



ANNUAL REPORT

25/26



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ACCESS Partners & Funders

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

Our Funding Partners

Canada





Jenna Forbes
CHAIR

With deep respect and pride, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to ACCESS on another successful year of walking alongside the Urban Indigenous community of Metro Vancouver. Together, you have cultivated pathways to meaningful employment—pathways that continue to grow stronger with each passing year.

ACCESS stands as a living example of what it means to be rooted together. Through the strength of relationships—between staff, leadership, partners, and community—you have created a foundation grounded in trust, culture, and shared purpose. From these roots, opportunities continue to grow for Indigenous people to access education, gain certification, and step into meaningful, sustainable careers.

It is an honour to serve alongside the dedicated staff, managers, President and CEO, and fellow Board members who nurture this work every day. I have witnessed the ACCESS team move with resilience, care, and determination—supporting community members as they navigate barriers, build confidence, and reconnect with their strengths. This work goes far beyond training for the trades; it is about creating spaces for healing, belonging, and self-determination.

The partnerships and relationships you have built are the soil that sustains this growth. They bring forward creativity, knowledge, and accountability, allowing us as

a Board to make decisions that honour both community needs and future generations. Your commitment to the mission—to increase Indigenous participation in the labour market—continues to open doors for youth and adults alike.

I also want to raise my hands to the Board of Directors, past and present. Your leadership and willingness to give your time, despite many responsibilities, reflects a deep commitment to community. It is a privilege to serve alongside you.

Hasaqu nm t'oyaxsn da gasgaaw waan.

(I want to thank you for how much you have done).

To everyone who has been part of this journey—staff, partners, community members, and supporters—thank you for helping ACCESS remain grounded in community while continuing to grow opportunities for generations to come.

Congratulations to all—your work is meaningful, and it matters.

Jenna



Lynn White
PRESIDENT & CEO

As I reflect on this past year, I am reminded that our strength has always come from where we are rooted: in community, in culture, and in our shared responsibility to uplift one another.

At ACCESS, we continue to walk alongside urban Indigenous peoples with purpose and intention. Our work is grounded in the teachings of respect, honour, sharing, and kindness. These are not just words, they guide how we serve, how we lead, and how we build pathways forward for those who come through our doors.

This year has been one of both growth and deepened connection. Across our programs from trades training to employment services, youth initiatives, and community supports we have witnessed the resilience, talent, and determination of our people. Each graduate, each new apprentice, and each individual who steps into meaningful employment represents more than success, they represent the strength of community and the continuation of opportunity for future generations.

Our work is further strengthened through our sister organization, Urban Spirit Foundation. Through scholarships, emergency supports, youth programming, and community gatherings, the Foundation helps ensure that individuals and families are supported. It is through this circle of care that we can respond to both

immediate needs and long-term aspirations, reinforcing that true success is built on a strong and supported community.

We have also continued to strengthen our partnerships with industry, with post-secondary institutions, and with community organizations ensuring that the opportunities we create are not only accessible but sustainable. These partnerships are essential. They allow us to expand our reach, respond to evolving needs, and remain a strong voice for urban Indigenous people in the workforce.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to growing opportunities that are culturally grounded and community driven. We will continue to advocate, to innovate, and to ensure that Indigenous leadership remains at the center of employment and training solutions.

I raise my hands in gratitude to our Board of Directors, our staff, our partners, and most importantly, to the community we serve. Your strength, your trust, and your commitment continue to guide our path.

With respect,

Lynn

Background

ACCESS began as a cooperative venture of the urban Indigenous community of Greater Vancouver. Our founding members came together to ensure that the employment and training needs of urban Indigenous people in Metro Vancouver were being met.

A duly incorporated BC not-for-profit society since 2002, ACCESS has grown into one of the most comprehensive employment and training service providers in Canada. We support all Indigenous people, providing 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 seven business units to streamline our program participants' experience with us.

At ACCESS we provide services for Indigenous people by Indigenous people. Decisions related to programming and operations are made for the betterment of our urban Indigenous community

and are consistent with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). A vital component of our programming is the integration of Indigenous culture, including traditional knowledge, teachings from Elders, and land-based learning which helps to ground our participants, instilling pride and confidence in who they are, while empowering them for continued success.

In 2019, ACCESS signed a 10-year Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) program agreement, securing our funding until 2029. This long-term investment allows us to continue advancing holistic, culturally-informed approaches that honour Indigenous ways of being and knowing, while supporting our people in building fulfilling futures rooted in cultural identity and self-determination.

Our Mission

Increasing urban Indigenous peoples 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 Metro Vancouver through the provision of employment and training.

OUR CORE VALUES:

Honour
Kindness
Respect
Sharing

ACCESS

Board of Directors

Olivia Jim
ACCESS SECRETARY
Helping Spirit
Lodge Society



Terry Adams
ACCESS DIRECTOR
Community Member



Nick Calla
ACCESS TREASURER
White Raven Consulting Ltd.



Jenna Forbes
ACCESS CHAIR
Vancouver Aboriginal
Transformative Justice
Services Society



