities to develop the necessary skills to ably compete for

job openings as Claims Support Assistants & Client Service Representatives. After their successful completion at Indigenous Skills for Success the students then moved on to different ICBC center locations in the Vancouver area.

Pre-apprenticeship programs were offered in collaboration with ACCESS Trades and BCIT, and ACE Trades & Technical Institute. A variety of opportunities in the trades were provided for our Indigenous community including Welding Foundations, Metal Fabrication Foundations, Pipefitting Foundations, Level 2 Carpentry, and Bridge Watchman training.

Burnaby Community & Continuing Education in collaboration with ACCESS created the Early Childhood Education Assistant program. This program consisted of eight weeks of training and provided participants with the required skills to successfully enter employment as an ECE Assistant.

"We appreciate very much the opportunity to work with you. Thank you for all your efforts in recruiting and preparing these highly qualified candidates for the CSA role. We were impressed with their interview skills and how confidently they have presented themselves." – **ICBC PARTNER**

"The lessons and tutoring help greatly because it had been a long time since I was last in school, going over the fundamentals as a refresher has helped feel more confident in preparing me for BCIT. ISFS provided and thought of every aspect a student would need to be successful." – **LORAIN BURGEL, METAL FABRICATION STUDENT**

9 PROGRAMS THIS YEAR

88% COMPLETED PROGRAM

REBECCA HILL

3 EMPLOYER PROGRAMS

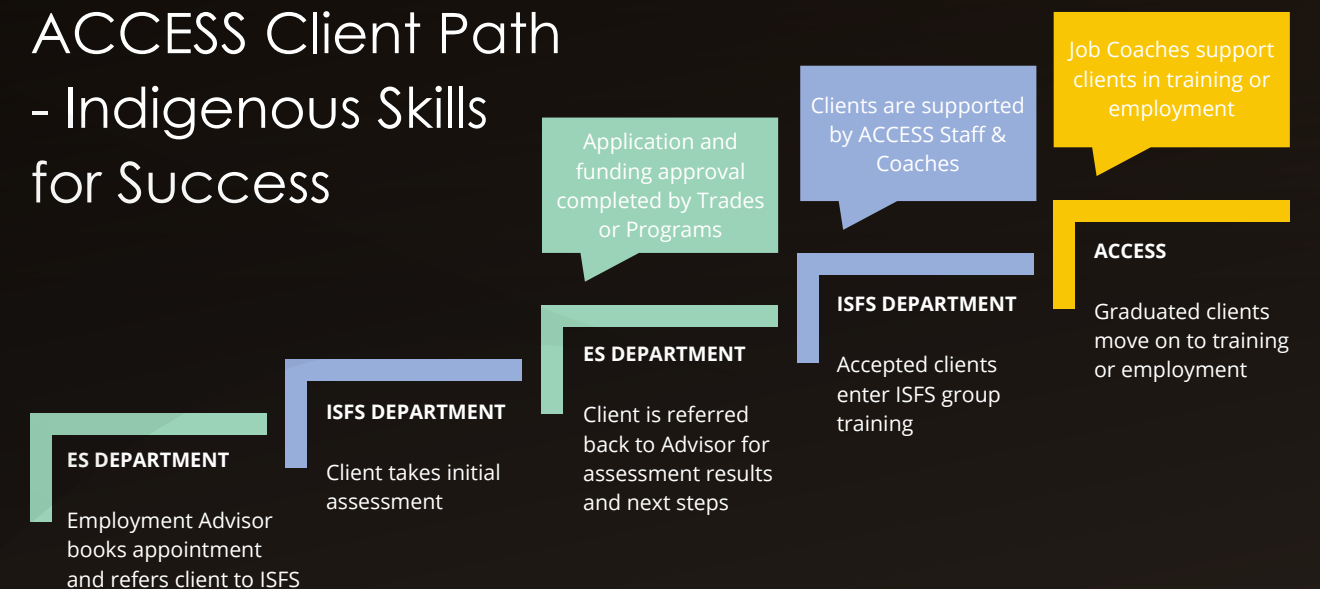
80% HIRED WITH EMPLOYER

6 TRAINING PROGRAMS

93% WENT ON TO TRAINING



ACCESS Client Path - Indigenous Skills for Success





ANGELA MCGILLIVRAY

MÉTIS

Angela knew she wanted to start a new career, however, she wasn't sure where to begin. After searching and almost giving up Angela found out about ACCESS and saw the Early Childhood Education Assistant program posted. She decided to take the giant leap of faith in herself to take the program and sign up. Through the support of ACCESS, she successfully entered the ECEA program and since then she left feeling more confident. It also gave her a push to continue to complete her studies in her dream career as an Early Childhood Educator.



LOURIE PARKER

SECHELT FIRST NATION

Lourie did not want to return to her job of 14 years because of a toxic work environment, but she stayed because she feared that her age and limited computer skills would make finding work difficult. She saw the ICBC program as a great opportunity to freshen up the skills that she was lacking and build a new career. The program not only gave her the skills required for the job but helped her to regain her self-confidence and belief in herself. The biggest hurdle for Lourie was typing, as the job required a minimum of 35wpm. She worried that she would not be able to meet the typing requirements, but with dedication and practice she passed the final typing test; as a result, she is now working in the ICBC office nearest to her home.

"The support given during the Program is amazing. I honestly believe without having that I probably would have not continued. It gave me a reason to be accountable and show up." – **ANGELA MCGILLIVRAY**

