

NO: **R081**

COUNCIL DATE: **April 23, 2012**

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **April 17, 2012**

FROM: **General Manager, Human Resources**

FILE: **ESAF**

SUBJECT: **Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures (ESAF) Initiative**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Human Resources Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the partnership that the City of Surrey, Surrey Libraries, the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Public Library and Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation have entered into through a memorandum of understanding with ACCESS (Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society) to support enhanced aboriginal employment opportunities in the municipal sector.

## BACKGROUND

In 2011 through staff's participation on the Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Strategy's Steering Committee, the City of Surrey was approached by ACCESS to participate in the Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures (ESAF) Program.

ACCESS is a non-profit organization that provides employment assistance services to the Aboriginal community in Metro Vancouver. In 2011, due to the large and growing Aboriginal population in Surrey, ACCESS opened an office in the Surrey City Centre area in partnership with Sto:lo Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training and the Metis Nation BC.

The ESAF Program is jointly funded by the Federal Government and various Aboriginal groups and has an objective of expanding employment opportunities for aboriginal people. The above-referenced partners support the Program through in kind donations of services and materials.

ACCESS states that:

*“Essential Skills are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation to learn a multitude of skills that enable our Aboriginal learners to evolve and adapt to changes within the workplace. Our innovative approach to training is focussed on the development of job skills required for specific job positions. Through this bridge of employer partnerships and customized training, our Aboriginal learners have the tools to support continued successful employment.”*

Aboriginal learners who complete the ESAF Program will be interviewed by the partners as employers but there is no job guarantee.

Working with its municipal sector partners, ACCESS has developed a nine-week essential skills program that helps participants build their employability with respect to municipal jobs. ACCESS provides an interactive classroom environment with a combination of one-on-one teaching, self directed learning and experiential learning in a group environment. The participating municipalities/libraries are providing resources to support in-class learning, including mock interviews, resume writing skills development, coaching in resume writing, coaching in employment application processes and workplace tours.

ACCESS and its ESAF initiative have a proven track record of success with other employers in British Columbia.

## **DISCUSSION**

The City of Surrey and its partners in this initiative have built a positive working relationship with ACCESS. On April 2, 2012, the first class of students in ESAF initiative began their training in the 9-week Essential Skills Program for Clerical/Administrative jobs in the municipal sector. The Aboriginal learners will enhance their reading, document management, numeracy, writing, oral communication, computer, teamwork, decision-making and continuous learning skills through the 9-week Program. Appendix A provides additional details on the Program. This group will graduate on May 31, 2012. The City of Surrey and the Surrey Public Libraries have begun to identify jobs for which these graduates can submit applications for employment.

It is hoped that this experience will solidify a long term relationship between the City of Surrey and ACCESS and that Surrey will set a good example that will encourage other municipalities to join the partnership in the future.

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The City's partnership in the Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures (ESAF) initiative will assist in achieving the objectives of the Surrey Sustainability Charter; more particularly, the initiative will address the following action items:

- SC1: Personnel Policies and Staff Training
- SC5: Plan for the Social Well being of Surrey Residents
- SC16: Socio-cultural Infrastructure and Services
- EC17: Educating the Workforce

## **CONCLUSION**

The City of Surrey, Surrey Libraries and the City of Vancouver are working together and partnering with ACCESS on the ESAF initiative with a view to enhancing employment opportunities in the municipal government sector for aboriginal people.

Nicola Webb  
General Manager, Human Resources

Appendix A – ACCESS recruitment brochure

## About ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR ABORIGINAL FUTURES (ESAF)

Essential Skills are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation to learn a multitude of skills that enable our Aboriginal learners to evolve and adapt to changes within the workplace. Our innovative approach to training is focused on the development of job skills required for specific job positions. Through this bridge of employer partnerships and customized training, our Aboriginal learners have the tools to support continued successful employment.