Merv Thomas
ACCESS VICE CHAIR
Circle of Eagles
Lodge Society



Susan Tateosh
ACCESS DIRECTOR
Vancouver Aboriginal
Friendship Centre Society



Carrie Humchitt
ACCESS DIRECTOR
Vancouver Aboriginal
Health Society



Governance

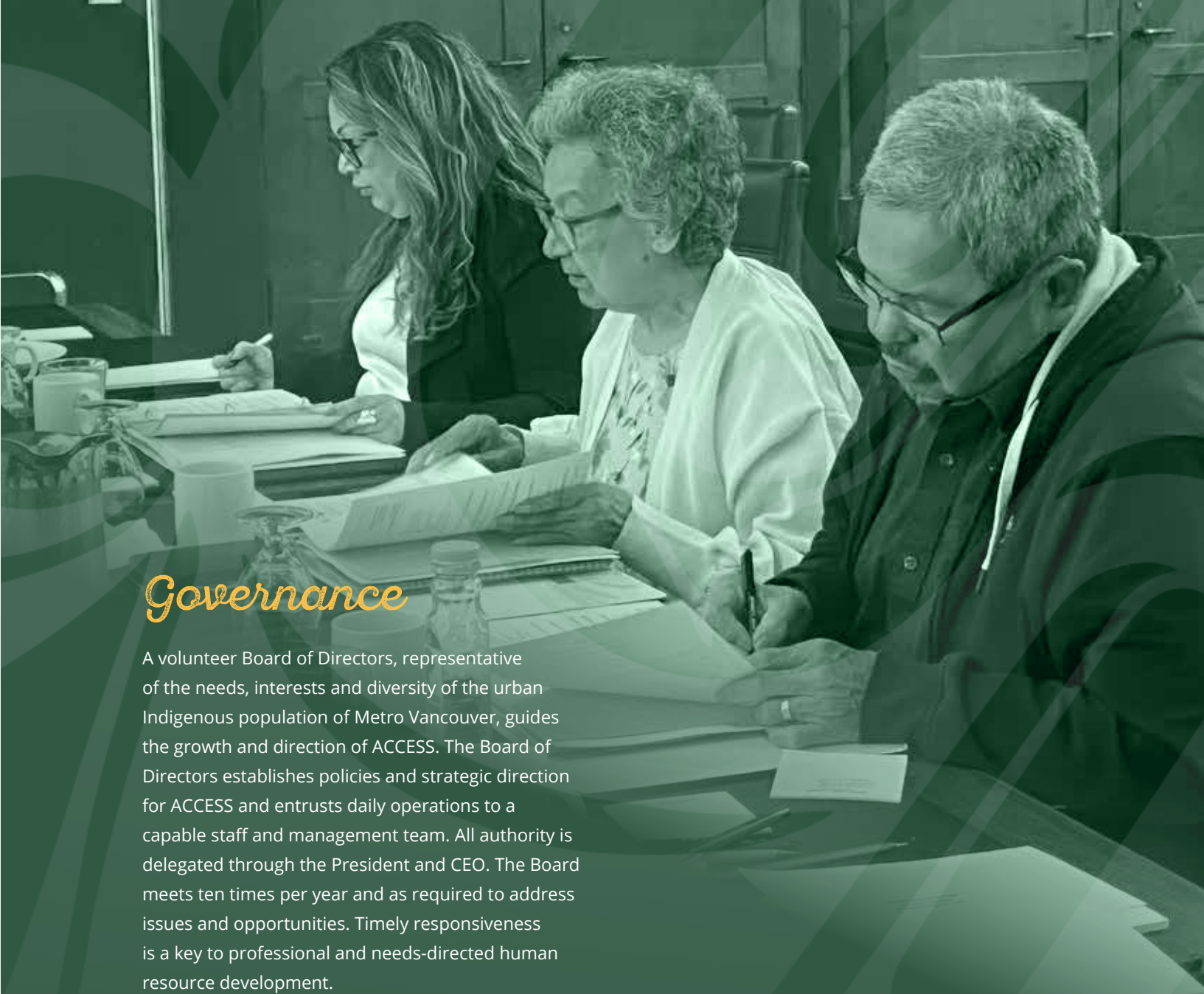
A volunteer Board of Directors, representative of the needs, interests and diversity of the urban Indigenous population of Metro Vancouver, guides the growth and direction of ACCESS. The Board of Directors establishes policies and strategic direction for ACCESS and entrusts daily operations to a capable 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.

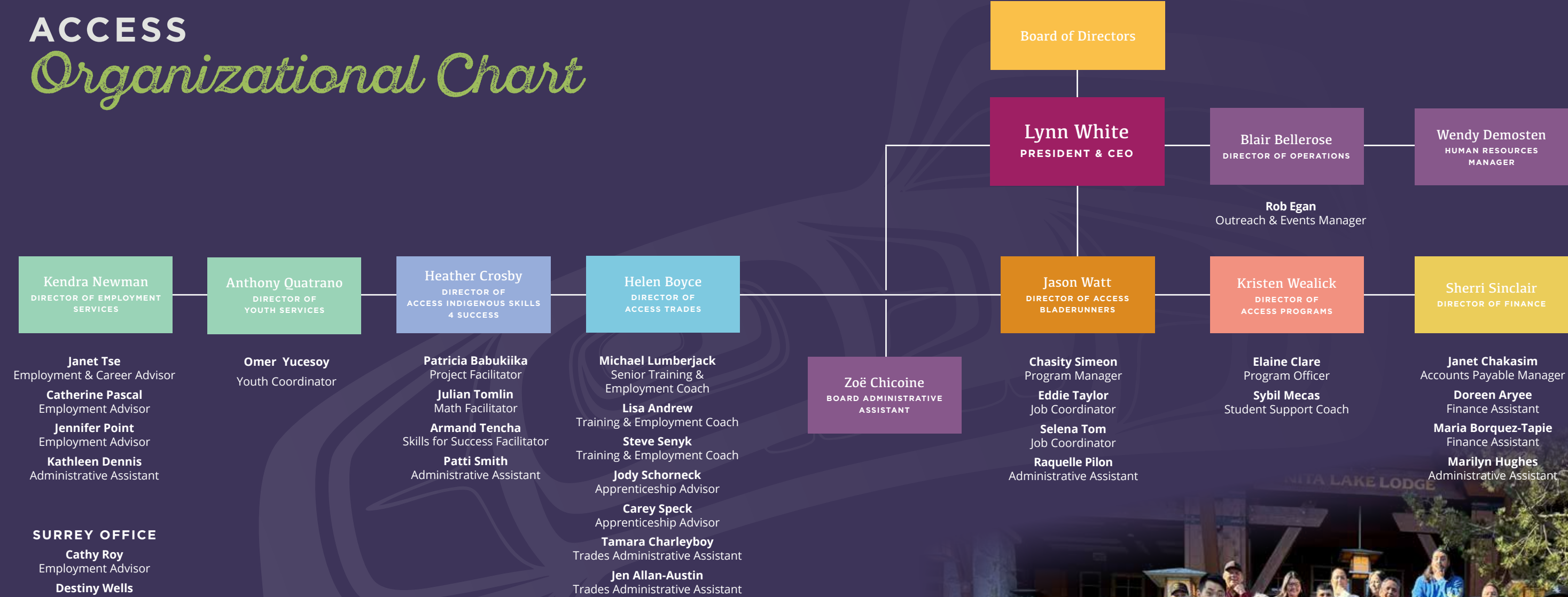
Management Team

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.



