



First Nations youth
Realizing their possibilities



Diversity in the trades
Changing common stereotypes

**MEDIA
PLANET**

June 2013

REMOVING BARRIERS

3

FACTS
ABOUT CANADA'S
ABORIGINAL
POPULATION

GIVING A VOICE TO THE VOICELESS

Demand is heating up and employers are looking for candidates; **Jordan Rain** is just one example of an Aboriginal youth who is **setting the bar higher** in hopes of a better future.

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CHALLENGES



PHOTO: WOMEN BUILDING FUTURES

FACT
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FROM 1996, THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION HAS GROWN BY 45%, WHICH IS 6 TIMES FASTER THAN THE NON-ABORIGINAL POPULATION

There is a **need to engage young women and Aboriginal youth** in study and career choices they may have otherwise overlooked. For some, **exercising the right to an education** can be a formidable obstacle. It is vital that we ensure youth have the **necessary tools to prepare them** for and connect them to the wealth of options that await them.

Improve employment opportunities by knowing your options

Oppportunity doesn't always knock. Sometimes it's on the doorstep waiting for you to open the door. That's certainly the case for the current and future generations of young Albertans including Aboriginal people, women exploring non-traditional roles, new Canadians and those looking to enter the workforce in a meaningful way. This publication speaks to the employment opportunities available to the various segments of the youth population, and how the path to a great career starts with insight, initiative, and encouragement.

Barriers to employment
At the outset the situation looks pretty bleak - 14.5 percent unemployment across Canada for those aged 15-24; 30 percent of high school students leaving school without a diploma; university graduates unable to find work in their chosen field; and more than 900,000 people under the age of 30 not employed, going to school or training.
Contrast those statistics with the fact that in February 2013 there were 210,000 job vacancies across the country. Alberta faces a serious shortage of skilled workers as the province's economy continues to grow. By 2021 there could be more than 114,000 jobs in need of workers to fill them, mostly in technology, health services, and the trades.



Jerry Heck,
Vice President,
Stakeholder Relations and Growth,
CAREERS: The Next Generation

Despite the large number of young people available for work, there are many barriers preventing them from entering the workforce or making the leap to full-time employment.
What's preventing our young generation from opening the door?

Consider this:
■ Some young people haven't completed high school while many employers need workers with some form of post secondary education
■ Many with a high school diploma believe a university education is the only way to improve their employment prospects
■ Society often places more value on a university education than training for a career in trades or technology
■ Many career influencers are unaware of the labour market information about workforce demands, skills supply and demand, and the tremendous career paths available
■ Minority groups like Aboriginal youth, single parents, young pe-

ople with disabilities, new Canadians, and youth who live in remote or rural parts of the country have their own unique obstacles that prevent them from participating in the workplace
■ Stereotypes often prevent youth from pursuing studies or training for careers in non-traditional roles
■ There is a lack of awareness and contextual application of key employability skills employers demand today and in the future, and how those skills can be attained
■ Employers are not investing nearly as much in training their staff and new employees as they did a decade ago
■ There are not enough workplace opportunities for youth as interns to discover their passion

Internship leads to better career choices
Youth who are provided with workplace applied internship opportunities make wise career choices, and gain the upper hand when it comes to having the skills employers demand. A recent employer study showed that 86 percent of employers would offer full-time employment to an intern as compared to another applicant. Fortunately these barriers to participating in the workforce are not as daunting as they once were. A concerted effort by community leaders, students, educators, and employers is ensuring that the next generation of workers is prepared for the skilled careers of today and tomorrow.

The secret to success is collaboration
They are supported by provincial and municipal governments, learning institutions, industry, and businesses - both small and large - and through collaborative initiatives from organizations like Skills Canada, Women Building Futures, and Careers: The Next Generation.
Training for skilled jobs in technology and trades is an investment in the future and critical to a robust economy and economic growth. That's the opportunity for anyone interested in rewarding and meaningful work.
Knowing your career options is the first step. In the pages ahead you'll learn about the many opportunities to help you start a great career, and the people - like you - who thought enough about their future to take the leap and participate.
Whether you're a student looking at your next move after high school; a new Canadian entering the workforce; a teacher or mentor who inspires; an employer with specific skill needs to build business certainty; or a parent with a child mapping a career future, we all share a role in developing a skilled and flexible workforce for generations to come.
Opportunity is waiting for someone with interest, focus and motivation. Open the door!