"If you're lucky enough to get in- give it all you got! The things they teach you awaken your brain if you have been out of work for a minute or help you change direction into a new profession."

– **LOURIE PARKER**

CHERYL ARNOUSE

SECWEPENC

Cheryl was looking for employment in the city when she heard about ACCESS' Indigenous Tourism of BC Program through our Facebook page. With her background in tourism and as an artist, she thought this was the right fit for her at the time as she wanted to further her tourism/hospitality skills. Cheryl was a great student; she arrived on time every day, was the first student in the door and would be here with the staff before class to complete working on her in-class assignments. After successful completion of the program Cheryl gained 12 Tourism related certificates including ITBC storytelling and Indigenous Tourism Ambassador. After the support and encouragement she received from ACCESS, Cheryl is now using her skills and knowledge while working at the Burnaby Museum as an Indigenous Interpreter.



TROY LINCON

NISGA'A & OJIBWE

Troy heard of ACCESS from a friend who went through a trades program and when he heard of the support that ACCESS offers, he finally decided it was time for a change and to do something with his life. Troy walked into the Vancouver office knowing he wanted to sign up for a career in trades. The timing was just right as the Skills for Success portion of our Welding Foundations program was about to start in our New Westminster location. Troy knew he couldn't do this on his own as he lacked the confidence and skills for a trades career. Since he completed the Skills for Success program with ACCESS however, he has gained the confidence in himself, and math skills needed to successfully complete the foundations course at BCIT.



ACCESS Programs

The Programs department oversees training projects delivered by urban Indigenous organizations in Metro Vancouver or through partnerships with public training providers. These project-based training initiatives are designed to assist Indigenous people to enter the workforce directly or to pursue

post-secondary education that will eventually lead to future career placements. The training projects respond to local labour market needs. Projects funded may include group skills training, pre-employment training, employer partnership training and summer student employment programs.



"I believe ACCESS is a huge service to the Indigenous community, offering programs with financial support as well as student support coaches to help us stay on the right path so that we can enrich our lives to obtain employment and I grateful for the opportunity."

– BRANDON MECAS



8 GROUP TRAINING PROGRAMS

4 GROUP SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS

3 EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMS

1 YOUTH MENTORSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

73 CLIENTS ENROLLED IN GROUP TRAINING

82% SUCCESS RATE

42 CLIENTS IN PRE-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

17 SUMMER STUDENTS PLACED IN 7 INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS





BRANDON MECAS

ANISHINAABE OJIBWE

Brandon Mecas is 28 years old and is Anishinaabe Ojibwe from Waywayseecappo First Nation.