ACCESS

Organizational Chart



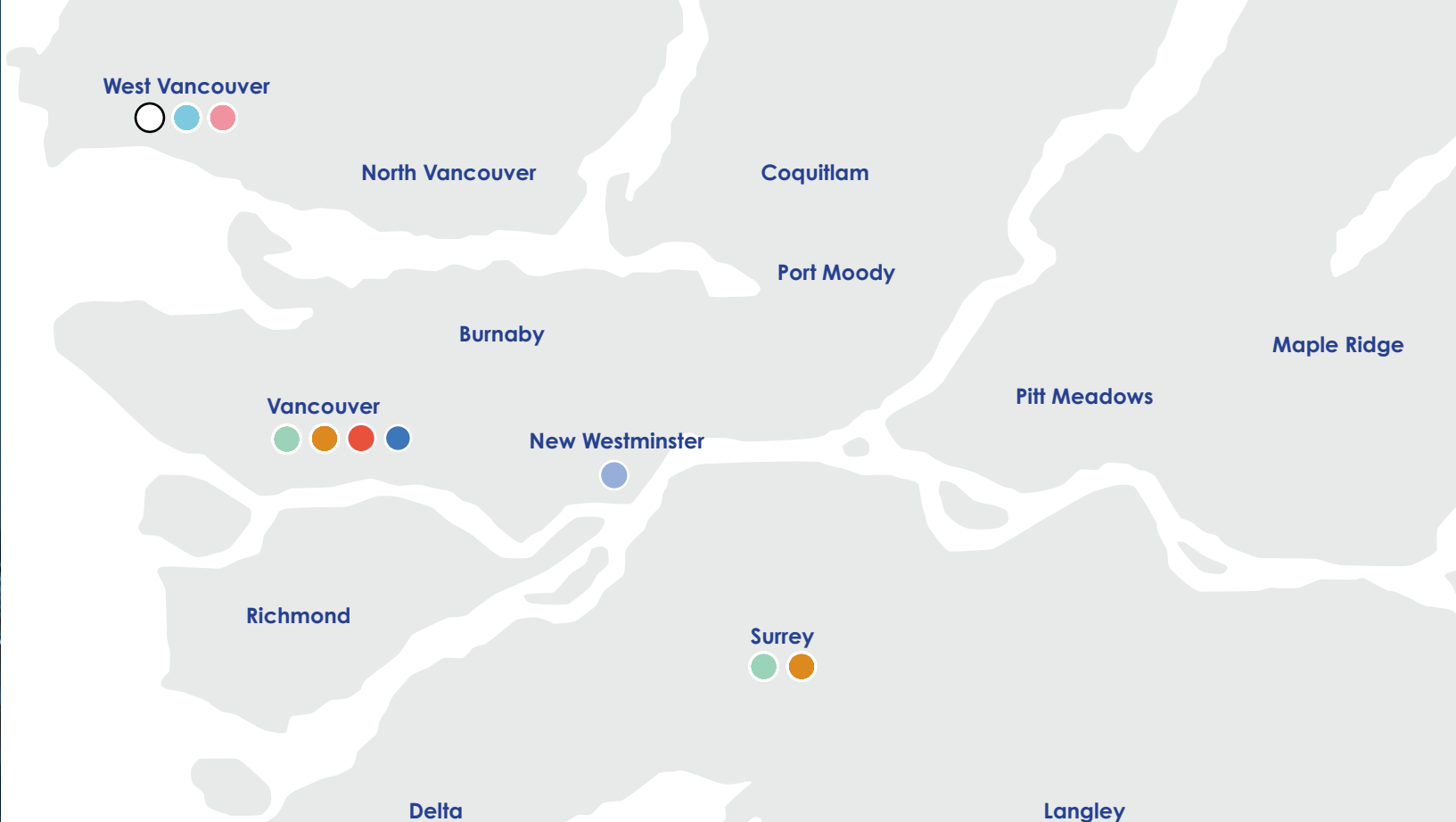
ACCESS Locations



To Increase Urban Aboriginal
Participation in the Labour Market



*Serving the urban Indigenous
community of Metro Vancouver
for over 20 years*



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

● **ACCESS Indigenous Skills
4 Success (IS4S)**
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 Youth Services**
110-1607 East Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V5L 1S7
TEL: 604-251-7955
FAX: 604-251-7954

● **BladeRunners Place**
250 Powell Street
Vancouver, BC V6A 0E2
TEL: 604-558-7787
FAX: 604-608-0476

● **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)

Employment Services (ES) operates from two locations in Vancouver and Surrey, providing comprehensive employment and training support to Indigenous job seekers across Metro Vancouver. Grounded in ACCESS' core values of honour, kindness, respect, and sharing, ES delivers client-centered, culturally informed services that reflect the strengths, experiences, and goals of urban Indigenous individuals.

As the primary point of entry into ACCESS, Employment Services plays a central role in guiding clients through their employment journey. From initial intake to career planning, Employment Advisors work one-on-one with clients to identify goals, address employability gaps, and support informed decision-making. This includes resume and cover letter development, interview preparation, and job search support, as well as early-stage career exploration for clients who are still identifying their path.

In 2025–2026, ES continued to strengthen its integrated approach across departments. Clients are assessed and referred to Indigenous Skills for Success for upgrading and assessments, as well as to Trades Training, Programs, and Youth Services, depending on their individual needs and readiness. ES works closely with Finance to facilitate funding supports, including short-term certifications, training programs, and employment-related costs, helping to reduce barriers to participation and success.

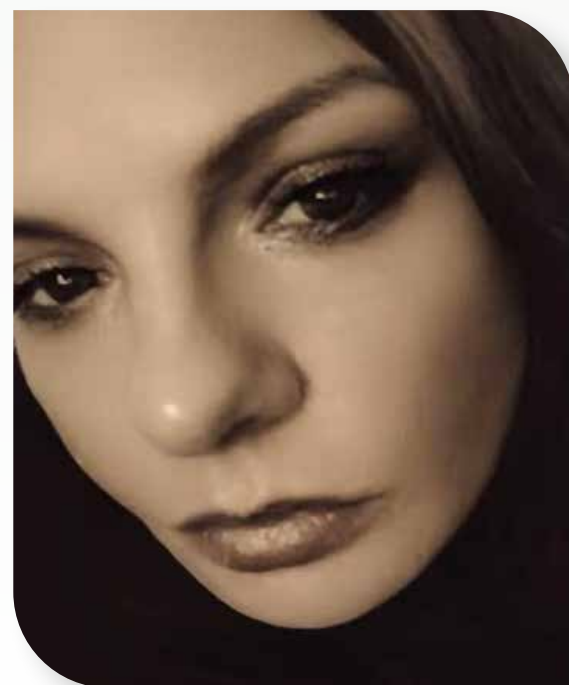
Beyond connecting clients to opportunities, ES emphasizes long-term outcomes through ongoing follow-up and support. By maintaining relationships with clients throughout their journey, the team ensures that employment is not only achieved but sustained.