JERRY HECK
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Transforming the face of industry in Canada



"By engaging with Aboriginal communities and hosting information sessions and career decision making workshops, we have seen a dramatic rise in the number of Aboriginal women who want to learn about career opportunities in construction."

Anna Wowchuk "Ponokaakii",
Aboriginal Engagement Manager, Women Building Futures

It is estimated that 40 per cent of the tradespeople currently working in Canada will retire over the next decade. The Construction Sector Council projects that over the next eight years, almost 40,000 construction workers will be needed

to handle growth and retirement in Alberta. That translates into great career opportunities for women in construction.
Women are interested and they can do the job
"Women are more than capable of

doing the work," said Ron Genereux, Vice President, Major Projects, Sunco Energy. "Anybody that's ignoring half of the workforce is doing themselves a disfavoured." More and more Alberta companies are looking to women for building their skilled-trades workforce to meet the demands of today and tomorrow.
However, barriers do still exist - the availability of housing, particularly for women with children, is often seen as a major barrier for women seeking to pursue educational and training opportunities.
Collaborative efforts between community organizations, employers, and government help to serve Aboriginal communities and provide Aboriginal women with train-

ing and housing to prepare them for careers in the trades. Increasing the participation of Aboriginal women should remain a key strategic priority.
Removing barriers, instilling hope
Continuing to provide new opportunities for women in non-traditional roles will not only have a profound change for these women's lives, it will have a long-lasting and positive effect on diversifying Alberta's workforce.

WOMEN BUILDING FUTURES
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WE RECOMMEND



Roberta Jamieson
Enriching Canada through indigenous education

"There is no shortage in talent, but there is an immense shortage in resources to realize that potential."

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The changing role of the young population in shaping northern Alberta

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BREAKING BARRIERS



Kolby Nepoose, 26
Apprentice crane operator and member of the Samson Cree Nation
PHOTO: MAMMOET

What made you choose trades?
1 My stepdad's a crane operator and he had a woman apprentice with him. I saw she was doing good for herself and she came from a dead-end job the way I did.
What were your challenges?
2 Moving from the reserve. Just actually getting the courage to do it, not knowing if I was going to succeed. My parents were very supportive, and my daughter was the reason the I wanted to do it because I knew on the reserve she wasn't going to get the life I wanted her to have.

Are there any challenges you face as a First Nations woman on the job?
3 No. I say what's on my mind. Whenever I feel I'm being mistreated I'll do something about it instead of letting it roll off my shoulders.
What can employers and colleagues do to help women in trades?
4 Don't underestimate me because I'm a woman. I get that sometimes and I prove them wrong.

KIMBERLEY FEHR
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The Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister for Status of Women, accompanied by students at Women Building Futures, called for projects that will increase opportunities for women in non-traditional roles
PHOTO: STATUS OF WOMEN

Government leaders taking action to increase women in non-traditional roles

While women play a key role in Canada's economic success, representing nearly half the Canadian workforce, they are still under-represented in many occupations. This is especially true in the trades, science, engineering, and technology. In 2009, women represented just 22.3 percent of Canadians with occupations in engineering, mathematics, and natural sciences. In 2012, women represented only 4 percent of those working in construction trades, and 20 percent of those working in primary industries such as forestry, mining, oil, and gas. All too often, barriers discourage women from greater workforce participation. Removing these barriers and making



"We know that investing in women's prosperity is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do."

Rona Ambrose
Minister, Status of Women

Canada's labour market more adaptable for women will help ensure our long-term economic growth.

Connecting Canadians with jobs

Economic Action Plan 2013 announced a number of measures to better connect Canadians with job opportunities. These measures will contribute to increased representation of

women in all occupations, including skilled trades and other non-traditional occupations, many of which are experiencing skills shortages.

As Minister for Status of Women, I am proud that our government recently issued a call for proposals to solicit projects to increase the participation of women in non-traditional roles. We are looking to fund projects with unions, trade associations,

post-secondary institutions and the private sector to get more women working.

Helping women succeed

Our government has already taken initiative to increase women's workforce participation in non-traditional fields by supporting the work of organizations like Women Building Futures, which helps women succeed in the construction trades through training, employment assistance, and mentorship. Its graduates become first-rate trades people who can provide companies with new skills and competencies.

