



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 27, 2018**

**Slave Lake, Alberta**

#### **Indigenous Careers Explorers Academy provides Métis and First Nations youth with valuable work experience**

On Friday, August 10, the Indigenous Careers Explorers Academy celebrated the successful completion of 10 students in the intensive, five-week program. Northern Lakes College (NLC), in partnership with CAREERS: The Next Generation and Shell Canada, hosted the camp from July 9 – August 10 at the NLC Campus in Slave Lake.

Open to Métis and First Nations youth, the program focused on the development of employability and personal skills, and included a one-month job placement. Students lived at NLC's Mouallem Student Residence for the duration of the program, preparing communal meals and sharing housekeeping responsibilities. During the first week of the program, students collaboratively developed a Code of Conduct, which focused on the values of accountability, flexibility, integrity, quality, respect, and teamwork. For every 25 hours of on-the-job experience, students were eligible for one Work Experience credit that can be used towards an Alberta High School Diploma. Personal skills were developed in the classroom, on the job, and during evening group events such as drum-making.

Ernie Grach, Field Director for CAREERS: The Next Generation and the Project Coordinator, maintains, "The relationship and support we receive from local Slave Lake employers is essential to the success of this program, as is the participation of Métis and First Nations partners, Rupertsland Institute, Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council, Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council, and Bigstone Cree Nation".

"It is great to see the enthusiasm of the students. Learning employability and personal skills, along with obtaining real-world life experience, will benefit participants in their future endeavors. Shell Canada is proud to be a sponsor of this initiative", states Charlene Parker, Community Relations Representative.

Student participant Miksu Chalifoux enthuses of his four-week placement with Alberta Energy Regulators in Slave Lake, "They made me a part of their team and actively involved me in their meetings". When asked about the highlight of his experience, land reclamation stands out. "Seeing

the process of reclaimed land, where wetlands have been started, was exciting. It was a good opportunity to learn about this aspect of the oil and gas industry.” Miksu goes on to say he highly recommends the program to other youth.

Other partner employers were Alberta Health Services, Tolko Industries, Lesser Slave Lake Regional Housing Authority, Vanderwell Contractors, and Northern Lakes College. The celebration was attended by Minister Danielle Larivee, MLA for Lesser Slave Lake, Jerry Heck, Senior Vice-President Growth, CAREERS: The Next Generation and Elder Mary Brown. This was the third annual offering of the Explorers Academy, with earlier offerings in Slave Lake in 2016 and 2017.



*Honourable Danielle Larivee, Minister of Children's Services and Status of Women, Deputy Government House Leader and MLA for Lesser Slave Lake, student Miksu Chalifoux, Jerry Heck, Senior Vice-President Growth, CAREERS: The Next Generation.*

Northern Lakes College is a multi-campus college located in northern Alberta and is focused on providing relevant, quality programs through a distributed learning model, serving over 6,000 students annually. To meet regional needs, NLC offers a wide range of certificate and diploma programs in Business, Health Sciences and Allied Health, Human Services, Technology, Trades, University Studies, and Academic Upgrading. The College collaborates with Campus Alberta partners to offer degree completion opportunities throughout its service region, including a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Social Work. Northern Lakes College also provides a wide variety of professional accreditation and certificate programs through its Continuing Education and Corporate Training Department. Northern Lakes College houses the Woodland Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF) to provide Forestry and related post-secondary and professional development programs.

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