Through culturally safe service delivery and strong internal collaboration, Employment Services continues to connect clients to the right supports at the right time, contributing to meaningful employment outcomes and long-term community impact.

Melissa Yake

MÉTIS/UPPER MOHAWK 6 NATION

Melissa first connected with ACCESS in Nov 2023, she was interested in Career Planning and Skill Development. Melissa had a history of contracted Temporary Positions and had considered training in Construction Trades or Heavy Equipment Operator. Her goal was to obtain long term stability and a steady income. Her first goal was to complete academic upgrading at NEC which she achieved in June 2025. While completing upgrading Melissa continued to broaden her horizons as she explored careers in more technical and creative areas. She considered Software Testing but ended up in the Information Technology Program at NEC. She completed the program in April 2026 and is on her way to a bright future in the Information Age.



Tammie Milton

WIT'SET FIRST NATION

Tammie first connected with ACCESS while seeking a path to develop new skills and re-enter the workforce. Her journey began with TCP Flagging training, which served as a stepping stone to obtaining her driving lessons, Class 7N license, and eventually her Hoist & Elevator Construction Operator certificate through Technical Safety BC. Although the technical requirements of the Hoist Operator certification were demanding, Tammie's persistence, supported by dedicated mentorship, allowed her to overcome every challenge. Since then, she has built an impressive professional track record with industry leaders such as Square Nine, Blue City, and Turner Construction. Today, she is a vital member of the Westgate team, serving as their primary full-time Hoist Operator.



ACCESS Youth Services

ACCESS Youth Services (YS) is dedicated to supporting Indigenous youth in reaching their full potential by removing barriers and creating meaningful pathways to success. Through culturally grounded programming, youth are supported in achieving high school graduation, exploring future career opportunities, and building confidence to support long-term success. Rooted in Indigenous values, YS creates space for youth to strengthen their cultural identity, develop independence, and feel a strong sense of belonging.

Throughout the year, youth engage in programs that reflect their interests and goals. This includes STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), IT, and driver's licensing support. Spring Break and Summer programs further engage youth through cultural activities, job readiness, and life skills development. Signature initiatives, such as STEAM, Girls Canoe Leadership, and Firefighter Boot

Camps, bring these elements together, integrating Indigenous knowledge and storytelling throughout, ensuring culture is embedded within learning rather than treated as separate.

YS is committed to creating accessible, engaging opportunities that prepare youth for future education and employment. Whether exploring trades, technology, or academic pathways, youth gain the tools and experiences needed to make informed decisions about their futures.

This year's highlights included a Firefighter Boot Camp in partnership with Vancouver Fire Rescue Services and the First Nations Emergency Services Society, Welding Camp in partnership with BCIT, and the Bear's Lair Dream Camp. Across all programming, there is a strong emphasis on teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving, alongside cultural connection and guidance from Elders.



Connor Baker
TSIMSHIAN

Connor is a recent high school graduate who participated in several ACCESS programs, including Job Club and driving lessons, where he developed valuable life and employment skills.

Through his dedication both academically and athletically, Connor has been accepted to the University of British Columbia on a football scholarship. His achievements reflect a strong commitment to personal growth and perseverance.

Connor plans to pursue a degree in Political Science, with the goal of building a meaningful career in public service and contributing to his community.



Natalie Martinez-Sangwais
SAKIMAY FIRST NATIONS

Natalie is a Grade 12 student who has actively participated in multiple ACCESS-funded programs, demonstrating a strong commitment to her education and future career.

She is currently enrolled in a Health Care Assistant certificate program through Vancouver Community College, allowing her to begin her career pathway early while earning credits toward her Dogwood Diploma. Her dedication to both her studies and hands-on training highlights her determination to succeed in the healthcare field.

After graduating high school, Natalie plans to continue her education and pursue a career in nursing, where she hopes to make a positive impact on the lives of others.



Carsten Cossette
MASSETT BAND, HAIDA GWAI

Carsten successfully completed Automotive Service Technician level 1 through the Youth Train in Trades program with VSB in affiliation with Vancouver Community College and will return for level 2 in fall 2026.

"When I found out about the trades program and there was an opportunity to become a mechanic, it was an easy decision."

ACCESS helped me with driving lessons and I was able to pass my road test on the first try. ACCESS helped me with the books and supplies I needed to enroll in the Level 1 class and I was able to pass level 1 with 86%. I recently competed in the Skilled Trades competition, I won gold medal at the regional competition and participated in the provincials.



ACCESS Trades

The Trades department provides access to training and apprenticeship services for the urban Indigenous community in Greater Vancouver. We partner with certified training providers and employers to offer the best opportunities for our Indigenous clients.

Funded through the Federal Skills & Partnership Fund, ISETS, and Seaspan, our programs offer wrap around support to increase the success rates of our clients. ACCESS recognized early the importance of certified training to ensure our clients are equally skilled as they enter the ever-competitive job market.

In 2025-26 we sponsored 19 programs with our training partners at BCIT, UAPIC, EJTC and Skillplan and in collaboration with other ACCESS departments.

With funding from Seaspan, we provided high school students with trades samplers to explore various trades through one- to two-day firsthand experiences. We hope these introductions will encourage students to pursue careers in the trades and even work at Seaspan in the future building ships as part of the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSP). The NSP will provide generations of families with high paying long-term employment.

The year started with a slow down in the demand for skilled workers in some trades as contractors were waiting for new projects to start but it quickly picked up again with hires at Seaspan, through BC Infrastructure Benefits projects, Ideal Welders, ACCESS Metal Products, Evergreen Sheet Metal, Piedmont Sheet Metal, Marcon, South Fraser Station Partners, Skylink Group, Enersolv, KMI, Lantech Fabrication, Fabwell Industries, Viking Fire Protection, PCL, Trimac Welding & Fabrication, Prism Marine, Local 97, CIMS, Georgia Mechanical, and Modern Niagara to name a few.

Jobs for our Electrical students remained steady all year supported by the Electrical Joint Training

Committee & IBEW213 and employer partners Houle Electric, Sasco, Western Pacific, Mott Electric, Seaspan, Plan Group, and Ainsworth. We are grateful for their continued support of our Pathway to Electrical program graduates.

