



For Immediate Release

Local Employment Planning Council celebrates Opening Doors for Newcomers and Indigenous job seekers

Pilot project launched in Thunder Bay, Terrace Bay and Greenstone

Baakaakonaanan Ishkwaandemonan – Opening Doors for You promotes the benefits of inclusive hiring amid changing demographics

January 26, 2017 – Employers in our region are going to be recognized for making their workplaces more welcoming to Indigenous peoples and Newcomers. An innovative new project led by the North Superior Workforce Planning Board, your Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC), in partnership with Northern Policy Institute, will help employers identify and access existing supports to hire individuals from these growing labour pools.

Changing demographics are impacting businesses in the Thunder Bay District; the overall workforce is shrinking and demand for skilled labour is growing, signaling impending labour shortages.

Baakaakonanan Ishkwandemonun (pronounced “bah-kah-ko-nah-nun shkwahn-deh-monun”) – *Opening Doors for You* focuses on identifying current best practices and promoting existing resources available for supporting the hiring of Newcomers and Indigenous job seekers.

“The goal of the Baakaakonaanan Ishkwaandemonan project is to recognize the efforts made by employers to create inclusive workplaces, and encourage employers to understand the value and benefit to hiring Newcomers and Indigenous job seekers,” said Madge Richardson, Executive Director of North Superior Workforce Planning Board, Thunder Bay District’s Local Employment Planning Council. “At the end of the pilot period, this project will be assessed and, if successful, implemented in other communities.”

In the upcoming four months, project staff will use social media, in person visits, and workshops to help employers identify and access the existing knowledge and supports they need to make inclusive hiring choices.

Baakaakonaanan Ishkwaandemonan (BI) will reward employers for engaging with existing service providers and fostering an inclusive workplace. Employers that complete a certain number of tasks will receive recognition in the media and free advertising and promotion online and will be provided with a visual identifier for their business storefront window and/or website. The project will also highlight best practices and recognize employer champions who have demonstrated their commitment to hiring Newcomers and Indigenous workers.

For more information on how you can get involved, please visit www.openingdoors4u.ca or contact Charmaine McCraw

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario



Media Interviews: Madge Richardson Executive Director of the North Superior Workforce Planning Board, your Local Employment Planning Council, is available for comment. Please contact: Madge Richardson, Executive Director, NSWPB & LEPC (807)346-2943 mrichardson@nswpb.ca

About the Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC):

LEPC for the District of Thunder Bay is a pilot project led by the North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) with the support of Northern Policy Institute (NPI) as data and research partner. The LEPC uses community consultation, research, and evidence-based practices to spur innovation in workforce development in our region. <http://www.nswpb.ca/lepc/projects>

About North Superior Workforce Planning Board:

The North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) is one of twenty-six Workforce Planning zones across Ontario, mandated through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to identify, assess and prioritize the skills and knowledge needs of community, employers and individual participants/learners in the local labour market through a collaborative, local labour market planning process.

About Northern Policy Institute:

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, and Kenora. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.



**Local Employment
Planning Council**