He was working as a painter's helper, and he lost his job due to Covid-19. Brandon received an Instagram message from his aunt about an ACCESS program and encouraged him to apply. He contacted ACCESS immediately and submitted all the required documents. Brandon was excited about his acceptance and approval for the Vancouver Film School Foundation and Visual Art Program.

Brandon put 100% effort into his work and his efforts paid off because he graduated from the program with honors, and won a full scholarship for VFS to specialize in Animation.

"ACCESS is an amazing organization to help you take the steps you need to reach your goals and help you with any barrier you may have." – **EVERALDA STEPHENS**

DAKOTA APSASSIN

SAULTEAU FIRST NATION

Dakota Apsassin is 27 years old from Saulteau First Nation. She heard about the Indigenous Tourism of British Columbia (ITBC) from her employment advisor. The ITBC program impacted her life by helping her gain more knowledge about herself which led to confidence. She now carries this confidence around with her. The ITBC program provided her with necessary workshops that led to her success in gaining employment with The Capilano Suspension Bridge Park.

Dakota recommends ACCESS to everyone because it is a great organization that wants you to succeed, and the teachers are there for extra help. Dakota was grateful for the tuition, living allowance, hot lunch, and bus pass that she received while attending the program.

Dakota's future goals are to become an assistant manager at The Capilano Suspension Bridge, and she would like to help others succeed by sharing her ACCESS experience.



EVERALDA STEPHENS

NISGA'A

Everalda started in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) field in 2016 as a "responsible adult" and her passion for Early childhood education grew. She learned about the Early Childhood Education Assistant (ECEA) program through the ACCESS Facebook page and called immediately and met with an employment advisor to create a plan.

Everalda completed the ECEA Certification, and she enrolled to complete her ECE Diploma with Burnaby Community & Continuing Education.

Now, she is months away from being a fully certified Early Childhood Educator and she is happy to say that it is never too late to pursue your dreams.

KHEYANNE HANCE

LYTTON FIRST NATION

Kheyanne Hance is 39 years old from Lytton First Nation. She came across the ICBC Claim support program through ACCESS Facebook page. It looked like an interesting career, so she decided to apply.

In the ACCESS program, Kheyanne gained new skills that helped her build confidence. She found the staff to be encouraging, approachable and kind. They were patient and assisted her through every step of the curriculum. ACCESS provided her with a safe environment to learn and encouraged her to go outside her comfort zone. The program included sharing Indigenous traditions which gave them a greater sense of community.

Today, Kheyanne is employed as a Claims Support Assistant with ICBC, and she is part of a wonderful team that encourages her to learn and to collaborate. She feels she finally has a sense of direction and belonging. "I am grateful to ACCESS for the encouragement and support."



ACCESS BladeRunners

We take great pride in showcasing the exceptional work carried out this year by ACCESS BladeRunners staff in support of the at-risk youth we served across 13 Provincial communities.

The BladeRunners Program primarily receives funding from the Province of British Columbia through the Service Canada Workforce Development Agreement with additional support from Service Canada. The program's inception dates back to 1994, when 25 at-risk youth were trained and employed for the construction of GM Place (now Rogers Arena).

Since 2003, ACCESS has been managing BladeRunners on behalf of the Province, leading the program's growth into one of Canada's most successful youth employment placement initiatives. BladeRunners serves youths between the ages of 16 and 30 who face numerous barriers to employment.

ACCESS BladeRunners offers a comprehensive range of support services that provide participating youths with access to housing, education, food, clothing, work gear, wrap-around care, and other forms of

essential support. ACCESS BladeRunners is pleased to announce the launch of a new BladeRunners program in the Surrey district, enabling us to extend our reach further with participants in surrounding communities, including Maple Ridge, Langley, and Coquitlam.

ACCESS also operates an innovative housing project, BladeRunners Place, providing 38 units of subsidized housing to youth that have gone through the program and are ready to make the next steps towards independence.

The success of the program would not have been possible without the support of our funders, the Province of British Columbia, specifically the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education & Future Skills (PSFS), and Service Canada.