### The 9-Essential Skills

- Reading
- Document Use
- Numeracy
- Writing
- Oral Communication
- Working with Others
- Thinking
- Computer use
- Continuous Learning

Employer Partners:



Vancouver Public Library



Funded by



[www.accessfutures.com](http://www.accessfutures.com)



## ESSENTIAL SKILLS For ABORIGINAL FUTURES

In partnership with:

## The Municipalities of Surrey and Vancouver

## Clerical/ Administrative

## 9-week Essential Skills Program

April 2 – May 31, 2012

## About the Program

Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures is offering a 9-week Essential Skills enhancement program for those interested in a career in the Clerical/Administrative sector.

The 9-week Essential Skills program will take place at the ESAF site in New Westminster, where participants will delve into lessons and activities designed to enhance their Workplace Essential Skills. Learning is in an interactive classroom environment and will consist of a combination of: one to one teaching, self-directed and experiential learning in a group environment; participants will be exposed to authentic workplace documents and scenarios, workshops and a Library site tour to develop workplace specific Essential Skills.

During the program, participants will be provided an opportunity to interview with the City of Surrey and City of Vancouver HR Departments for potential hire into entry level auxiliary positions such as:

### Office Support Clerk 1 - Clerk 2

- Performs entry level clerical work

### Circulation Service Clerks

- Performs duties related to the shelving and handling of library materials
- Performs entry level clerical work

### Community Services Assistant 2/Cashier Receptionist

- Performs basic clerical work including counter and receptionist duties

The compensation for these positions varies from approximately: \$18.00 to \$22.00 per hour with an additional 12% in lieu of vacation and benefits.

## Job Requirements

- Grade 12 completion or GED
- Able to pass a criminal records check
- Fast and accurate keyboarding/data entry and computer navigation skills
- Communicate clearly and effectively both verbally and in writing
- Spelling and basic numeracy
- Sorting, alpha and numeric
- Good interpersonal, customer service and public relations skills
- Working knowledge of office practices, procedures and equipment operation
- Ability to effectively multi-task in a fast paced environment

## Eligibility

- Aboriginal ancestry and able to work in Canada
- Have a referral from an ACCESS Employment Counsellor
- Willingness to learn about Essential Skills
- Demonstrate reliability, punctuality, commitment to demonstrate a positive attitude

## Course Outline

- Customized Essential Skills Enhancement
- TOWES Testing
- Authentic Workplace Document Use
- Work Site Tours
- Hours: 9:00am to 3:30pm
- Daily: Monday to Friday

## Contact Information

For more information about the Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures program, please contact an Employment Counsellor at one of the following **ACCESS Employment Assistance Services Offices**:

### ACCESS Employment Assistance Services

Suite 110-1607 E. Hastings Street  
Vancouver, BC V5L 1S7  
Tel: 604 251-7955 Fax: 604 251-7954

### ACCESS Aboriginal Connections to Employment

390 Main Street  
Vancouver, BC V6A 2T1  
Tel: 604 687-7480 Fax: 604 687-7481

### ACCESS ATEC Employment & Training

10757 – 138<sup>th</sup> Street  
Surrey, BC V3T4K8  
Tel: 778-395-0385 Fax: 604-581-0944

ESAF is located at:

735 Carnarvon Street  
New Westminster, BC V3M 1E6  
Tel: 604 521-5929 Fax: 604 521-5931



# ESSENTIAL SKILLS for ABORIGINAL FUTURES

In partnership with



## Clerical/Administrative

### 9-week Essential Skills Program

**April 2 – May 31, 2012**

**Monday – Friday 9:00am – 3:30pm**

#### Eligibility:

- Aboriginal ancestry and able to work in Canada
- Have a referral from an ACCESS Employment Counselor
- Grade 12
- Must pass a criminal records check
- Fast and accurate keyboarding/data entry and computer navigation skills
- Communicate clearly and effectively both verbally and in writing
- Working knowledge of office practices, procedures and equipment operation
- Ability to effectively multi-task in a fast paced environment

#### For more information:

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#### ESAF is located at:

**735 Carnarvon Street New Westminster, BC V3M 1E6 Tel: 604 521-5929 Fax: 604 521-5931**

Funded by Service Canada

**Canada** 