We have also worked together with the Hypatia Association on a project that increases the participation of women in trades and technology training programs and workplaces through a mentoring network.

Canada's prosperity linked to skill development

Canada's well-trained and highly educated workforce must remain one of our key advantages for competing successfully in today's global economy. It is essential for Canada's long-term prosperity that women and girls have the opportunity to develop their skills, further their education, and advance their careers in all sectors of our economy.

Our government is committed to empowering more women to succeed and prosper in non-traditional jobs. We know that investing in women's prosperity is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do.

RONA AMBROSE

editorial@mediaplanet.com

GETTING THINGS OUT OF A TIGHT CORNER



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INSPIRATION

Question: In an economy that is hungry for workers, how do we help engage and motivate youth to grasp the opportunities that await them?

Answer: The youth of today must understand their endless potential – this will not only improve their economic and social prosperity, but will contribute to the development of a much-needed diversified and robust labour force.

Seeing is believing: helping First Nations youth realize their possibilities



Jordan Rain (left) and April Papequash lead by example, setting goals for themselves and raising the bar higher.
PHOTO: (LEFT) CAREERS: THE NEXT GENERATION, ABORIGINAL HEALTH CAREERS STRATEGY GROUP

“We’ve got to start looking at this as not just a problem, but a great opportunity.”

Eric Newell,
Retired oil executive,
Founder and Board Chair of CAREERS: The Next Generation

Every single time a First Nations intern comes to the Imagination Group’s Calgary office, the same thing happens. “They see our showroom, reception area, boardroom, offices and a warehouse - and they’re in shock,” says the company’s president Colby Delorme, who is Métis. “It usually takes a day or two and then they’ll say, ‘So you own this?’”

Certainly the Imagination Group is impressive, with a promotional products company featuring Aboriginal artists, a consulting branch and the service Authentically Aboriginal, which certifies Aboriginal art, but that’s not the point.

Success is catching

“The youths’ only understanding of what the world has to offer our people is this very small area in which they grew up in,” says Delorme. “It’s not just the reserves. It’s that they haven’t seen enough positive things even within their own extended families.”

The best part: “They realize someone in their community did it, so that must mean there’s an opportunity for them. That’s the most powerful thing, and I see it every time,” says Delorme.

The positive impact of mentorship

That’s why Delorme volunteered to create a new mentorship program called Influence: Inspiring Our Fu-

ture Leaders that will cater to third and fourth year Aboriginal students facing the crucial transition from university to the work world.

“Shared experience has been proven to have such a positive effect on people. It curbs the time it takes to learn things on your own and allows for someone to be that much more successful in a shorter period of time,” says Delorme, who worked with Bruce Randall, the CEO of the Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council to design the program.

A program like this thrives on collaboration, which is why they have been engaging government, Aboriginal organizers, community leaders, and employers every step of the way.

A skills solution

“Aboriginal youth are one of the greatest opportunities we’ve got,” says Eric Newell, a former oil executive and founder/Board Chair of CAREERS: The Next Generation, a non-profit that connects youth to careers in trades and health care through info days, summer camps, internships and more, and also caters to First Nations youth through its Aboriginal Youth Initiative.

Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing part of our population, he

notes.

“If we work towards getting Aboriginal unemployment down to what it is for non-Aboriginal youth, we could go a long way to solving the skills shortage in Canada, and Alberta,” says Newell. “We’ve got to start looking at this as not just a problem, but a great opportunity.”

Knowledge opens doors

April Papequash, 19, of Edmonton had the opportunity to tour hospitals as part of Careers’ Health Care internship program when she was in Grade 11.

“This program helped me see that there’s so much more to health care than just being a doctor. There were so many more things I could do,” she says. She still wants to be a doctor, but she has raised the bar higher. Now a first-year biology student at University of Alberta, she plans to become a surgeon.

A helping hand

Another Edmonton youth, Jordan Rain, 18, who started his Registered Apprenticeship Program in carpentry this year while still in Grade 12, was connected to his employer BDC Bulldozer Construction through Careers.

“By the time I’m 24, I’ll have my journeyman ticket,” he says. “You make a lot of money in the trades. You can build your own home, and that’s what I plan to do. I have a son, and I’m going to build him a treehouse.”

It’s not about giving Aboriginal youth a handout, stresses Newell. “It’s a hand up,” he says. “Education and economic opportunities are the great equalizers.”