Many of our graduates who achieved their Red Seal certification go on to related careers, we recently met up with a new employer and former ACCESS plumbing client now Red Seal, who owns Reds Plumbing. He is interested in hiring one of our current graduates. Giving back to the community that supported one's journey is meaningful, and we encourage our students to leverage their trade skills toward future roles in teaching, supervision, or entrepreneurship.

The staff in the Trades Department want to acknowledge the success of 2025-26 trainees who complete their programs and the apprentices who achieved Red Seal Certification in their trade.

The skills our students gain from these programs make it possible for them to achieve long-term employment and allow them to create and maintain strong ties with their urban community where their families will grow and prosper.



649
ACTIVE
APPRENTICES

189
RED SEAL
CERTIFIED

41
BRIDGEWATCH
RATED

19
JOURNEYPerson
CERTIFIED

15%
APPRENTICES AND
JOURNEY PEOPLE
ARE WOMEN



Deekon Healy

CARPENTER APPRENTICE

Deekon is from the Blood Tribe Nation in Alberta. Deekon represents the kind of hardworking and driven individual that strengthens both the construction industry and his community. His achievements are something to be proud of and they give him a solid foundation for a successful career in carpentry.

Throughout his training, Deekon demonstrated a level of commitment that set him apart. After finishing a full day of classroom and shop instruction he continued his day with a construction job at BCIT working four hours each day after class. Balancing school and work is no small task.

He is now currently working for BCIB where he is excelling in his trade and gaining hours toward his apprentice.



Daniel Pavlic

ELECTRICAL APPRENTICE

Daniel Pavlic is proud member of the Musqueam Nation. When Daniel entered the ACCESS Electrical Program in 2020 he was looking for more than a job; he wanted to build a stable career. Daniel committed himself to learning the trade and creating new opportunities for himself and his family. Daniel attended school at EJTC, and through dedication, perseverance, and support from ACCESS, Daniel achieved his Red Seal Certification. Reflecting on his journey, he encourages others to trust themselves and take the first step, noting that he only wishes he had started in the trades sooner.

“I am so happy I get to use my knowledge again and be recognized for it. So many happy tears. Now life is finally coming back together.”

- RACHEL FIFI

Rachel Fifi

RED SEAL JOINER & CABINETMAKER

Rachel is a member of the Nisga'a Nation. Rachel began her journey in a Try a Trades for Women which lead to her signing up for the ACCESS sponsored Joinery Program BCIT. The program began in October of 2007 and wrote and passed her Red Seal exam in 2011. She completed the hours she needed for Red Seal Certification in 2026.

During her apprenticeship journey Rachel stopped to have three babies. Despite her responsibilities of raising three small children Rachel continued to work and collect hours the hours she needed and complete her Red Seal in 2026.

Rachel recently returned to a position with Immanu'El Cabinets.

Rachel said, “There are not enough words to truly express how grateful I am to have a trade that will take care of me and my babies.”



Hannah Lozinski

RED SEAL METAL FABRICATOR

Hannah was uncertain about a career path so she contacted ACCESS for career support. Her brother told her about the Metal Fabrication program being sponsored by ACCESS at BCIT. She was drawn to the trades as she liked hands-on work plus the idea of strong earning potential, growth, and job stability. She received support from ACCESS in preparing for BCIT through resume and cover letter writing, bursary applications, and personal development. Hannah has now completed Level 3 training, passed her Red Seal exam, and is completing the required hours for full certification. She now works at Intercontinental Truck Body building custom truck bodies, trailers, enclosures, and specialized equipment. ACCESS played a major role in making this outcome possible. Congratulations Hannah!



ACCESS

Indigenous Skills 4 Success (IS4S)

ACCESS-IS4S continues to remove employment barriers for Indigenous learners by delivering targeted training grounded in the 9 Skills for Success framework, including reading, writing, numeracy, communication, and collaboration. Our approach builds on each learner's strengths while providing culturally grounded, holistic support to prepare them for sustainable employment and long-term careers.

In 2025–2026, IS4S programming spanned multiple trades and sectors, delivering a range of pre-apprenticeship and skills development programs. These included Building Manager (VCC), Welding Foundations (UAPIC), Pipefitting Foundations (UAPIC), Carpentry (BCIT), Metal Fabrication, Tower Crane and Rigging (IOUE), and Ironworker (BCIT). Through these programs, learners gained hands-on experience, industry-recognized certifications, and exposure to high-demand sectors such as skilled trades, infrastructure, and marine industries.

A key strength of IS4S is our integrated approach across all ACCESS departments. We work collaboratively with Employment Advisors, Trades Training, and support staff to ensure learners receive wraparound services throughout their journey. From recruitment and assessment to training, job placement, and retention support, this coordinated approach helps remove barriers and ensures each learner is supported every step of the way.

Guided by a vision of building local capacity, empowering Indigenous leadership, and sustaining change for generations, IS4S continues to evolve beyond traditional workforce development. Our work is rooted in creating culturally safe learning environments that restore confidence, strengthen leadership pathways, and support long-term

community capacity. This approach reflects a shift from transactional programming toward relational, community-driven systems change.

IS4S remains committed to developing training pathways that are culturally grounded, aligned with high-demand sectors, and focused on long-term impact. By embedding mentorship, skills development, and leadership opportunities into our programs, we support not only employment outcomes but long-term career development and generational sustainability.

Through intentional program design and delivery, IS4S contributes to strengthening Indigenous participation in the workforce while supporting communities to lead their own economic growth. This is not just workforce development; it is self-determination in action.



Over the 2025–2026 reporting period, Indigenous Skills 4 Success (IS4S) delivered 11 cohort-based training programs, supporting 130 Indigenous learners across a range of high-demand sectors. Of those participants, 113 successfully completed their programs, resulting in an overall completion rate of 87%.

Program outcomes continue to demonstrate strong success, particularly within trades-focused pathways. Welding, Carpentry, Ironworker, and Piping Foundations cohorts achieved exceptional results, including multiple programs with 100% completion rates. These outcomes reflect the strength of culturally grounded delivery, industry partnerships, and wrap-around supports that meet learners where they are.

In addition, programs such as Bridge Watch and Building Manager highlight IS4S's ability to support diverse career pathways. Overall, these results demonstrate IS4S's continued impact in preparing Indigenous learners for employment, further training, and long-term career stability.



