

Canadian Council for  
**ABORIGINAL  
BUSINESS**



# **BUSINESS** **RECOVERY FORUM**

*Rebuilding our economy together!*

*sodexo*

**QUALITY OF LIFE SERVICES**

## **POST REPORT**

**A VIRTUAL LIVE EVENT**

**SEPTEMBER 16, 2020**

together  
we will make great things happen



***Proud Patron Member of CCAB***

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Progressive  
Aboriginal  
RELATIONS

**GOLD  
LEVEL**

Canadian Council for  
Aboriginal Business 

# BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM

A VIRTUAL LIVE EVENT SEPTEMBER 16, 2020



It was our great pleasure to sponsor the Business Recovery Forum, an exceptional event organized by the CCAB this year. This was for us the occasion to celebrate our partnership with our Indigenous partners and the communities where we work and share some of our experiences in working as true partners.

Sodexo's relationships with our Indigenous partners and communities are directly tied to our goal of becoming an employer of choice, as well as a partner of choice for our clients. Our Energy & Resources segment business has deep, longstanding partnerships with Indigenous groups and communities with whom we collaborate very closely, employing, training and developing community members to provide Quality of Life services. The Energy and Mining industries have undergone major upheavals in recent years and this current unprecedented pandemic event is testing their resilience and flexibility even further.

At the height of this crisis, we continued to provide on-the-ground support, experience, uncompromising health and safety standards, and a strong commitment to engaging with local communities. Today, many of our clients' workforce continues to need services that support their well-being and meet their evolving needs while they are on-site.

I am confident to say that this life-changing crisis brought out the best in our people, especially our frontline employees who kept serving our clients and helping our communities despite physically and mentally challenging working conditions.

During the digital Business Recovery Forum, we celebrated the top Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation Award by rewarding Ntityix Development Corporation. With a growing and sustainable portfolio of diversified strategic assets to maximize community benefits to its shareholder and members, this company serves the social, cultural and economic needs of the Westbank First Nation Community improving their Quality of Life. Recognizing this company makes us even prouder to be a trusted partner of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. Together we strengthen and enhance a prosperous Indigenous economy through the fostering of business relationships.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Erwin Joosten". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Erwin Joosten  
Senior Vice-President Energy & Resources  
Sodexo Canada

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In the early days of the pandemic our priorities changed as they did for everyone –an unprecedented time for all of us. CCAB focused on helping members navigate through the various assistive services and financial programs and ensured, by working with government and other organizations, that Indigenous businesses were eligible to apply. Our members, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses, wanted to discuss concerns and find solutions on how to move forward through this economic crisis. It soon became evident that as we maneuvered through new and uncharted circumstances we needed to think about recovery and moving back to a period of prosperity.

From the research done by CCAB, we knew that without meaningful and real Indigenous partnerships, the Canadian economy would be at further risk. Our members are also aware and understand, that Canadians owe it to Indigenous communities to implicitly share in the rebuilding opportunities that will increase the Indigenous economy and benefit us all.

**AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY**  
**97 PERCENT**  
of attendees found **THE FORUM**  
helpful in bringing them informative  
and relevant content.

an impressive speakers list of Indigenous leaders, industry experts, corporate professionals, and business mentors from across the nation. They delivered valuable insight and relevant content on how to recover and rethink business priorities. There was much progress through networking and important dialogue that created opportunities and shared best practices.

The Forum also allowed a very thoughtful way for CCAB and participants to celebrate some of our member companies that received their well-deserved Progressive Aboriginal Relations certification. We proudly presented several national award recipients as well, including Keith McIntosh who received the award for Excellence in Aboriginal Business,

We needed an innovative forum to address the concerns brought on by the changes that enveloped us all because of COVID-19. We created the *Business Recovery Forum*, a live virtual and unique opportunity to discover innovative ways to network, collaborate, and exchange ideas to rebuild businesses and prosper in this new reality and uncertain economy. The full-day event, the first of its kind, featured host Stan Wesley who made us feel connected and kept the energy level high throughout the entire day. It featured an



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Ntityx Development Corporation the recipient of the Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation award, and Dr. Deborah Saucier who received the Indigenous Women in Leadership award.