Pick a purpose

Glen Armstrong, who is Métis, is a family physician in High Prairie. At the University of Alberta, he mentored other Aboriginal students. “I remember one guy saying, ‘My class is bigger than the reserve.’”

Armstrong also gives talks to high school classes on the reserves.

“I tell them, ‘You have to pick a purpose. It took me two tries to get into med school. I’m not the smartest guy. If I can do it, you can do it.’”

KIMBERLEY FEHR
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FACT
2

ALBERTA IS PRIVILEGED TO HAVE THE LARGEST, YOUNGEST AND FASTEST-GROWING ABORIGINAL POPULATION IN CANADA

Aboriginal girls: the untapped workforce.
PHOTO: WOMEN BUILDING FUTURES

Inspiring Albertan youth to lead future economic development

Without question, a highly skilled and diverse workforce is the engine that will drive innovation and economic development in Alberta.

As the fastest growing population, Alberta's Aboriginal youth have an important role to play in fueling this need. Early engagement in science, engineering, technology, and mathematics (STEM) education outreach programming is key to inspiring youth to fulfil their critical role as young professionals and community leaders and preparing them for the wealth of regional opportunities that will drive this province's future economy.



"We need to encourage [youth] to think critically and creatively, and give them the skills [they need]."

Jennifer Flanagan
President and CEO, Actua

Connect youth to real life development

If we are to raise a new generation of informed decision makers, community leaders, and innovators and entrepreneurs, we also need to connect Aboriginal youth to the real

life development that is happening around them. We need to encourage them to think critically and creatively, and give them the skills to become problem solvers and innovators. At the same time, we need to ensure that any education that

is provided is both culturally relevant and rooted in local traditional knowledge. No single strategy is going to make all this happen. A multi-sector approach involving industry and post-secondary institutions as purveyors of innovation and leading edge technology is extremely important. Equally important is the engagement of community leaders, Elders and other Aboriginal role models as purveyors of traditional knowledge and culture and an understanding of the significance of local development and its related challenges and opportunities.

Leading the way

As a national charity, Actua has twenty years of experience bringing

all sectors together to deliver transformational STEM programming to youth across Canada. Supported by industry leaders and working with community leaders, Elders and other Aboriginal role models, Aboriginal youth throughout the province are given the clear message that their future awaits them. But, it takes investment, time, persistence, and collaboration among educators, industry, government and communities - to create the next generation of change-makers, leading the way toward social and economic prosperity.

JENNIFER FLANAGAN
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Enriching Canada through indigenous education

First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth are one of Canada's most overlooked pools of unrealized potential to advance Canada's future. We are the fastest growing demographic group in Canada; [we are] also the one with the least financial resources to invest in the future, and regrettably, the group that is least likely even to graduate from high school. Every year thousands of intelligent, capable and motivated Indigenous youth in Canada find

"There is no shortage in talent, but there is an immense shortage in resources to realize that potential."

their dreams of training and higher education turn to disappointment because they are unable to pay the costs. The notion that Indigenous education is funded from the cradle



Roberta L. Jamieson,
President and CEO, Indspire

to the grave is a myth - this is an unforgivable squandering of a precious asset.

Opportunities to make a difference
Does better education funding lead to better futures for First Nation, Inuit and Métis youth? Is education the key to unlocking the tremendous potential of Indigenous youth? Absolutely! As more and more youth become role models, our youth will be inspired to follow their example. Role models such as Nikita Desjarlais from the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nations of the Northwest Territories, now a Petroleum Engineer Technologist; Daniel Bennett, an Inuk of La

brador, now an articling student; or Thalia Aspeslet, a Métis from Alberta, now a geophysicist. Canada has a remarkable opportunity to enrich the lives of Indigenous youth by investing in their education so that they can reach their dreams, contribute to their communities and boost the Canadian economy. We can't afford to let them down.

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NEWS



Diversity in the trades: great for both people and the economy

Imagine running a business in a sector that is facing a looming labour shortage, yet you only hire 10 percent of the potential workers that you could. Sound crazy? This is exactly what's been happening in the skilled trades, as women, Aboriginals, visible minorities, and the disabled have been chronically underrepresented.

Engage the local population

According to Sarah Watts-Rynard, Executive Director of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, workplace diversity is important for a host of reasons - including recognition of the client base, the location of many Aboriginal communities, and more dynamic work environments.

