



## BLADERUNNERS DONATION

On September 28<sup>th</sup> the Nuu-chah-nulth BladeRunners Port Alberni office donated a six-sided picnic table that can seat up to ten people to Rainbow Gardens/Tsawaayuus. The table was built during the basic construction skills training segment of the BladeRunners Program this past August. We'd like to thank all the BladeRunners who were involved in this special project, in particular Eric Nicholas Seitcher-Adams, the BladeRunner who did the majority of the work. Eric did the layout, measuring, cutting, assembly and painting with assistance from Steve Southin of Masters@Work who provided the project plan.

The table donation was gladly received by Gerri Thomas, site manager. It now sits in the back garden for residents, family members and staff to enjoy.



**Jim Knighton, Jody Vos, Robert Oldale  
and Eric Seitcher-Adams**



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# NUU-CHAH-NULTH BLADERUNNERS UCLUELET



**Ucluelet BladeRunners Grads**

The Nuuchahnulth Employment and Training Program located at 1971 Peninsula Road in Ucluelet has now completed its second intake of participants for the BladeRunners Program. The goal of the program is to assist at-risk and disadvantaged youth (19 to 30 years of age) in getting into the construction and trade fields. The program is open to both aboriginal and non-aboriginal people, visible minorities, and both men and women alike.

The Ucluelet BladeRunners participants: Will Haipee, Ucluelet First Nation; Patrick Frank and Wendy David, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation; Josh Varley, Ahousaht First Nation; and Victor Mickey, Mark Mickey, and Joseph Mickey, Hesquiat First Nation; took part in two weeks of life skills training. The life skills component covers lifelong learning, conflict management, planning and goal setting, problem solving and decision making, time management, financial management, managing stress,

anger management, healthy eating and healthy activity.

Other training included resume writing, construction math, hearing tests and driver's preparation.

Special guests during the five weeks of training included Ucluelet North Island College, who spoke about the trades programs offered at their campus; the local RCMP, who spoke about prevention and criminal record checks; two representatives from the local ICBC office also gave a talk on insurance policies and how to obtain a driver's license. The Royal Bank did a workshop on banking services, investments and financial management. A fourth year apprentice in carpentry gave words of encouragement and shared his work experience and expectations of the job.

Congratulations to all the BladeRunners for completing the program and the 71 percent that have secured a job.



## KELLY ALEXANDER: BLADERUNNERS ASSISTANT

My grandparents immigrated here in the early 1900s to escape the political climate of the times. They had no money but always had food for their children. They ended up having over one hundred grandchildren and great grandchildren who are now scattered all over Canada and the western United States. I would not be here if they had stayed in Europe.

It makes sense then, that from an early age it was in my nature to want to travel and see where I fit in. So, when I was fourteen I asked my family if I could move to Mexico. My parents laughed and said 'if I made the money I could go there.' So, I worked hard and by the time I was seventeen, I was going to school in the Southern province of Oaxaca, Mexico. I have since called Mexico home many times and in living in a developing country I have continually realized that I am so lucky to be a Canadian citizen. In Mexico, Honduras and Nicaragua (being some of the places I have lived) they don't have supportive programs for youth. Children there have to work in the markets from a young age to pay for school and that's why I'm excited to be assisting with a program



like BladeRunners in Ucluelet. Here in Canada we can get our youth an education and a real chance for a great life.

Because of this, in 2003 I decided to go back to university and complete a degree in visual art and psychology. Of course, I moved back to Mexico and painted. Art is a very big part of my life as well, and I think no matter what you do you should find beauty and pleasure in doing it.

I am a painter, a friend, a worker, a daughter and many other things. While living in Ucluelet for the past three years I have: been in art shows, participated in a community play that raised money to help the West Coast Community Resource Society, taught pre-school, served food, and sung a lot of karaoke! My name is Kelly Alexander and if you see me out in the community, please say 'hi'. In the words of a wonderful person, "a stranger is just a friend you haven't met yet." I really look forward to my time with the BladeRunners program in Ucluelet and will strive to support the community and make new positive connections.

Sincerely,

*Kelly Alexander*

### DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ BC has been leading in most categories of economic growth since 2001.
- ▶ Investment growth has exceeded other provinces in all construction sectors.
- ▶ Total employment (trades plus other occupations) in construction has expanded by 50% from 2001- 2005.
- ▶ Growth far exceeds all other provinces, including Alberta where construction jobs grew 23%.
- ▶ The BC government is making it easier for companies to hire foreign workers because we don't have enough people trained for construction.

This information was published in the report: Construction Looking Forward: Labour Requirements from 2006 to 2014 for British Columbia, produced by the Construction Sector Council, with support from the Government of Canada.