This post-Forum report shares the various session intentions and key findings from discussions – topics of which were found to be most pertinent to our members, businesses, and organizations. The analytics, engagement data, survey findings, and the feedback and testimonials from attendees help provide CCAB with next steps and a positive direction. We will continue this momentum based on the key messages and feedback to

plan a series of forums and events in 2021. It is important as we all continue to recover and cope with the challenges of COVID-19 that CCAB provides members and Indigenous businesses with engaging events and useful opportunities to learn, network, and help adapt to this new world. Together we can continue to move forward on a path of recovery and prosperity.

A sincere thank you to the generosity of our donor, Sodexo, for enabling us to produce the Business Recovery Forum report.

Tabatha Bull  
President & CEO  
Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business



OVER **600 PARTICIPANTS**  
ATTENDED THE **BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM**

# BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM

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## BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM AGENDA

Welcome and Opening Address: Stan Wesley, Tabatha Bull

Keynote Speaker: Rob Bigler, General Manager, eBay Canada

On Stage with Stan: Gamification, Prizes, What's Next!

Throughout the Day Visit the Virtual Tradeshow & Marketplace and Connect with Attendees in the Networking Rooms

Main Stage Award Presentations:

- Excellence in Aboriginal Relations
- Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation
- Progressive Aboriginal Relations
- Indigenous Women in Leadership

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Session 1: Supply Change

Session 2: National Indigenous Business Organizations Working Together

Session 3: E-Commerce in a New Economy: How to Promote your Business in a Virtual World

Session 4: Workplace Transformations – The New Normal

Session 5: Rethinking Tourism for the Future

Session 6: Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) – it is more important than ever!

Session 7: Rebuild and Leverage Indigenous Land into Business Success

Session 8: Export & Trade

Session 9: Establishing Partnerships with Big Industry

Session 10: Indigenous Women in Business

Session 11: Access to Capital and Financing for Indigenous Business

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Closing Remarks and Grand Prize

Continue to Visit the Virtual Tradeshow & Marketplace and Networking Rooms

# BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM

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## KEYNOTE ADDRESS Rob Bigler, eBay Canada



Robert Bigler, General Manager, eBay Canada provided an overview of e-commerce, the benefits of selling on a global marketplace like eBay, and tips for moving business online in response to the pandemic.

The content was designed to be useful for established e-commerce retailers keen to add an additional channel for reaching customers worldwide as well as businesses looking to make their first online sale.

eBay has been a proud partner to Canadian small businesses since launching 25 years ago giving businesses access to 182 million buyers in 190 markets. Bigler outlined how e-commerce is growing and the opportunities for small businesses to extend their online presence, reach a worldwide audience, and export to foreign markets. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it necessary for businesses to adapt and think differently. eBay offers information on how to move a business online at [eBay.ca/UpandRunning](https://www.eBay.ca/UpandRunning).

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*“Congratulations to CCAB for bringing together Aboriginal business leaders and other experts for an important conversation around pandemic recovery with a focus on practical solutions. eBay Canada was happy to contribute and is here to help retailers adapt to this evolving situation. While the crisis has created significant challenges, it has also exposed a spirit of resilience and innovation within the Indigenous business community that is truly inspiring.”*

*Rob Bigler, General Manager, eBay Canada*

## SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

for the virtual event **SURGED** on all platforms.

The highest increase in posts were seen on

**TWITTER** at **525%** and

**INSTAGRAM** at **1200%**

# BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM

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## SESSION 1 Supply Change

For generations, Indigenous people have provided goods and resources to help Canada grow. Today there are approximately 56,000 Indigenous businesses thriving and ready to help Canada compete and prosper. However, they are underrepresented in the supply chain of the federal government, which now has a mandate to procure at least 5% from Indigenous business. Achieving this mandate will help struggling businesses affected by COVID-19 with their recovery. This session discussed moving forward with CCAB's Supply Change initiative and how to do business with government.