Think about automotive service: if half of the population are women, it only makes sense to have more women working as automom-

otive techs. Many of our resource based work sites are located in rural communities, and home to a large number of Aboriginal [people]. It only makes sense to engage the local population, rather than fly in a workforce from somewhere else. Many Aboriginals want to continue living in their communities, so location is not a barrier. "We don't advocate for diversity simply for the sake of a heterogeneous workplace," says Watts-Rynard, "but rather because it makes economic sense. There is an untapped workforce out there."

Changing common stereotypes

There are systemic barriers that industry is starting to address. This includes making workplaces more welcoming for women and other underrepresented groups, ensuring there are dedicated change rooms and washrooms for women, and making sure that young people

have the foundational skills and education to succeed, and changing stereotypes we have.

"We owe it to everyone to be inclusive," says Ray Massey, Chair of the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board. "Not every-



one has had the same opportunity. Some have dropped out of the education system, or have low employment. We need to find ways to engage these individuals and provide them with the tools to have fulfilling careers in the trades."

Creative solutions

One of the strategies being implemented in Alberta is something called, grow our own at home. This means removing barriers and finding creative solutions to encourage Albertans to consider a career in the

"We don't advocate for diversity simply for the sake of a heterogeneous workplace, but rather because it makes economic sense."

Sarah Watts-Rynard
Executive Director,
Canadian Apprenticeship Forum

trades. Scholarships, some directed to women and Aboriginals, are available for education and training. Another strategy is blended learning, where apprentices can access some education and training online, so they don't have to their com-

munities and their workplace for an extended period of time. This is of particular importance to the Aboriginal people, many of whom live in rural communities close to where tradespeople are needed in resource work.

Mike Deranger, an Albertan First Nations and owner of Derantech Welding, is one who sees first-hand the value of the trades for his people. "Young Aboriginals want to be engaged, but we need to remove the negative stereotype that we have of aboriginals," he says. "Across the country we have 300,000 Aboriginals under the age of 25. This is a huge untapped resource, and once they are trained they work hard and perform well." Deranger adds that mentoring is important and so is training Aboriginal workers to be more than labourers; we need to help them become skilled labourers.

