

aets partnership

Anishinabek Employment and Training Services (AETS) Partnership

AETS is settling in nicely to the Thunder Bay Public Library (TBPL), through a partnership which is helping transform Waverley Library into a Community Hub. As an incorporated, not-for-profit organization, AETS is part of a national network delivering an Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) federally funded program with a focus in the North Superior Region.

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) has been working with partners since 1999 to improve Indigenous participation in the economy, to assist clients in skills upgrading and training and to help Indigenous communities build capacity. The ISET program in its current form began in 2010 and has been extended until March 31, 2019 when a new version will begin. There are 85 Indigenous service organizations, commonly referred to as Agreement Holders, who deliver employment and training support services through over 600 points of service (like AETS) across Canada. The ISET program aims to provide support to Indigenous people to join the labour market by providing employment related assistance and training in addition to childcare supports and other services.

The Indigenous population of Canada, according to the 2016 census, is estimated to be 1,673,785 citizens, and the clients served in the ISET Program is close to 23% (or 377,330) of the Indigenous population of Canada. It is interesting to note that the average age of an Indigenous citizen in Canada is 32.1 years, which is almost a decade younger than the non-Indigenous population. In Thunder Bay, it is estimated that we have approximately 15,075 Indigenous people of which AETS serves anywhere up to 600 clients per year.

AETS had another successful year of delivering continuing education programs and training to employment services, at the same time as delivering externally funded Construction Craft Worker and Carpentry Training (Pre-Apprenticeship Training Programs), Personal Support Worker Training (Skills Partnership Fund) and an Indigenous Workplace Inclusion Event. The collaborations engaged the trainees in a holistic approach to service co-ordination. The continued dedication and commitment of the AETS Board of Directors and Staff was instrumental in creating a successful environment and service solutions during the past year.

AETS continues to work co-operatively in a partnership for high school credits and a credit-granting process, whereby mature students may obtain credit for prior learning. Another program deliverable is the Dinowigehmin – Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program (AYLP), which took place this fall and is designed to contribute to the participants cultural, spiritual, mental, physical and emotional well-being. Please contact AETS to discover how we can assist with continuing education needs, be it via independent course study, scheduled class time (English or Math) and/or community leadership skills.

The new AETS partnership between the TBPL and AETS, continues to empower the Anishinabek, and support the TBPL's strategic plan in Community Hub development. Both the staff of the TBPL and AETS successfully completed a joint staff development day this past September, which serves as a good example when it comes to inclusion and reconciliation.



On behalf of the AETS Board of Directors and Staff, AETS continues to be excited about the move and looks forward to continuing to refine our delivery and services through our new location in partnership with the TBPL to even better meet the needs of Indigenous people.

Most of the major renovation is now complete at Waverley, with the exception of some signage which is expected to be completed early in the new year. Please visit our website at www.aets.org for program/service details. Feel free to drop by in person to Waverley to meet us on weekdays from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm and check out the renovated space as well as the eight computer workstations.

Miigwech,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John DeGiacomo', written in a cursive style.

John DeGiacomo, Executive Director
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change & transformation

Indigenous Knowledge Centres Now Open! *(continued from front cover)*

The launch was opened with a traditional smudge and prayer led by Sheila Karasiewicz, Knowledge Keeper from Fort William First Nation. It was also celebrated with drumming and songs by Kwe Dweiigon Women Drummers, greetings from the City of Thunder Bay, Fort William First Nation and our partner Anishinabek Employment and Training Services. Robert Ostamas, from the Indigenous Advisory Council which had been so critical to the Centres' evolution, spoke about the value of the Centres and thanked the Library, saying, "Now users will have an opportunity to learn about our People's history, experiences, wisdom, way of living and being, aspirations, hopes and dreams. I hope it will bring understanding, openness and create an environment of reconciliation between the Indigenous Peoples of Canada and Non-Indigenous Peoples of Canada."

We are looking forward to receiving feedback from the community to name the Centres with a new, Ojibwa term or word which describes its unique nature. We also plan to engage Indigenous youth to develop the artistic vision and elements which will truly bring the space to life. Do you have an idea for a name for the Centres? Please see page 7 for more details on how to share your ideas.

Front cover photo - Top row, left to right: Tracey McKinnon (Kwe Dweiigon / Women Drummers), Mel Legarde (Indigenous Advisory Council Member), Robyn Medicine (Indigenous Liaison, Thunder Bay Public Library), Sharon Johnson (Indigenous Advisory Council Member), Sheila Karasiewicz (Elder & Knowledge Keeper, Fort William First Nation), Clara Quisses (Kwe Dweiigon / Women Drummers), Linda Barkman (Kwe Dweiigon / Women Drummers) Bottom row kneeling, left to right: Robert Ostamas (Indigenous Advisory Council Member) and Robert Gougeon (Indigenous Advisory Council Member)

Thank You AETS!

Special thanks go out to AETS and partners for their generous donation of a new storage shed which has now been installed at the back of the Waverley Community Hub.

It was proudly built by the participants of Anishinabek Employment and Training Services' 2018 General Carpenter Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program including:

Nicholas Baxter, Daniel Bonear, Marvin Bouchard, Edgar Desmoulin, Jeremy Desmoulin, Yolanda Desmoulin, Gino Fortier, Lorne Hardy, Caitlin Jourdain-Spence, Dylan Jourdain-Spence, Rosanna Kawtiash, Keewaden King, Samuel King, Mana McGuire, Wilfred Potan, Gary Poulin, Gilbert Thompson and Devon Tookenay.

Thanks as well to the Carpenters Local Training Centre, Resolute Forest Products and Nor-Ont Supply Building Materials.

No More Late Fees for Children's Materials ... Ever!

Reading is one of the most important activities a child can do to develop the mind, learn new things and stimulate the imagination. Your Library wants to ensure that it's easy for families to borrow all the books that they want and to not worry about having to pay for returning those books late. We want every child to experience the Library as a welcoming, friendly place where stories come alive and you can learn about anything that you are interested in.

Effective January 1, 2019, there will no longer be fines charged for any children's book, movie, magazine or music CD which is returned after the due date. Borrow books without barriers!



Re-Envisioning Brodie!

The lower level of the Brodie Library is in the process of being transformed. Last year all adult and young adult collections were moved to the main floor, which provided the flexibility to expand spaces for children's collections and to welcome our developing partnership with Anishinabek Employment & Training Services (AETS) on the lower level. Upcoming plans include renovating the south side of the lower level to create a range of bookable meeting and office spaces for use by AETS (and other partners), the Library, and the community. A new family program room is also planned, along with a fully accessible washroom. The timelines for this work are in development and updates will be provided as we know more.

We have also partnered with Science North to bring an exciting "Think Space" to Brodie in early to mid 2019. The Think Space will feature interactive science stations, available for independent exploration as well as group activities and class visits. In the meantime, an expanded children's play area has been set up in order to use the emptied space until renovations begin, and we await some new and fun toys to stimulate children's creativity, literacy, and inquiry. Stop by Brodie and check out our ongoing transformation!

What's Happening with hoopla?

The per-use costs to the Library to provide hoopla for users became too high for us to sustain without imposing restrictive limits which ended up frustrating those who liked to use it. Therefore, hoopla has been discontinued.

We are looking at other products which could provide easy and affordable access to eAudio and other online products. In the meantime, do take advantage of existing products such as Overdrive (free ebooks & eAudiobooks), Naxos (free music streaming) and our other online databases and cool apps.