# GERRY MARK: KUTIIS GRAD

Gerry Mark attended the kutiis Employability and Skills Training Program held in Gold River from April 24 to June 8, 2007. After being back in the community for two years, Gerry attended the program because she felt that she was, “going nowhere”. With a grade eight education and having been on social assistance for twenty years, Gerry knew that she had to make some changes in her life.

The kutiis program helped Gerry realize that you can't believe everything you hear about people; that was, “a big eye opener”. She made a lot of friends with people that she hadn't talked to before and saw that communities can get along. The program helped her to cope with anger—she didn't realize how angry she was—and to better deal with issues in life, and to do so without conflict.

When she was 18 or 19, Gerry previously worked as a part-time CHR, a janitor, a homemaker, and at a fish hatchery. Immediately after the kutiis program she



Gerry Mark

began working for the Mowachaht/Muchalaht Marina. Her work there ended on Friday September 14<sup>th</sup>. On Monday September 17<sup>th</sup>, after being chosen as the successful candidate out of seven candidates, Gerry began working for the community daycare where she continues to work. Gerry credits securing her job to the skills she learned, such as writing a resume and cover letter, and using job search techniques.

Besides learning to be more assertive and professional, Gerry is feeling good about working. It has increased her self-esteem and self-confidence. Gerry would definitely recommend the program to other people.

She states that the program has, “made her a better person and an active member in the community. I want to be a role model for my children...it's never too late”. Gerry adds, “a lot of opportunities out in the world; don't be afraid to go out and learn”.

## KUTIIS PROGRAM A SUCCESS

The kutiic program completed on September 5, 2007 in Ahousaht, marking the third time that it has been sponsored by the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Employability and Training program. kutiic (in the Ahousaht language) means to lead by the hand, and throughout the entire learning experience, this is exactly what the kutiic program has been designed to do. All of the materials and information are designed to meet the unique needs of each student as a whole person: mental, emotional, spiritual and physical.

18 students participated in the program and are now moving toward their objective, whether their goal is to go into the workplace, or to seek a trade or professional occupation.

Because success in life requires openness to life-long learning, students are encouraged to learn and

understand more about themselves and others through both study and practice. Eighteen modules are worked through at the students' pace and all learning material is designed with a cultural component so that students can examine new knowledge in relationship to prior learning and previous understanding. Each Friday morning has been devoted to an elder who addresses the prior week's learning from a traditional cultural perspective. In this way, Kutiiic supports the student in their creation of a bridge between cultural understanding and the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in a non-native work and learning environment.

The Ahousaht students decided to use the modules on planning and decision-making as well as the tools

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and methods for problem-solving to address a real problem: the condition of the Ahousaht Harbour. There were four teams. The students presented their work at the graduation in order to raise community awareness concerning the need for a clean Harbour as a place for their children to swim and as a healthy place for wildlife to inhabit.

Each student is taught how to write a resume and cover letter, as well as the skills to conduct their own job search online. If wanting to pursue a trade or academic occupation, students are required to search for colleges that offer their desired course of study and to create a plan to reach their long-term goals. Plans often include considerations such as funding and child care. The intention is to have student confidence at a level where they are able to move from the classroom directly into their field of work or study.

Some of the Ahousaht students offer the following comments about the kutiic program:

Patti Frank says, "Thank you for the wonderful program and we're having loads of fun! I love it."

MaryAnne Charlie says that the program, "has opened up a lot for me. I am learning about myself and I like it. I would recommend this program to everyone, especially the young to get started early."

Jeannie Sutherland writes that, "being in the kutiic program is a very interesting experience. The people in class are also interesting. This program is helping me to

move forward toward my goal of going to college and becoming an early childhood educator (ECE). For the most part I really love Fridays because that's when an elder comes in and shares stories with us about how they dealt with work and many other situations. I've learned a lot from this program and our instructor is such an amazing lady. I would really like to thank my Mom and Dad (Felix Jr. and Donna Thomas) and my aunties in Ahousaht for all their encouragement and support."

Iris Rose John has learned that she, "can be independent, and, I am chumta—my Indian name. My children are my inspiration and my spouse is so supportive. Thank you for everything; it's helped me be so much stronger to survive

this crazy world." She also wants to make sure that "our families are thanked for all the help and support they have given us over the course of the program with a special thanks to Billy."

Nicole Frank also expresses thanks for the kutiic program adding that, "I have learned a lot. I learned how the workplace operates, how our culture is slowly dying and how we can revive it. I had a lot of fun. Everyone in class has supported me when I wanted to quit. Thank you. Kleco, Kleco."

And finally, Trevor Titian sums the program up in one word, "Intriguing!"





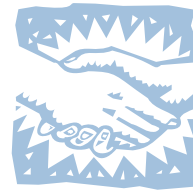
## JONATHAN WATTS: A KUTIIS SUCCESS STORY



Jonathan Watts attended and completed the kutiis eight-week Employability and Skills Training Program in March of 2007.

