

# Odawa Native Friendship Centre welcomes TeKnoWave

## *Canada's First National Aboriginal IT Training Initiative*

BY RIMA ARISTOCRAT

Jerry Lanouette is a man with a mission. The president of the Odawa Native Friendship Centre is determined to position the Centre as a major source for information technology training for the region's Aboriginal peoples.

Mr. Lanouette and his staff are busy putting the final touches on classroom facilities for the launch of the TeKnoWave program. TeKnoWave is a national program whose goal is to develop Aboriginal IT professionals across the country and in September Odawa will be the

host of the initial pilot program. Odawa Native Friendship Centre is a hub for the region's over 30,000 Aboriginal population.

ONFC provides a comprehensive program of social support, life skills counseling and cultural and spiritual guidance. Occupying a former elementary school at the corner of Stirling and Scott Streets, the Centre also offers indoor sports facilities to the community's youth and the annual Summer Pow Wow is a major event on the region's calendar.

Over the last few years, Odawa has been evolving to provide more and more technology training at the Centre and TeKnoWave is first post secondary education step in this progression. TeKnoWave, Canada's first national Aboriginal training program is a blend of industry certified IT training, university management courses and community projects.



— Willis photo

**A TeKnoWave presentation was part of the World Summit of Indigenous Entrepreneurs recently. Rima Aristocrat is on the right.**

The program has been developed by Ottawa's Willis College of Business & Technology and the University of Winnipeg.

The coalition of partners who have

contributed to the implementation of TeKnoWave includes companies such as Donna Cona, community programs such as the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC), and Grand River Employment and Training (GREAT), the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) and the federal Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI/INAC).

Through an intensive one year program, the successful TeKnoWave graduate earns a Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities IT diploma, a University of Winnipeg management studies certificate and critical industry certification from companies like Oracle, Sun and Microsoft. Most importantly, by engaging the local business community in the design of TeKnoWave, the graduates are virtually assured of that valuable

job after the program.

Graduates may also choose to continue their studies – the University of Winnipeg recognizes TeKnoWave credits against the first year of continued undergraduate studies in computing science or business management.

TeKnoWave students are also important contributors to their communities. Through the community internship component of the program, students work in teams of two to develop a technology application for a local community or community-based organization which would not otherwise be able to afford to apply information technology.

For information please contact TeKnoWave admissions consultant: (613) 722-3811 Tina Leblanc: Ext. 223 or Linda Zaluska: Ext. 228.

*Rima Aristocrat is President/CEO – Willis College.*