

Mining essentials pilot project begins

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A Sacred Fire burned outside the Moose Hall last week as one of three Canadian pilot projects for Mining Essentials: A Work Readiness Training Program for Aboriginal Peoples program was launched.

Program elder Diane Richmond was moved by it.

"This is very encouraging for me, to see a sacred fire burning in our community," said Richmond, who has played an integral part of overseeing the cultural aspect of this program.

Anishinabek Employment and Training Services (AETS) in co-operation with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR), announced the pilot launch of the program. The pilot project in Marathon is in partnership with the Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation, Pic Mobert First Nation, Barrick - Hemlo, and Confederation College's Training and Development Department. Representatives from each group as well as the 12 students participating from Pic River and Pic Mobert,

were in attendance.

The 12-week program, which started Nov. 8, is based on industry approved standards — a comprehensive description of the mining industry's requirements in terms of essential, non-technical skills and knowledge — for a basic entry-level position in the industry. The AFN and MiHR, along with a number of industry and Aboriginal training representatives, have partnered to develop the Mining Essentials pilot training project, which will be delivered in Marathon in co-operation with Confederation College.

There will be two other pilot sites in Canada.

Reinforcing the work readiness aspect of the training program, there is a separate five week environmental monitor training component based on the Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) project with Environmental Careers Organization (ECO) Canada.

The third and final component is seven weeks of tailored training based on the needs of Aboriginal learners in order to further learn, develop and retain transferable skills.



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Students of the Mining Essentials pilot program in Marathon with Elder Diane Richmond (front row at left).