



ALBERTA BOREAL CAREERS PROJECT
2015 Youth Education Summit



ABC Project Lac La Biche/Conklin • April 15-16, 2015

Summary Report

Inside Education's fourth iteration of our popular [Alberta Boreal Careers Project \(ABC Project\)](#) took place on April 15/16, 2015 in Lac La Biche and Conklin, AB. During the program, 48 students and teachers representing [seven rural-Alberta high schools](#) participated in engaging, hands-on experiential career education. Students were able to see themselves in a wide variety of careers connected to, and occurring in Alberta's boreal region.

Northern Alberta is a resource-rich region with a growing potential to open doors for young people as they embark on their future careers. Inside Education designed the ABC Project to expose high school students to the multitude of career opportunities available to them through two days of experiential learning.

Continuing the vision for Inside Education's suite of youth education summits, the ABC Project created an environment where students and teachers learn together. It provided opportunities to discuss and discover natural resources in Alberta's boreal region alongside local experts. The outcomes of the program will extend beyond the participants themselves as teachers and students share the resources and experiences back in their classrooms and communities.



Participants

Applications were accepted from all Alberta school districts, although the program specifically targeted grade 9 – 12 students in the Northern boreal region.

A total of 11 teachers and 37 students from the following schools participated in the event:

Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation School,
Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation
Amisk Community School,
Beaver Lake Cree Nation
J.A. Williams High School, Lac La Biche
Nipisihkopahk Secondary School,
Maskwacis
St. Paul Alternate Education Centre -
St. Paul
Vilna School, Whitefish Lake First Nation
Wainwright High School, Wainwright

The Program

The ABC Project was designed to showcase a wide variety of careers with an emphasis on experiencing the first-hand knowledge and understanding about the career realities for both the young people and their teachers.

Inside Education strived to make real connections for students, and allowed them to explore, ask questions and become immersed in the realities of living and working in the Boreal. A theme that resonated throughout the program is that individual skills, strengths and interests should guide career paths and that the vast opportunities in the boreal region has great potential and diversity for everyone.

The program featured hands-on activities, site tours, job shadowing and a unique career networking expo.

Specific Program Highlights

1) **Career Conversations** - Meaningful conversations are at the centre of any successful exhibition. This session allowed students and teachers to visit with those whose work is either in, or is

impacted by, development in Alberta's boreal. Networkers included representatives working within various sectors of government, industry and community development, program sponsors and other career-related organizations.

Career Themes included:

- ❖ Forests & Forestry: Millar Western Forest Products
- ❖ Energy: Cenovus Energy
- ❖ Traditional Lifestyles: Alberta Trappers' Association
- ❖ Parks and Protected Areas: Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
- ❖ *The Voices of the Boreal*: Inside Education

2) **Careers in Motion** - Inside Education believes engaging young people in their learning is the best means through which they can feel a part of what they are experiencing. This session was an interactive, hands-on opportunity for young people to experience some paths to post-secondary education, hands-on training, and careers working in the outdoors. The sessions featured were:

- ❖ **First Nations Technical Services Advisory Group (TSAG)** - Students modelled watershed sampling by studying benthic invertebrates under a microscope;
- ❖ **WorkWild** - Students learned about careers in forests and forestry, and planted lodgepole pine trees around Portage College;



- ❖ **Learning Clicks** - Students completed a self-assessment to help focus on what sorts of careers might best 'fit' for them today and tomorrow;

- ❖ **Careers, the Next Generation** - Students investigated potential to secure dual credit and *paid* apprenticeship training while still in high school;

- ❖ **Alberta Distance Learning Centre** - ADLC had students working with the Woodlands Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF) forest harvesting simulator - technology in action!

- ❖ **Portage College** - Students took a field trip to a stream crossing to test and study stream flow before and after culvert installation;

3) **Portage College Tour** - One of northeastern Alberta's most popular post-secondary institutions, with a wide variety of technical, trades and academic offerings - Portage College is a potential destination for some of the students gathered at the ABC Project. Students and teachers had a chance to tour the entire campus, including the state-of-the-art learning labs in power engineering, welding and carpentry. Additionally, students had a chance to see what 'dorm life' is like at the College. First-hand knowledge in things that might not immediately jump to mind is critical in making these life-decisions for young people.



4) **Devon Jackfish Tour & Job Shadow** - Students and teachers had an opportunity to visit Devon Canada's Jackfish Lodge and J2 in situ oil sands project near Conklin. Following a site tour, students had the opportunity to visit with a wide variety of professionals, trades people and support staff to find out first-hand what their role is onsite, and to get insight into life living and working in Alberta's remote, fly-in/fly-out SAGD region.



Job Shadow opportunities included:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ❖ Aboriginal Affairs | ❖ Security - including Dog Handlers |
| ❖ Administrative Support | ❖ Power Engineers |
| ❖ Lodge Chef | ❖ Human Resources |
| ❖ First Aid & Safety | ❖ Supply Chain |
| | ❖ IT |
| | ❖ Maintenance |

Student & Teacher Feedback

"I liked that my students were exposed to several career opportunities. They had a chance to explore jobs they may not have considered before. Great job!" - Deanne Nielsen, teacher, J.A. Williams School

"I got to know how many people work at camps - and I enjoyed the tour, especially job shadowing the chef - I learned a lot and want to work as a chef! ~ Chelsey, St. Paul Alternative Education Centre

"This whole experience gave me a positive insight on my career path, which I greatly appreciate. I also came out of my shell, so I'm even more happy!" ~ Elvera, Amisk Community School

"The most positive outcome was to hear the boys I brought more positive about their future." ~ Marshall Mah, teacher Alexis Nakoda Sioux Nation School

"I want Inside Education to know I had fun and had an awesome, informative trip. I really enjoyed touring Portage College and Devon. I learned that when you pick your job, you gotta love it, or you'll be miserable." ~ Britany, Amisk Community School

Inside Education extends its thanks to our partners and supporters who made the 2015 Alberta Boreal Careers Project so successful:



We extend special thanks to Portage College and Meredith Allan as well as Devon Canada and Tracey Thompson, for their generous assistance in putting together ABC 2015.



Summary and Next Steps

Inside Education plans on continuing to expand and diversify program availability related to career awareness in the environment, energy and natural resources. We will certainly revisit the northeast of Alberta in 2016, again focusing on students from Alberta's Aboriginal communities. Additionally, we will be bringing "Alberta Boreal Careers" to the Grande Prairie/Dawson Creek region in Fall 2015.

For further information contact:
Kathryn Wagner, Program Director
kwagner@insideeducation.ca

Steve McIsaac, Executive Director
smcisaac@insideeducation.ca