We are also immensely grateful to the employers who hire our youths. Companies such as Coast Salish Steel, Nucor Harris Rebar, Starline Windows, and Scaffcat Access Services (to mention a few) play a pivotal role in the program's success.

644

PARTICIPANTS
PROVINCIALY

13

INDIGENOUS AND
NON-INDIGENOUS
AGENCIES

250

EMPLOYED ACROSS
THE PROVINCE

157

COMPLETED IN
VANCOUVER & SURREY

100

EMPLOYED FROM
VANCOUVER/SURREY

38

RESIDING AT
BLADERUNNERS PLACE

ROMAN MENDOZA

ERMINSKIN BAND

With no work history and a few brushes with the justice system, Roman realized the need for positive changes in his life.

He learned about ACCESS BladeRunners and its reputation for excellence and decided to give it a try. In January of this year, Roman entered the doors of BladeRunners with no expectations but was quickly taken by the staff's professionalism and welcoming demeanor. Guest speaker Brandon Joseph from Coast Salish Steel, a 100% Indigenous-owned ironwork company, spoke to the group and sparked Roman's interest in a career in the field. After completing his two weeks of training, Coast Salish Steel hired Roman and provided him with work gear and an opportunity to work on the Kingsway Project in East Vancouver on February 8th of this year.

Roman continues to work for Coast Salish Steel, with aspirations of becoming a red-seal iron worker. He gives all the credit to BladeRunners for their unwavering support in his journey, expressing his desire to eventually move into BladeRunners Place. Brandon Joseph from Coast Salish Steel praises Roman as a great worker with a bright future in the company.



BladeRunners

"BladeRunners is Full of opportunity. Both in personal and professional life. Struggle, Endure, Contend." – **ZACKARY BROWN**

29%

FEMALE
PARTICIPANTS
IN PROGRAM

Once a
BladeRunner,
always a
BladeRunner.



RESHEA DOOLAN

NISGA NATION

Reshea, current resident of East Vancouver, decided to take advantage of the booming construction industry in the Lower Mainland by enrolling in BladeRunners. Having previously participated in the program seven years ago, Reshea recognized the value of renewing his certificates and getting support from program coordinators in finding a trade with a promising career. Reshea began his journey with BladeRunners in October 2022, participating in the comprehensive two-week life skills and Health & Safety training program. With the support of BladeRunners, Reshea was placed at Starline Windows' Metrotown site, where he was thrilled with his starting wage. Working under the supervision of the first female supervisor in Starline Windows' history, senior Bladerunner Rebecca Knott, Reshea has excelled as a membrane installer. Recently, he purchased his own vehicle and attributes his success to the tremendous support provided by BladeRunners.

ZACKARY BROWN

GITXAN

Zackary Brown is Gitxan, born and raised in Terrace BC. Part of his life was in the care of the ministry because his family struggled with alcoholism. Zack is very proud that he lives a life of sobriety and healthy fitness. He came to Vancouver without a plan or housing to find a better life for himself and younger siblings.

Zack completed BladeRunners in November of 2022. He utilized all the life skills and training provided to him in the program. Going from training to employment was an easy and fun transition with the support of the job coordinators. Zackary now has his own home in BladeRunners Housing and a full-time secure job in construction. He is confident that he can be the positive role model needed for his younger siblings.



AVERY DELANEY

KAINAI NATION

Avery underwent a career change after feeling unhappy at their previous job, which was taking a toll on their mental health.

The BladeRunners program was recommended to them by a close friend who had already benefitted from it. The program provided Avery with a great deal of support, including job coaches who were always there for them throughout the process.

"My coaches always reassured me that it's going to be okay and that I'm going to do fine with this new career change. I received such amazing support from BladeRunners".

Though initially shy and scared to step out of their comfort zone, Avery found the training to be fun and informative, and enjoyed learning about different areas of construction. They particularly valued the opportunity to learn a new skill and trade, which helped them grow as a person.