Richard Brass
SAPOTAWEYAK CREE NATION

Richard Brass, from Winnipeg, joined the Indigenous Skills 4 Success (IS4S) program while living in Langley, to improve his skills and create better opportunities for his future.

Encouraged by friends who had completed the program, Richard committed fully and focused on building confidence, communication, and problem-solving skills to prepare for employment and further training.

Through the program, he grew both personally and professionally, gaining confidence and valuable workplace skills. He now feels prepared to attend BCIT's Marine Campus and pursue his next steps.

Richard encourages future learners to stay focused, show up, and remain open and dedicated. His journey reflects the power of commitment, self-belief, and growth.



Shakoia
TOQUAHT TERRITORY

Shakoia, from Victoria, joined the Indigenous Skills for Success (IS4S) program while living in North Vancouver to build skills for her goal of working on the water and preparing for BCIT's Marine Campus.

She approached the program with openness and commitment, gaining confidence and clarity around her values. With consistent support, Shakoia overcame her fear of math and developed the skills needed to move forward in her training.

Now confident in her path, she believes her goals are achievable through persistence and dedication. Her advice to others is to show up with a positive attitude, stay open to learning, and trust the process.

Shakoia's journey reflects the power of perseverance, confidence, and culturally grounded support.

Laureen Watts
NISGA'A AND KWAKIUTL

Laureen, 28, from Vancouver, joined ACCESS-IS4S to create new opportunities and build a more stable future for her family.

Inspired by her partner's experience in the Carpentry program, she enrolled in Indigenous Skills for Success seeking direction, stronger job readiness, and long-term employment. Though uncertain at first, she was determined to move forward.

Through the program, Laureen gained confidence, clarified her goals, and discovered new possibilities in a supportive, culturally grounded environment.

Today, she works with Sheway, continuing to grow while supporting her community. Reflecting on her journey, she says, "Just take that first step. Even if you're unsure, showing up is a big deal—ACCESS will meet you where you are."

Laureen's story is one of courage, growth, and taking that first step toward lasting change.



Chantel Williams

Chantel Williams, 39, originally from Mount Currie, BC, and now residing in Port Coquitlam, joined the Indigenous Skills for Success (IS4S) Tower Crane Operator program with a goal of creating new opportunities for herself within the construction industry. Having worked in labour and traffic control positions, Chantel understood the challenges of seasonal employment and was looking for a pathway to more stable, long-term career opportunities.

Although she initially thought being away from work for eight weeks would be difficult, Chantel quickly found the time went by faster than expected. She appreciated the small class environment, which made it easier to get to know her classmates and build supportive relationships. Through the program, she strengthened her workplace skills, built confidence, and gained a greater understanding of the opportunities available within the skilled trades.

The support from instructors and staff played an important role in her success. She valued sharing notes, ideas, and support with others in the program.



ACCESS *Programs*

The Programs department leads the development and delivery of responsive, high-impact training initiatives for Urban Indigenous people across Metro Vancouver. Working in partnership with Indigenous organizations and public training providers, these programs are designed to create meaningful pathways into employment and post-secondary education for growing opportunities for our community members.

Guided by community needs and labour market demand, our project-based approach supports participants in gaining the skills, confidence, and experience needed to succeed. Programming includes group skills training, pre-employment initiatives, employer-driven training, and summer student employment opportunities, all aimed at strengthening long-term career outcomes and advancing economic participation.

“I received my wings, a dream I once thought was out of reach. This moment is not only my achievement, but a reflection of the strength, resilience, and prayers carried by our ancestors. They gave us roots so we could rise, and now it is our time to soar. To anyone doubting themselves: remember that every step you take honours those before you, and every dream you chase makes the path wider for those yet to come. Believe in yourself because you are capable of flying higher than you ever imagined.” — DEANDRA C. LEGAULT-TALLIO





Nicole Johnson
OJIBWAY

Nicole, 22, from Rolling River First Nation now living in Vancouver, discovered ACCESS through Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week and former ACCESS Global Makeup students studying at Blanche Macdonald. Inspired by the success and growth she witnessed in other Indigenous artists, Nicole joined the Barbering program eager to build a future in the beauty industry. Through the training, she expanded her knowledge and creativity in hair artistry, gained hands-on experience, and built a strong network of peers and mentors. Since graduating, Nicole has secured full-time employment at Fringe Hair Design, where she specializes in barbering, long haircuts, and hair coloring. She's grateful to ACCESS for providing not only career training, but also supports such as tuition coverage, living allowance, bus passes, meals, laptops, cultural workshops, and guidance from support coaches. After previously relying on student loans, Nicole is especially grateful to have completed the Barbering program debt-free while launching a successful new career.

Jeanarah Allan-Austin
OJIBWAY

Jeanarah, 25, is from Long Plains First Nation. She discovered the ACCESS Office Administration Employment Training program through social media while upgrading courses at Native Education College. After recognizing its alignment with her interest in computer studies and desire for a fresh start, she applied at the last minute. Jeanarah describes the program as transformative, helping her build confidence, strengthen her computer and employment skills, and form meaningful connections with peers and staff at both ACCESS and NEC. She credits the encouragement and guidance she received throughout the training as key to her growth and success. As a top student, she was offered a practicum placement that led to employment with ACCESS Trades, an opportunity she accepted. Jeanarah shares that ACCESS opened doors she once thought were out of reach and played a major role in advancing her education and career, and she continues to recommend the program as a supportive, life-changing pathway for others.



Deandra Legault-Tallio
NUXALK AND CREE

Deandra, 23, from Edmonton, acknowledges the ACCESS Flight Attendant program with helping her achieve her dream career as a flight attendant with Air Canada. Encouraged by her mother to apply, Deandra joined the program because it aligned with her goals of traveling, meeting new people, and building a long-term career in the airline industry. Through ACCESS, she gained confidence, strengthened her communication and customer service skills, and learned to step outside of her comfort zone. The program helped her become more independent and showed her that she was capable of achieving more than she thought possible. Since completing the training, Deandra has had the opportunity to travel to many countries while gaining valuable hands-on experience in her field. "ACCESS is an incredible organization that truly changes lives," Deandra shares. "The staff are encouraging and dedicated to helping participants achieve their goals. The program gave me the confidence, skills, and support I needed to succeed, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to be part of it."

