

Final Report  
**Tourism Careers For Youth**

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# Final Report

## Tourism Careers for Youth

*"Ready to work in the Deh Cho!"*  
*Dates: September 30<sup>th</sup> –October 18<sup>th</sup>*

### **Introduction:**

The Tourism Education Council recently began promoting a training program, developed by people in the tourism industry, called "Tourism Careers for Youth" in the NWT. The initial course is introductory leaving students with the option to expand into specialized occupational training at a later date. Course offerings are expanding throughout the NWT. In some areas of the NWT, specifically Inuvik, Yellowknife and the Fort Smith area, it has become part of the High School curriculum.

The NWT Tourism Education Council urged us to get involved and prepare the youth to take advantage of the potential that exists in the North within the Tourism Industry. Business opportunities related to the industry continue to present themselves throughout the NWT. Within the Deh Cho, we have a huge National Park visited by thousands of Tourists every year. Many of the opportunities that go with the Park, and other tourist attractions, are being used by Southern based companies to earn good revenue. The people of the North are being left out. It is time to encourage economic development in this area that allows local people to benefit.

### **Course Description:**

The "Tourism Careers for Youth" course curriculum offers youth cross-occupational knowledge and skills about being in the Tourism industry and in the workforce in general. Training in First Aid, CPR, Food Safety, WHIMIS, and the Northernmost Host training complemented the industry specific training noted above. They also received information about tourism-related career paths and appropriate job search skills, including how to improve on professionalism and customer service capabilities, which are transferable to any occupation.

Rather than NWT Tourism Education Council providing the training directly, the Deh Cho Business Development Centre (BDC), with funding assistance from the Deh Cho RWED office, sent two people from Fort Simpson to Yellowknife for a 3 day train-the-trainers session. Upon completion, they were qualified to teach the course to participants from the Deh Cho region. Tonya Makletzoff, from the Deh Cho BDC, and Eileen Marlowe were the two selected. Their resumes are attached.

The BDC then hosted the 3-week Tourism training session for youth ages 18-34 in partnership with Education Culture and Employment (Yellowknife), and NWT Tourism Education Council (NWTTEC) using the two trainers.

The trainers used a team approach. Tonya did the logistical planning, proposal and report writing, arranged workshops/speakers, budgeting, and assisted in teaching and lesson planning, while Eileen implemented the curriculum, marked students work and did most of the lesson planning. This approach worked really well.

The course was taught through classroom training, videos, workbooks, group projects, discussion & role-play, CDROM presentations, oral presentations, community research, guest speakers and workshops. To ensure that the course, developed by industry, is very effective participants are interviewed with a rigorous screening process before they are admitted.

## **Outcome:**

With the course under their belt the participants are not only prepared for employment in the industry, but they are now better equipped to handle, and know, what is expected of them in the workforce. (Portions of the training are applicable to other industries as well.) The course taught them how to work effectively in the industry and ensure that it is sustainable, by teaching them how to promote and present Tourism products/services to world markets and serve as an ambassador for the North. The group of youth were dedicated. The new employment skills gained will last a lifetime.

**Youth:** By the end of the three weeks, eight out of twelve youth achieved a national Certificate of Completion and four extra high school credits. One of the students dropped out due to personal reasons. This was Miranda Isaiah. The other three were considered no shows as they did not appear at all on the first day of class in spite of their stated commitment in the interviews. Out of the 24 youth that applied, nine showed up on the first day. There were 7 cancellations and 8 no shows in total. This may seem like a low number of participants from a national perspective, but considering our low population and the personal challenges the youth from our region face we were quite impressed with the number of graduates. From our point of view all of the graduates demonstrated an excellent effort and commitment to complete the course and the ones who cancelled had legitimate reasons and expressed regret that they could not partake in the course. In fact three of the cancellations stated they would be able to enrol in a High School course if one is offered in the near future.

**Speakers:** Dynamic guest speakers were incorporated to keep it interesting. Speakers such as the Nahanni National Park staff, who gave some in-depth knowledge and understanding of authentic Eco-Tourism. Also, the Tourism Officer informed them of the proper procedures for obtaining licenses and insurances and gave them insight into the regulations. Industry professionals offered advice and real life experiences about what the industry taught them and how to be effective and ensure sustainability. One speaker was Loyal Letcher from the North Nahanni Naturalist Lodge who visited the

class and offered his experience and knowledge and offered answers to many of the youth's questions. He will be a possible employer in the summer season.