Currently, Avery is settling into their new home and job, and feeling happier and more fulfilled than before. Avery's advice to others is to never be afraid to pursue their dreams and goals, as they are achievable with perseverance and dedication.

Urban Spirit Foundation



The Urban Spirit Foundation (USF) is a charitable organization that exists to further the success and self-reliance of Urban Indigenous people in the Metro Vancouver Region. USF was created in 2007 by the founders of ACCESS, and with ACCESS' support all funds raised by USF go directly to our purpose with no administration fee. We are united in our purpose, with the Foundation working to grow philanthropic resources to provide education and employment training opportunities, secondary and post-secondary scholarships and bursaries, and community-based programs and projects that move people from poverty to self-sufficiency.

In what seems like a short time since, we have worked to create our vision, build our leadership, support our local community, and engage with people who have been so moved by our purpose that they have made valued contributions of many kinds.

Annually, USF supports the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre's Children's Back-to-School Backpack Program. Children receive a backpack filled with school supplies needed to start the new school year. USF also supports the VAFCS (Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society) Children's Christmas Party where low-income families receive a food hamper, and each child receives a present to open on Christmas morning. Each year for Giving Tuesday, USF has the Chili and Bannock Lunch-To-Go Fundraiser and the Annual USF Charity Golf Classic Tournament.

CHAD ROBINSON GITGA'AT FIRST NATION

Chad was enrolled in the Carpentry Foundations program at BCIT and received the USF top student award for his great attitude and commitment to the program. He received the award for overcoming barriers and still attended and worked hard to maintain an elevated level of achievement in his schoolwork. He was a leader in the classroom and helpful to his classmates.

"My future goal is to get my Red Seal in Carpentry so hopefully one day I can build a house of my own. I'd like to thank the USF for helping me on my journey to get my Red Seal certification."

USF would like to wish him all the best with his future goals.



CRYSTAL CHAPMAN SKAWAHLOOK FIRST NATION

Crystal Chapman returned to school as a mature student. She is enrolled in Integrated Studies at Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. She was chosen to receive the Urban Spirit Foundation scholarship because of her drive and commitment to overcoming all the barriers she faced. She has a great attitude and doesn't let anything get in the way of her success to achieve her goals and dreams.

She would like to help the Indigenous community to heal from their trauma due to Colonization and Residential School experiences.

"I would like thank USF for the financial help. I am extremely grateful for all the assistance that I received on my educational journey".

Since 2010 we have provided
over **153 scholarships** totaling
over **\$150,000.**

JEWELL ISAAC CARRIER FROM NAK'AZDLI WHUT'EN NATION

Jewell is Carrier from the Nak'azdli Whut'en Nation. She is 18 years old. She is from Fort St. James and moved to Vancouver when she was 3 years old. Congratulations to Jewell who successfully graduated from the Tupper Nova Program with the Vancouver School Board. Jewell has plans to enrol in the Culinary Arts program at Vancouver Community College. Jewell received an Urban Spirit Foundation award for all her hard work and perseverance.

"Thank you to Urban Spirit Foundation for the scholarship. I would like to pursue the Culinary Arts Program at Vancouver Community College to further my cooking skills and learn more about food and nutrition."