### Moderator



**Philip Ducharme**  
Director, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, CCAB

### Speakers



**Sam Damm**  
President, FoxWise Technologies Inc.  
Founder, The Public Sector Aboriginal Business Association (PSABA)



**Garen Blais**  
Director, Gestion ADC



**Lionel Drouin**  
President and Principal Consultant, LDC Solutions Inc.



**Victoria LaBillois**  
Owner, Wejipeg Excavation & Construction

### Key Messages

- For the federal government to achieve at least its 5% procurement target from Indigenous business, there needs to be a mandate in place that has consequences if the target is not met.
- There is a need to simplify the procurement process and reduce barriers. If a company is required to have previous government contracts awarded in order to qualify, new Indigenous businesses will never be able to qualify.
- Indigenous businesses are capable and do have capacity to bid and succeed on federal contracts. It is important to address inherent biases and stereotypes of Indigenous businesses and peoples for all government procurement decision makers.
- Better communication and engagement are needed between Indigenous businesses and the government. If a company has not had a success after 30 bids, they need clarification on what they can do to become successful.
- From Parliament to the Executive to departmental staff, everyone needs to understand and advocate for Indigenous procurement for the betterment of Canada and must take the necessary action now.

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*"As a new corporate member of the CCAB, attending the Business Recovery Forum was the perfect introduction into all the great work that the CCAB is doing. We look forward to participating in future events."*

*Kayla Maduk, Specialist – Supplier Diversity, Procurement Operations, Bell Canada*

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## SESSION 2 National Indigenous Economic Organizations Working Together

In these unprecedented times, it has been more important than ever for Indigenous organizations to come together as one unified voice. National Indigenous Organizations have been working together to ensure the Indigenous economy not only survives COVID-19, but how they plan to ensure it will thrive through recovery.

### Moderator



**Tabatha Bull**  
President & CEO,  
CCAB

### Speakers



**Dawn Madahbee Leach**  
Vice-Chairperson,  
The National Indigenous  
Economic Development  
Board



**Shannin Metatawabin**  
CEO, National Aboriginal  
Capital Corporation  
Association (NACCA)



**Kelly Lendsay**  
President & CEO,  
Indigenous Works

### Key Messages

- The collective impact of Indigenous organizations working together is greater than each organization working separately with smaller isolated impacts and in some cases in competition with one another for the same funding.
- The pandemic has also highlighted the socio-economic gaps. We need to work together to ensure that the gap does not widen further, and that recovery ensures there are opportunities to close the gap.
- National Indigenous economic organizations are working together on a National Indigenous Economic Strategy, which has economic calls to prosperity under four pillars: Land, People, Financial, and Infrastructure.
- Indigenous peoples and communities have the capacity to achieve economic and social prosperity on their own terms.

These are the recommended priorities during the recovery period:

- Increasing Indigenous innovation for economic transformation, employment, and well-being
- More policy recommendations to government on how to involve Indigenous women in the economy
- Incorporate technology in everything we do
- Research
- Export and investment
- Youth and skills upgrading
- Indigenous business procurement

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*“Congratulations on delivering your first virtual Business Forum! You had some amazing speakers and I can’t wait to go back in and listen to the other presentations.”*

*Tuesday Johnson-MacDonald, TAP Resources*

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## SESSION 3 E-Commerce in a New Economy: How to Promote your Business in a Virtual World

How can businesses and entrepreneurs pivot to buy or sell their goods in the digital economy? A panel discussion from expert organizations and CCAB members who have succeeded in the new digital economy shared their transformative stories. Best practices, new technologies, social media/communication tips, and e-marketing skills were discussed to help businesses survive and thrive.

### Moderator



**Paul-Emile McNab**  
Director, Business Development and Strategic Initiatives, CCAB

### Speakers



**Nicole Hurtubise-Watts**  
Head of Government Relations Canada, Paypal



**Jenn Harper**  
Founder, Cheekbone Beauty



**Kim Barrington**  
Director of Operations, Rogers Communications Enterprise Division



**Rakesh Krishna**  
e-Commerce Leader, Deloitte Digital



**Sara Scurfield**  
E-commerce Marketing Lead, Google

### Key Messages

- The impact of COVID-19 has caused a transformative shift to e-commerce business – 365 days a year.
- Some businesses have moved from crisis management to more opportunity by pivoting their operational structure.
- E-Commerce has become a necessity with an essential supply chain. Look at cost effectiveness and measuring data to increase efficiency. By looking and thinking about what customers want, businesses can channel more innovation.
- It is important to take full advantage of the technology available for your small business. You can find and use different platforms for customers to access and engage. Live streaming and selling online can increase product reach and even international growth.
- Companies like Deloitte Digital are helping SMEs digitize their businesses to optimize customer experience and drive growth.
- Complementary programs like Google's ShopHere help businesses to build an ecommerce site and teach the basics of digital marketing. (e.g., Manitobah Mukluks expanded globally by using the program's digital marketing tools)

