



MEDIA RELEASE

FIRST GRADUATING CLASS IN FIRST NATIONS TAX ADMINISTRATION

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KAMLOOPS, BC -- The Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics -- in partnership with the First Nations Tax Commission and Thompson Rivers University (TRU) -- is honouring and celebrating its inaugural graduating class of the First Nations Tax Administration program.

The first certificate of its kind in Canada, the program is designed to provide students with the practical skills and knowledge to develop First Nations economies, generate tax revenues and create support systems for First Nation investors and taxpayers. In particular, the program provides students with the skill set to implement the *First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act*, which provides a legal and administrative framework for First Nations property tax systems.

Board Chair of Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics Chief Michael LeBourdais, President of Thompson Rivers University Dr. Alan Shaver, and Chief Commissioner of the First Nations Tax Commission, C T (Manny) Jules, joined together with students, teachers, family and community leaders for the important event.

“We are tremendously proud of our graduates,” said Chief LeBourdais. “We are looking forward to hearing about their leadership in developing on-reserve infrastructure projects that utilize best practices they have learned from our program -- we have the utmost confidence that our Class of 2011 is now uniquely positioned to help First Nations governments unlock their economic potential and create sustainable communities.”

“This program reflects TRU’s commitment to Aboriginal learners and is another example of how Tulo provides innovative approaches to serving the needs of our communities in BC and the rest of Canada,” said Dr. Shaver.

“Together, with their success of the Tulo graduates and the strength of our many partnerships, we are one step closer to achieving our collective goals as First Nations governments,” said Chief Commissioner Jules. “We are very pleased to recognize the hard work of the students and the dedication of the instructors who are helping to build on our past for a brighter future.”

For more details about the certificate program, see the attached backgrounder.

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