**Guest Speakers:**

- Loyal Letcher - North Nahanni Naturalist Lodge, Owner
- Gerde Fricke – RWED, Tourism Officer
- Sophie Borcoman – Nahanni National Park, Heritage Programs Officer
- Sue Sibbeston - Visitor's Information Centre, Manager

**Extras:** Tonya did a PowerPoint presentation on how to set up a Tourism business, and we borrowed the Aurora College computer lab to type up their resumes.

**Field Trips:** The class went on two field trips, one to the Visitor Information Centre and one to the accommodation/food & beverage establishments in town. They also created FAM (familiarization) Tours for the region as a homework assignment. All of which helped them become more familiar with the day-to-day operations of tourism related businesses. Here, they were required to phone current establishments and do research on what is available, as well as the costs involved.

**Workshops:** There was a total of four certification workshops incorporated into the program. The majority of youth completed them. There was one youth who did not complete the Food Safe course and one who did not pass the First Aid segment. This was due to illnesses.

**Workshop Facilitators:**

- Val Gendron – First Aid
- Craig Nowakowski – Food Safety Level 1
- Alex Lacroix – WHIMIS
- Rosanna Strong – Northern Most Host

**The Grad Ceremony:** This took place at the community hall, and there were a total of 40 people in attendance. There were a number of guest speakers and prominent people from the community present to congratulate the youth. We decorated the hall very nicely to assist them at feeling it was a special moment. We had flowers, a cake, catered luncheon, balloons, table clothes, and candles and sparkly confetti on the tables. I think the youth appreciated that we always exceeded their expectations with little surprises. This was our way of teaching by example. Another added touch was that we ordered custom designed pad folios and certificates with matching pens. The pad folios read : “Dare To Soar; Your attitude almost always determines your altitude in life.” And had a picture of an eagle on them. These were ordered from a company called “Successories”.

**Graduation Ceremony Speakers:**

- Key Note Address: Mayor, Tom Wilson
- Industry Professional: Ted Grant, Simpson Air
- GNWT- RWED, Gerde Fricke and Carl Lafferty

- Deh Cho BDC: John Hazenburg, Chairperson

## **Participant Expectations:**

To ensure participation from the outlying Deh Cho communities, travel and accommodation costs were covered by RWED and a per diem to offset the cost of food was provided. This encouraged five youth from outlying communities to apply, however two of the youth were unable to attend the course, leaving three participants from Trout Lake and Wrigley.

Accommodation was provided at the Student Residency building through the Deh Cho Board of Education, which was not being used at the time. However, there was a period of 5 nights where the youth were required to stay at the hotel due to the Education Board meeting needing the residency.

The course took place upstairs in an empty classroom at the Deh Cho Divisional Board of Education Building. Hours were from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday with some tutoring offered at various times during the evenings and lunch hours. The course was fast paced and a full schedule. This was in part due to the holiday Thanksgiving, which fell within the three-week period.

The youth were prepped on what was expected of them long before the course began through letters, interviews and signed contracts. Students were made aware of time constraints and were asked to conduct themselves accordingly. For the out of town participants, this meant absolutely no drugs, alcohol, or smoking on the premises and no guests after 10 pm. All participants had to provide a doctor's note if absent and were notified they would get ½ a mark deducted if they were late for class. Everyone agreed to the terms and demonstrated respect for the rules and each other throughout the course.

## **Evaluation Results:**

In general, people stated in their evaluation assessment of the course that it was above average in a lot of areas. The instructors and course content received the best ratings and the support materials received the lowest rating. The resource section may need further development. The course was also fast paced and did not leave enough time to carry out the group work or absorb all of the information. One example is the time allowed for the reading exercises. The benefit of a fast paced course is the fact that it increased participation from the region. A higher rate of participation offsets the limited amount of time for absorption of the material.

## **Conclusion:**

This has been a very valuable course for our region. It has addressed a need among the young labour force, increasing their awareness of what employers are looking for. This will give them an edge when it comes to competing for jobs in the workforce. On another level, it improved the ability of the region to develop the tourism industry as there are many untapped potential business opportunities for local people.

Clearly, we have enhanced our young labour force's employability, knowledge of the Tourism industry and encouraged youth to gain job-related experiences for their futures. Tourism brings significant revenue to our economy. Assisting in its growth will have a positive impact on our economy as a whole.

Whether the youth use the course to open their own companies or work for other operators, it will lead to better services and sustainability in our economy. An interesting spin off benefit will be the increased information that tourists will likely receive about Northern Canada and Aboriginal Culture. Ultimately, it has provided the youth with much needed skills and experiences that will last a lifetime.