Andrew Edwards
LIL'WAT NATION

Andrew, 55, discovered the ACCESS Building Manager program after visiting the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society in search of employment opportunities. Through ACCESS and Vancouver Community College, Andrew gained valuable skills in preventive building management, communication, leadership, and vendor management. He learned that success comes from being proactive rather than reactive. The training helped him reduce stress, build confidence, and better navigate the modern workforce while balancing both cultural and professional responsibilities. Andrew says the program changed his life by giving him the tools to stay ahead of challenges instead of constantly "putting out fires." Today, he encourages others with the message: Success is not final, Failure is not fatal, it is the courage to continue that counts. Believe in yourself and strive for the stars and never give up on your dreams.



ACCESS *Bladerunners*

ACCESS BladeRunners is a community-driven employment initiative rooted in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and dedicated to growing opportunities for youth facing barriers to employment, particularly Indigenous participants aged 18 to 30. Since 1994, the program has helped tens of thousands of young people across B.C. build meaningful pathways into the construction industry.

At its core, BladeRunners connects youth with the training, support, and employment relationships they need to succeed. Participants receive life skills development, job-readiness preparation, health and safety certifications, resources, and ongoing individualized follow-up support. This wraparound approach helps youth overcome barriers and move forward with confidence.

The program also recognizes that employment success depends on more than training alone.

Participants can access essential supports such as housing referrals, education upgrades, meals, work attire, transportation, and other foundational services that help create stability as they enter the workforce.

Beyond its core employment program, ACCESS BladeRunners operates BladeRunner’s Place, a supportive housing initiative offering 38 subsidized units for graduates ready to transition into independent living. This reflects the program’s commitment to supporting long-term growth, independence, and community connection.

With support from the Province of British Columbia, specifically the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, Service Canada, and valued employers such as Bearclaw Traffic Management, Aecon Group, and Siber Facade Group, ACCESS BladeRunners continues to stay rooted in community while growing opportunities for the next generation.



“BladeRunners’ impact extends beyond Greater Vancouver, with programming and partnerships active in 14 communities throughout B.C., including Vancouver Island and Northern B.C. This growth is made possible through strong collaboration with local partners, employers, and funders who share a commitment to empowering youth.”





Braedon Burke

Rooted in the strength of his Squamish Nation community and determined to grow his future, 21-year-old Braedon Burke came to BladeRunners ready to build on his construction labour experience. Through the program, he gained the nine essential safety tickets needed to enter the construction sector with confidence.

That opportunity quickly took root. Braedon secured work with Ventana Construction on the Native Health Authority's new office in North Vancouver, and has since advanced to a role with Ventana's sister company, Seagate, in the Northwest Territories. His new skills now allow him to travel and work across Canada, with plans to begin his carpentry apprenticeship soon.

"The Vancouver BladeRunners Program gave me a launchpad for my career by providing the certificates I need to excel in a safe and productive manner. Everyone was incredibly supportive and fun to be around."



Eljia Thompson

Rooted in his Musqueam First Nation community and ready to create new opportunities, Eljia Thompson joined BladeRunners in July 2025 after a period of unemployment and personal uncertainty. Referred by our ACCESS Employment Services department, Eljia saw the program as a steppingstone toward certificates, support, and meaningful employment.

Through BladeRunners, Eljia gained practical training and a deeper understanding of healthy relationships, the importance of asking for help, and the value of staying connected. After completing the program, he secured a labourer position with BEL Contracting, where he has become known as a reliable, hardworking team player.

Today, Eljia feels more confident, less stressed, and focused on building better habits and long-term stability. His commitment to his job, himself, and his future continues to grow.

"BladeRunners helped me gain stability in life again and has given me the opportunity for growth."

Kaidence Sam

Rooted in determination and guided by a vision for a better future, 19-year-old Kaidence Sam of the Samahquam Nation made the courageous decision to grow her career in a new direction. While working in a kitchen and earning just enough to cover her living expenses, Kaidence set her sights on the construction sector and enrolled in BladeRunners in Vancouver.

Each day, she travelled two hours by SkyTrain and on foot to attend the program, maintaining perfect attendance and showing remarkable commitment. Through BladeRunners, Kaidence earned the certifications needed to open new doors and soon secured an entry-level labour position with Dwelly Prefabs in Maple Ridge, BC.

Now earning significantly higher wages, Kaidence is thriving in her new career and is on track to begin an apprenticeship after her probation period. Her long-term goal is to become a Red Seal carpenter.



Mathew Wurcherer

Rooted in resilience and supported by a community that continued to believe in him, Mathew Wurcherer of Beausoleil First Nation found his way back to stability through BladeRunners. After first completing the program in 2013, Mathew returned in 2026 to renew his skills, reconnect with the trades, and rebuild his path in carpentry.

Through BladeRunners' training, industry connections, and ongoing support, Mathew secured employment with Skylink Guideway Partners and became a member of CMAW Local 1995 in carpentry and scaffolding. For Mathew, the program offered more than job readiness, it provided belonging, encouragement, and the resources needed to move forward.

With close to a year of sobriety, Mathew is grateful for the opportunity to rebuild his life and acknowledges the support he got from the BladeRunner's program for the forward movement and success.



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. Established in 2007 by the founders of ACCESS, and supported by ACCESS, USF ensures that all funds raised go directly to its purpose, with no administration fees. United in this mission, the Foundation works to expand philanthropic resources that create pathways to education, employment training, and self-reliance. This includes secondary and post-secondary scholarships and bursaries, as well as community-based programs and projects that help individuals move from poverty toward sustainable independence.

In a relatively short time, USF has strengthened its vision, built leadership, and deepened its connection to community—engaging supporters who are inspired by its purpose and contribute in meaningful

ways. Each year, USF supports initiatives such as the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre's Children's Back-to-School Backpack Program, ensuring children are equipped for the school year, and the Children's Christmas Party, where families receive food hampers and gifts. Signature fundraising events like the Giving Tuesday Chili and Bannock Lunch-To-Go, along with the Annual USF Charity Golf Classic Tournament, continue to grow opportunities while staying firmly grounded in community.



Since 2010 we have provided more than 243 scholarships totaling over \$222,000





Jayden Taggart

HAIDA GWAI

Jayden is a graduate from Byrne Secondary High School in Burnaby.

“To be chosen for this award means so much to me. I’d like to thank Urban Spirit Foundation for selecting me as their 2025 scholarship recipient. Being an Indigenous leadership student at Byrne Creek has opened my eyes to the possibility of staying connected to my ancestral roots in the city. In addition, working in peer tutoring further constructed my ability to work with youth. These are two big aspects in life that no money can pay for. With this scholarship money I hope I can become a Social Worker and continue helping the Indigenous youth in the lower mainland.”



