

Want to ride the waves—the TeKno Wave, that is? No, I didn't spell that wrong, it's actually a new initiative, the first of its kind to be exact, that has one goal in mind: to train 1,000 Aboriginal IT professionals over the coming years. It's a plan that organizers hope will bridge the existing gap, one that has Aboriginals who need training and a technology sector that needs highly skilled employees, more closely together.

TeKnoWave, Canada's first national Aboriginal IT Training initiative, is headquartered in Ottawa, is non-profit, and is catching the eye of the international community. After all, this type of plan is relatively unheard of but has already achieved major success, graduating its first participants in November 2004. Its purpose is straightforward; oversee the delivery of IT, business and sustainable energy training programs that will create the essential technical and managerial capacity within the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis popula-

tions. Organizers believe that this, in turn, will enable the achievement of community social and economic goals, which will create employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Programs within TeKnoWave are designed specifically for Aboriginal people, and as a mandatory component of the program of study, all students are required to complete an IT or business application that provides practical benefit to a local community, or socially responsible agency while building students confidence and pride. This community internship ensures that students gain critical practical experience and provides benefits to the participating organization.

One graduate tells his heartbreaking story of being homeless, without family and without hope but with this program, he now has a chance: *TeKnoWave began as a course and is now becoming a way of life and opening doors to a future for me as well as everyone*

else involved. The people that I have met, have been an integral part of my journey and I credit the TeKnoWave program for giving me the opportunity to have a future that looks brighter each day. If there is anyone out there that is feeling discouraged and thinks that things are just too tough to handle, I have just one thing to say to you; "Anything is possible!"

If you are interested in finding out more about the TeKnoWave initiative, check out their website at www.technowave.ca. Career colleges right across the country also provide great educational opportunities. Whether you're interested in technology, health, trades or anything else your heart desires, there are programs that will fit your needs!

Similarly, if you, your organization or your community are interested in participating in this initiative, call (613) 688-0179 or visit the website. ▲

- TeKnoWave is a national program that creates the essential technical and managerial capacity within the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis populations. The program operates at the intersection of Indigenous capacity building, economic development, connectivity, job creation and entrepreneurship.
- TeKnoWave Inc., headquartered in Ottawa, is a non-profit corporation that has been formed to oversee the delivery of this program and is committed to increasing Aboriginal employment in the technology, business and sustainable energy sectors.
- The TeKnoWave partnership currently includes Willis College, the University of Winnipeg, Donna Cona Inc., Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council of Canada, OFIFC-GREAT Initiative, Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative / Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, OSWE:GE Inc., Earth Restoration Corps and Volunteer Canada.
- The overall goal (IT sector) is to develop 1000 Aboriginal IT professionals
- TeKnoWave has been the focus of attention internationally and there is a huge demand to bring TeKnoWave onto the national and international stages.

Catching the Wave

Career colleges can help aboriginal students ride the TeKnoWave