

## Trent University: Project Beyshick Comes to Trent University July 13 - 15

Twenty First Nation youth arrived at Trent University on July 13 to participate in a series of workshops to learn about entrepreneurship from leading business and cultural experts as part of Project Beyshick, a youth mentoring program focused on career mentoring and entrepreneurship among Aboriginal youth aged 21 to 35 years.

Based on an application process, Project Beyshick participants are trained by professors from leading Canadian business schools and matched with Toronto-based business executives for hands-on job shadowing experience. This is the first time Project Beyshick has taken place at Trent University.

“As an international leader in the field of Indigenous Studies and as the home of Canada’s first Ph.D. program in Indigenous Studies, Trent University is a perfect partner for Project Beyshick and for our other initiatives surrounding Aboriginal people in Canada,” said Aditya Jha, chairman of the POA Educational Foundation.

A leading Canadian IT entrepreneur, Mr. Jha recently established a \$100,000 endowment to support bursaries and awards for Indigenous Studies students at Trent University. He has also furnished Trent with several computers for use by Indigenous Studies students.

“We are pleased to work with Aditya on this important undertaking,” said Professor David Newhouse, chair of Trent’s Indigenous Studies Department. “All of us are motivated by our desire to work to create places of dignity and respect for Indigenous peoples in Canada. Helping to create economic prosperity is a key element of gaining control over one’s life.”

Prof. Newhouse will be joining fellow Indigenous Studies faculty members Mark Dockstator, Dan Longboat and Vern Douglas in the delivery of sessions focusing on Aboriginal leadership and business practices, Aboriginal culture and perspectives, and the movement of Aboriginal peoples into the modern world.

Project Beyshick has been conceived and designed by the POA Educational Foundation in close partnership with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF), specifically for members of Canada’s Aboriginal communities who are seeking to sharpen their entrepreneurial skills and/or pursue a career in the corporate world. The mission of this unique project is to nurture prosperity and financial independence amongst First Nations communities and individuals.

“It is our goal that members of First Nations will become equal partners in the economic prosperity of Canada and Canadian life,” said Mr. Jha.

Following their weekend workshop at Trent, participants will then head to Toronto where they will be mentored by a chosen business-executive. The job-shadowing portion will last three days, during which the participant will observe the executive conduct his/her daily business routine. Participants will also spend four additional days preparing activities, including face-to-face interaction with successful entrepreneurs from ethnic minorities in Canada. One of the unique features of Project Beyshick is an award of \$15,000 to the participant who presents the best business plan at the end of the program.