KEN DONOHUE
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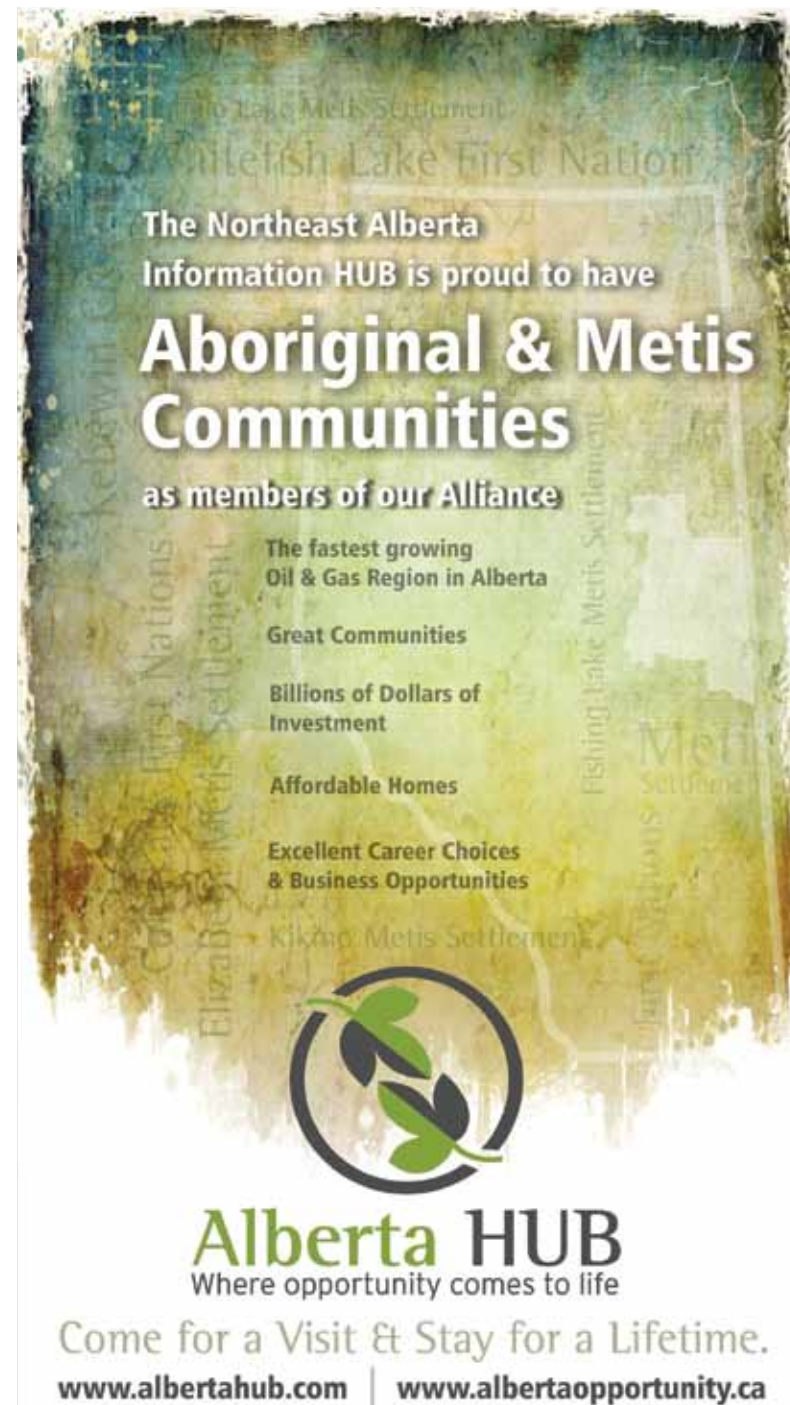
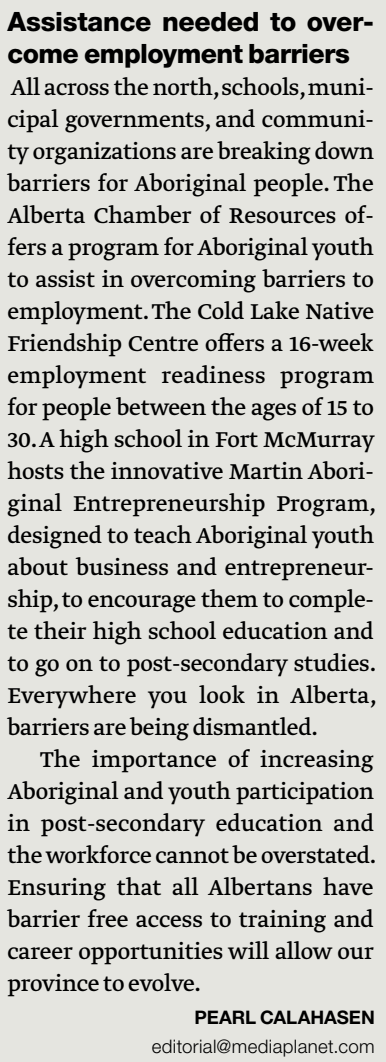
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While people reporting Aboriginal descent make up 6.7 percent of Alberta's population, this number is much higher in the northern and western areas of the province.

ANDREW SEALE
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SO YOU'VE READ REMOVING BARRIERS...NOW WHAT?

How to get involved in the Trades with **CAREERS: The Next Generation** In the High School Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)



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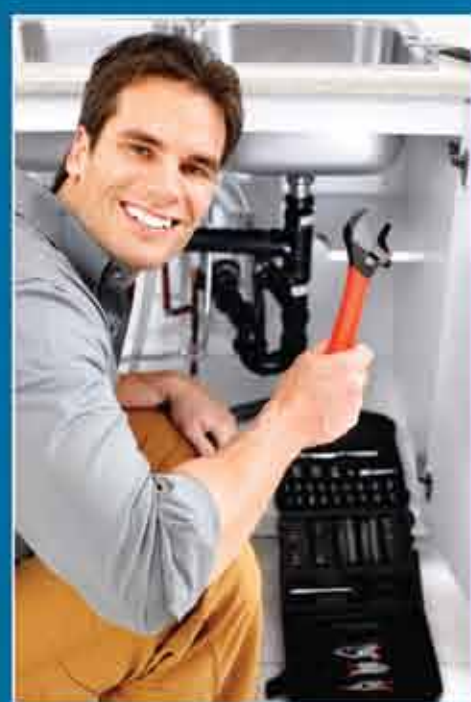
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