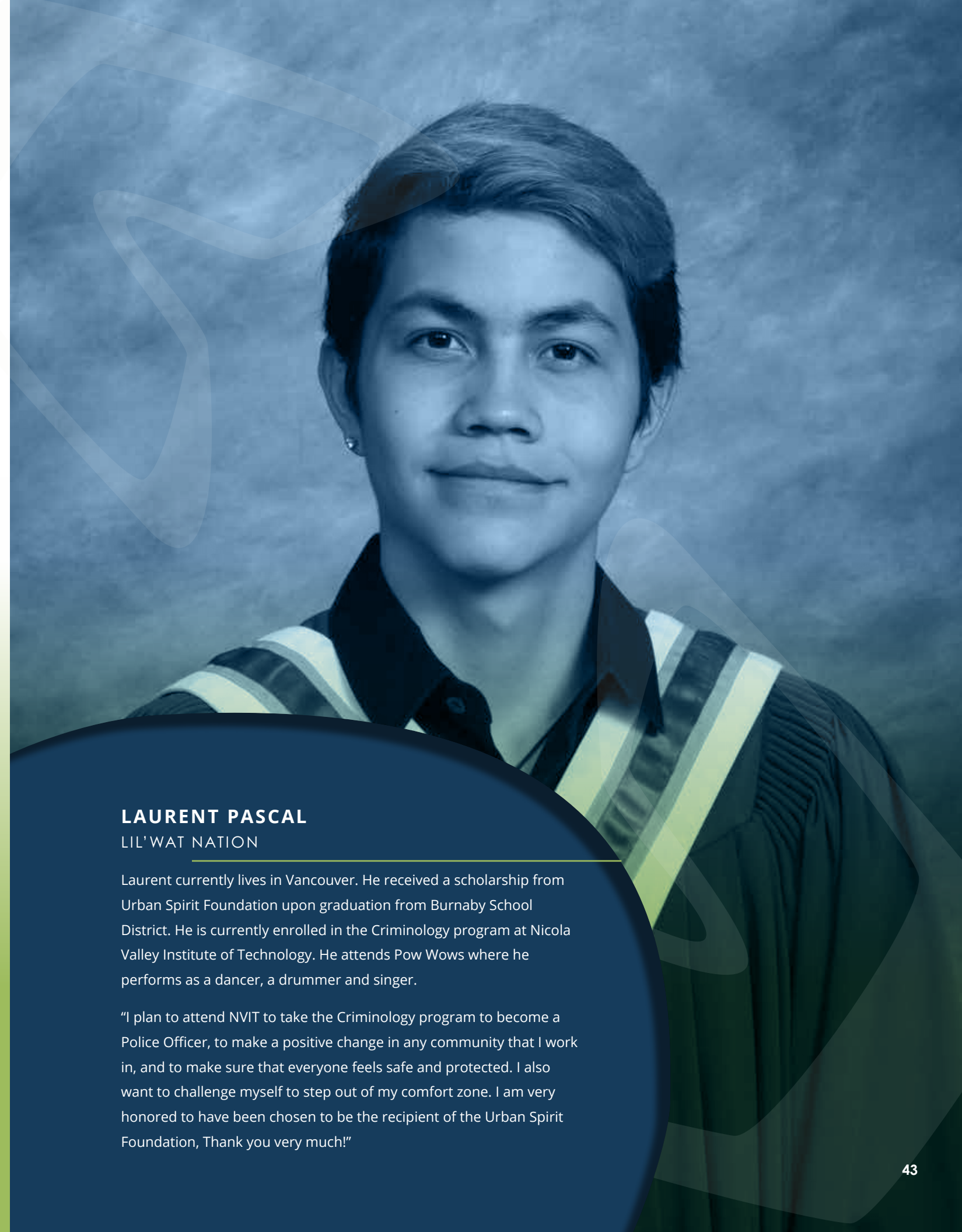




JODI KLASHINSKI
MÉTIS

Jodi is 21 years old and is from the Musqueam Nation. Jodi completed high school at South Hill Education Centre and is now enrolled in the Child and Youth Care program at Douglas College. She hopes to pursue a degree in Social Work.

"I intend on getting my child and youth care diploma, pursuing my Bachelor of Social Work to benefit Indigenous communities. I am doing this to break the cycles within my own family. Intergenerational trauma ends with me. If I can do it, you can too. Thank you to USF for the scholarship, it helped to start off my 1st year of college without worry!"



LAURENT PASCAL
LIL'WAT NATION

Laurent currently lives in Vancouver. He received a scholarship from Urban Spirit Foundation upon graduation from Burnaby School District. He is currently enrolled in the Criminology program at Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. He attends Pow Wows where he performs as a dancer, a drummer and singer.

"I plan to attend NVIT to take the Criminology program to become a Police Officer, to make a positive change in any community that I work in, and to make sure that everyone feels safe and protected. I also want to challenge myself to step out of my comfort zone. I am very honored to have been chosen to be the recipient of the Urban Spirit Foundation, Thank you very much!"

