

Editor's Introduction

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Sharing our experiences in this section is a significant and culturally appropriate way to learn about building strong communities from our neighbours. We need strong communities so that there is a foundation for economic development that will drive dreams, plans and turn meaningful governance into a reality.

Inspiring our young people is not easy and encouraging business training as a career so they can help drive the community economy in a positive way is not usually on their radars. "Inspiring Aboriginal Youth Achievement" highlights inner city student Lenny McKay who was motivated by a caring teacher and used the experience he gained from an E-Spirit business plan competition to enroll in a university business program. Many young people from across the country are being mentored by teachers in this competition and learning about business opportunities.

Success is often achieved with great sacrifice and hardship. Perseverance is an incredible tool in this modern world for success. That is the story of turning a former residential school into a successful hotel that is captured in the story of St. Eugene Mission. A former residential school student shares the memories in the process of changing a place of loss and sadness into a vibrant business opportunity for the community. It is also a means of educating a clientele who have little or no knowledge of community history.

When stories of successful community development are shared, feelings of pride, community and hope are inspired. The three winners of last years' EDO awards are sharing those kinds of stories. Kendal Netmaker (Sweet Grass First Nation) is owner of

Neechi Gear, a socially conscious clothing brand that celebrates humour and culture for contemporary tastes. Grant Taibossigai, (M'Chigeeng First Nation) has built a foundation of sustainability in his community through such projects as Mother Earth Renewable Energy wind farm project. Finally, find out how remote Moricetown Band capitalized on their assets through a wholly-owned value added mill that embraces community values. Shared stories are meaningful in today's fast-paced world. It is about making connections for yourself and for your community.