Abigail Lee

CREE, COLD LAKE FIRST NATION

Abigail received the USF Health Science Grant, and she is a first-generation university student at the University of British Columbia, pursuing a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. She is of Cree descent from Cold Lake First Nation and grew up in Coaldale, Alberta. She previously earned a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the University of Alberta. At UBC, Abigail supports fellow students as Chair of the Indigenous Pharmacy Student Collegium while continuing to deepen her connection to her culture.

Driven by a lifelong desire to help others, Abigail has combined her passion for science with her commitment to community care. She has participated in a pilot program focused on urban, land-based learning in collaboration with Indigenous communities, including traditional medicine workshops, cedar harvesting, and sharing circles.

Abigail is dedicated to providing culturally safe care and aspires to practice pharmacy in a rural or Indigenous community.

Priscilla Lawson-Pires

HEILTSUK AND NISGA’A

Recipient of the USF Health Science Grant

In 2025, she completed medical school at UBC and began her residency in the UBC Family Medicine program in Vancouver. She is grateful to train in Bella Bella and the Nisga’a Valley during her two years of residency.

“I am deeply appreciative and humbled to be supported by the Urban Spirit Foundation during my residency training. This support allows me to continue giving back to my communities, which is why I chose to become a doctor.”



Leona Scarff (“Lou”)

NISGA’A, TLINGIT, AND SKWXWÚ7MESH
ÚXWUMIXW

Leona (“Lou”) received the USF Top Student Award upon graduating from the Global Makeup Program at Blanche Macdonald, recognizing their outstanding academic achievement and dedication. Inspired by a passion for makeup artistry that began at age 13, Lou has built a strong reputation for creativity and excellence, developing their skills through years of self-directed learning and hands-on experience with bridal, prom, and drag makeup clients.

The program strengthened Lou’s confidence and inspired them to continue growing in their field. Their goal is to bring together artistry, culture, and community through their work. As Lou shares, “Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week has been the dream. I love creating beautiful looks and helping people feel beautiful in their skin.”



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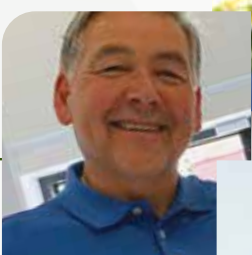
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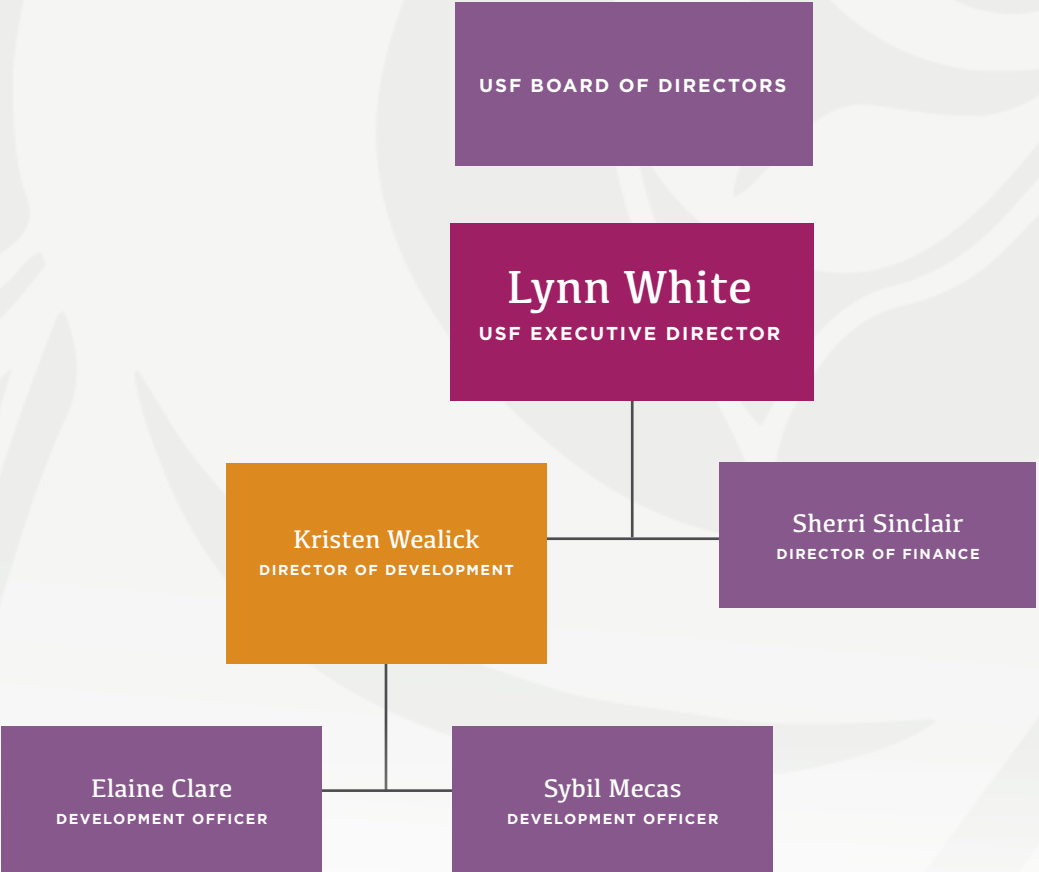


Samantha Singbeil
USF DIRECTOR
FortisBC



Carrie Humchitt
USF DIRECTOR
Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society

Organization Chart



We would like to thank our donors



2025-26 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, 2026

	2026	2025
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 2,295,325	\$ 1,990,384
Accounts receivable (Note 5)	959,833	899,782
GST receivable	54,141	332,350
Prepaid expenses	197,802	123,412
	3,507,101	3,345,928
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (Note 3)	3,739,599	3,787,550
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 7,246,700	\$ 7,133,478
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 152,096	\$ 385,727
Wages payable	64,401	56,842
Employee deductions payable	16,185	15,090
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	1,686,767	1,417,997
Current portion of mortgage payable (Note 6)	39,449	36,247
	1,958,898	1,911,903
MORTGAGE PAYABLE (Note 6)	1,205,149	1,245,450
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,164,047	3,157,353
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted contributions	1,621,129	1,489,747
Invested in capital assets	2,461,524	2,486,378
	4,082,653	3,976,125
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 7,246,700	\$ 7,133,478

LEASE COMMITMENTS (Note 7)

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