URBAN SPIRIT FOUNDATION Board of Directors



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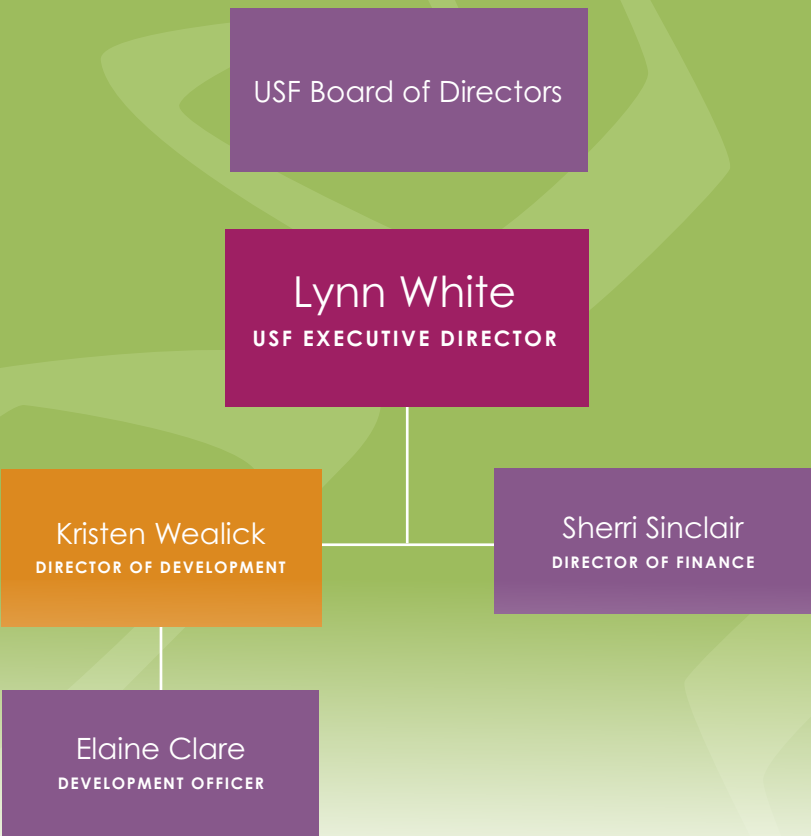


**SAMANTHA
SINGBEIL**
USF DIRECTOR

FortisBC



Organization Chart



We would like to thank our donors



2022-23 Audit Finance Department



Our Finance Department consists of five employees. We pride ourselves in being accurate, timely, and efficient, yet flexible in our relations with clients, employees, and vendors.


ACCESS and Urban Spirit Foundation are audited annually by an independent auditor in accordance with the Canadian Accounting Standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Details of the ACCESS audit are available on our website at www.accessfutures.com



ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CAREER EMPLOYMENT SERVICES SOCIETY (ACCESS)
Statement of Financial Position
March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 4,863,628	\$ 4,032,651
Accounts receivable	1,455,886	1,107,456
GST receivable	245,100	145,076
Prepaid expenses	101,009	105,687
	6,665,623	5,390,870
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (Note 4)	3,863,998	3,914,086
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 10,529,621	\$ 9,304,956
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 547,696	\$ 951,706
Wages payable	40,656	30,642
Employee deductions payable	10,052	8,682
Deferred revenue (Note 5)	5,010,431	3,612,130
Current portion of mortgage payable (Note 7)	42,752	41,287
	5,651,587	4,644,447
MORTGAGE PAYABLE (Note 7)	1,323,661	1,366,759
TOTAL LIABILITIES	6,975,248	6,011,206
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted contributions	1,056,790	787,711
Invested in capital assets	2,497,583	2,506,039
	3,554,373	3,293,750
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 10,529,621	\$ 9,304,956
LEASE COMMITMENTS (Note 8)		

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD
 Director
 Director

Thank you to our partners!



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**Aboriginal Community
Career Employment Services Society**

Tel. (604) 913-7933

www.accessfutures.com