The kutiis program gave Jonathan the tools he needed for seeking employment. It built his self-esteem, self-confidence and work ethic. Jonathan is now working full time at the Tseshah Market located on the Tseshah Reserve in Port Alberni.

Jonathan's lifelong dream is to one day own his own business. Thanks to the kutiis program he is one step closer to fulfilling his dream.



## ESSENTIAL SKILLS

There are nine essential skills identified by employers and the Government of Canada. These skills are; reading text, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others, continuous learning, thinking skills and computer use. Essential skills are considered to be the basic skills necessary for people to be productive, safe workers who work effectively and efficiently. People who lack essential skills are prone to have higher rates of accidents and are often less productive, both at home and in the workplace.

The TOWES, the Test of Workplace essential skills, can assess the first three essential skills. The TOWES gives



an accurate measure of reading text, document use and numeracy, by testing an individual's use of authentic workplace documents and skills. These materials include such things as; memos, catalogue and charts, regulations, and work orders—just the kinds of materials a person works with in the everyday workplace. The TOWES can identify gaps in a person's skills and identify areas where training is needed.

With a referral from the NETP's employment counsellor, Judy Rumney, people can complete the TOWES assessment as part of their

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application for vocational training or to identify support for other types of training that will lead to employment.

If you have access to the internet and would like to learn more about the TOWES (and test some of your essential skills), you can go to: <http://measureup.towes.com/english/index.asp> Here you will find a free web-based tool to practice some questions in the three essential skills that the TOWES measures. You can

start by selecting 'Choices of Activities' to see what is available.

For more information regarding the TOWES assessment, you can call Judy Rumney at NTC, 724-5757, or Jan Green at a-m'aa-sip Learning Place, 723-1331.

The TOWES is the sole property of the Bow Valley College in Alberta.

## HEALTHY TIPS FOR STRETCHING YOUR MUSCLES

If your muscles hurt and you want relief, here are some tips to allow you more mobility and greater opportunities every day:

*Warm up.* This can be done by simply taking a shower, or by getting your muscles warmer through mild exercise. The increased muscle temperature allows you to respond quicker to the stretch.

*Go easy: Don't force any muscles.* You should feel a stretch for the first six seconds and then the muscle should begin to respond to the pull.

*Hold for 30 seconds:* If you cannot hold it for the 30 seconds, you are holding it too tight. Breathe: Holding your breath makes the stretch ineffective.

*Do Not Bounce:* You will do more damage than good if you start off by bouncing. Stretch both sides: This enhances flexibility and reduces the risk of injury.

So forget the coffee or soft drink. Instead give yourself a few minutes to really relax and feel good from the stretching. Have a pain-free day!



# SUCCESS STORY: DARWIN WEBBER



Darwin Webber is another step closer to his goal of becoming an officer with the Canadian Coast Guard. With assistance from his Band and NETP he has recently completed two courses that are required by the Coast Guard.

“I could be a deckhand with my current credentials, and I am on the call-out list now, but with

another 21-week program, I will start with them as an officer,” Webber states.

Darwin has worked with Canadian Fisheries as a fisheries guardian for the last ten years; the last three of those were with the Tshesah First Nation. He was required to take six months of training to start the job and over the years has jumped at any chance to gain credentials or additional training. He states that he has gained some wisdom over the last few years. He might have started reaching for his goal sooner, than later. His

advice is, “if you have a dream start working on it now. That is the wise choice. You don’t have to wait to be my age to be wise.”

Being a fisheries guardian was perfect for him for some time. He enjoyed being on the water although he says it could be a very demanding job at times. He was young, single and only had himself to consider. Now he is a family man and wants to have more security and opportunity for advancement, so he is changing his career.

Darwin completed the Marine Emergency Duties program at BCIT this summer. He is currently completing an application to NETP for assistance during the 21 week Watch Keeping Mate Program through BCIT.

“My advice is to stay in school, graduate and then look at further schooling. Grade 12 is just a jumping off point in today’s world.”

Watch our newsletter for updates as Darwin continues on. Maybe we will have to call him ‘Sir’ in the next article!

*Watch your thoughts; they become words.*

*Watch your words; they become actions.*

*Watch your actions; they become habits.*

*Watch your habits; they become character.*

*Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.*

- Frank Outlaw



## Contact Information

### Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program

PO Box 1383

Port Alberni, BC

V9Y 7M2

Canada

Ph: 250.724.5757

Fax: 250.723.0463

Email: [info@netb.ca](mailto:info@netb.ca)

[www.netb.ca](http://www.netb.ca)

[www.nuuchahnulth.org](http://www.nuuchahnulth.org)