



Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council (WPRC) Update to the Community #4 – April 2018

What We're Doing

WPRC has embarked on an initiative called *TRC92: Youth Employment* named after and guided by the 92nd Call to Action in the [2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report](#).

Call to Action #92 calls upon the corporate sector to:

*“...ensure that Aboriginal peoples have **equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector and....provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples,***
including the history and legacy of residential schools,
the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,
Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations...
*(and conduct) **skills based training in intercultural competency,***
conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.”

TRC92: Youth Employment incorporates three strategies:

1. **Build awareness** among private-sector employers about Indigenous history and legacy in relation to Indigenous youth employment;
2. **Support workplace education** about Indigenous history, and intercultural safety and anti-racism; and
3. **Facilitate new connections for work experience and employment** by linking employers and youth from community-based training partners.

Where We Left Things

At the time of the [September 2018 Update to the Community](#) WPRC had formed partnerships with eight community training organizations and twelve private sector employers. The employers formed an *Employer Consortium* led by Dave Angus, former CEO of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and currently President of Johnston Group.

Dave describes the aim of the *Employer Consortium* as “...engaging in a journey toward truth and reconciliation, incorporating business-to-business learning”. The *Employer Consortium* will work with the Indigenous community and other partners to co-create innovative strategies that can then be shared with others for large-scale employment of Indigenous people.

Last September we reported that the *Employer Consortium* had engaged in learning opportunities about Indigenous history, including participating in a ‘Blanket Exercise’ and a learning session with Ry Moran, Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR).

Since Then

Since September, the *Employer Consortium* focus has been on continued learning opportunities and connecting with the eight community training organizations.

The *Employer Consortium* meets regularly to plan and learn together, sometimes with speakers from organizations including [Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata](#) and [BUILD](#), who bring information and new understanding related to Indigenous youth employment.



Art Ladd, Executive Director of BUILD, shows Employer Consortium members around the BUILD workshop.

Employers meet Community Trainers

In January the employers and community trainers met together at the [Manitoba Indigenous Cultural Education Centre](#) on Sutherland Avenue. This beautiful setting, steeped in Indigenous culture, was ideal as a first opportunity for the employers and community training organizations to meet face-to-face. The meeting was an important first step for building relationships between the two groups.



Leslie Kwok (right) tells Nicole Stewart, HR lead at Payworks, about the 'First Jobs for Youth' program at Spence Neighbourhood Association

NCTR hosts Company CEOs

We have always recognized that employer commitment to *TRC92: Youth Employment* has to come from top leadership in order to instill commitment throughout the workforce.

In March members of the *Employer Consortium*, who are mostly Human Resources (HR) leads, were joined by their CEOs and senior leaders for a morning session at the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) with Kevin Lamoureux, National Education Lead at the NCTR.

With the group gathered in the midst of Indigenous artifacts, Kevin spoke about the historical context for truth and reconciliation, today's legacy, what truth and reconciliation means for all of us and the path forward. For some participants, the meeting had a profound impact.

MaryAnn Kempe, Chief Human Resources Officer - Birchwood Automotive, expressed it this way:

“I left the session feeling quite emotional – a raw reminder of my privilege and as (Kevin) stated, deep anger of broken promises. Having two Indigenous sisters I have witnessed the impact of the residential schools and the Indian Act and being a mother and grandmother I cannot fathom the scars that have been created for 7 generations as a result of our ancestors. But I also left hopeful for the future, that the time is now and that we all need to step up and make it our business to set the future right and repair this partnership. I commit to spending reflective time considering the TRC call to action and what next steps might look like for me personally and for Birchwood.”



The Bentwood Box which accompanied the Truth and Reconciliation Commission across Canada is on display at the NCTR. It was one of many artifacts viewed by participants.



Kevin Lamoureux (center) has an informal conversation with participants, following his presentation about Indigenous history in Canada.

Other Activities since September

TRC92: Youth Employment is a Collective Impact effort with WPRC staff providing ‘backbone’ support through bringing sectors together, and engaging in on-going research, evaluation and consultation.

Since September, WPRC staff attended meetings with a variety of stakeholders (12 individual meetings), attended relevant conferences and workshops, and participated in networks and consultations to share information related to *TRC92: Youth Employment*.

WPRC made presentations about *TRC92: Youth Employment* at a conference and Executive Breakfast hosted by [Chartered Professional Human Resources](#) and in a [Vibrant Communities Canada](#) webinar, and participated in the Provincial Government Poverty Reduction consultations, subsequently submitting a paper.

Next Steps

In coming months, WPRC will work with the *Employer Consortium* for continued learning, building relationships with community partners and youth and preparing to engage youth in their workplaces. This will include exploring resources for workplace education, and what 'supported employment' could look like.

Workplace Education

A particular priority going forward is workplace education within the *Employer Consortium* companies. As the TRC Report makes clear, education and understanding throughout the workforce is important. Senator Murray Sinclair addressed this issue in a recent Free Press article.

"...Sinclair said for (Indigenous employment programs) to ultimately be successful or meaningful, participating companies have to be committed to providing support that will be needed to accommodate a workforce with a unique set of issues related to Aboriginal history and racism. 'That's the challenge we're going to place to these CEOs,' Sinclair said. 'Once they open the door, how will you let them in? And when you let them in, what are you going to do to help them? You have to recognize what the new chemistry combination is going to be.'

(Winnipeg Free Press, March 1 2018)

Employers Meet Youth

In May six of the community partners are coming together to host an event where employers will meet with youth in the training programs. The timing is appropriate because many of the youth will be coming to the end of their training terms and may be ready for work experience or jobs.

We look forward to reporting on further progress in future.