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*"In my opinion [CCAB] were the rock stars of virtual events with a great mix of ideas and concepts and even better, good people. This is the start of a new wave of doing events and already after this one others are following the lead with virtual conferences..."*

*Terry Mitchell, Graham Group*

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## SESSION 4 Workplace Transformations; The New Normal

When we emerge from this pandemic, what permanent changes will be ingrained in our workplace strategy? People will think and behave differently as businesses recover, rebuild and transform. The well-being of employees will drive long-term changes and workplace safety will be a priority for employers. Executing a well thought out plan for your business can make a difference between success or failure as we rebound. In this session, industry experts discussed business preparedness in response to COVID-19, and how to operate effectively, working remotely #WFH or in split operations.

### Moderator



**Lauren Bernardi**  
Principal, Bernardi  
Human Resource Law

### Speakers



**Darryl Wright**  
Associate Partner, EY



**Jennifer Campbell**  
President,  
Two Worlds Consulting



**Lisa Isaac**  
Owner, Lisa Issac  
Human Resources

### Key Messages

- People are being productive at home but miss the face-to-face interactions and talking to their coworkers about non-work-related things.
- There are ways to take advantage of a crisis, it's a time to identify issues and to innovate: What have we stopped doing, what have we started doing, what do we need to do?
- The burdens of working from home fall on people differently. Those who are caring for children, elderly family or family with disabilities have an additional load to carry. A return to work plan needs to take into account diversity to ensure all individuals are included.
- Empathy, transparency, and communication are crucial at this time, and balancing this with work and professionalism can be hard. People need to be empathetic to their employees and coworkers. Especially now, during transitions like back to school, back to the office, reopening etc., because it is a very stressful time for many people.

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*"The conference was excellent. It felt like an in-person conference and I was able to make many great connections for future opportunities for students."*

*Brian Malott, Fanshawe College*

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## SESSION 5 Rethinking Tourism for the Future

The coronavirus pandemic has triggered a global economic crisis in the tourism industry. In Canada, Indigenous tourism alone was on a steady climb to quickly becoming a \$2 billion industry until the immediate and immense impact of COVID-19 turned it into a staggering revenue loss. Will removing travel restrictions, opening border closures, and eliminating mass gathering bans jump start the economy or do we need to restore confidence and rethink the tourism sector for the future? In this session, experts from the Indigenous tourism industry discussed the impact on this diverse, independent sector and how to move forward to build a stronger, more sustainable and resilient tourism economy.

### Moderator



**Keith Henry**  
President & CEO,  
Indigenous Tourism  
Association of Canada

### Speakers



**Frank Antoine**  
Co-Owner, Moccasin  
Trails, Indigenous Tourism,  
BC Board, ITAC Board



**Marilyn Jensen**  
Yukon First Nations  
Culture and Tourism  
Chair, ITAC Vice Chair



**Darrell Bernard**  
Owner/Operator, Kluskap  
Ridge RV & Campground,  
ITAC Board Director

### Key Messages

- The tourism industry was hit hard, especially since the borders were closed.
- While borders remain closed tourism businesses can increase marketing efforts to local people.
- Innovative ideas are needed to increase the flow of the potential local customers.
- Rethinking the tourism sector in the short-term by increasing Canadian interest to less restricted activities (e.g., outdoor adventures) and areas could help restore traveler confidence.

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*“Congratulations on a great virtual event. I was very impressed with the speakers that I saw and the entire virtual platform that accommodated so many features – breakout sessions, exhibits etc. It must have been a lot of work to pull it off, so well done!”*

*Sarah Weber, P.Geo., MBA | President & CEO, C3 Alliance Corp*

**SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT** for the one-day live event also increased with **INSTAGRAM ENGAGEMENT** gaining a boost of **2233%**. **TWITTER** rose by **612%** and **FACEBOOK** by **339%**.

## SESSION 6 Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) It is more important than ever!

Inevitably the pandemic has put companies under test for its commitment to ethical business conduct and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The financial strains caused by the outbreak may tempt some companies to push for only short-term gains and reduce their long-term CSR investment with the mounting pressure to survive. In this session, Bruce Power and communities of interest discussed why building progressive Aboriginal relations is so important for both short- and long-term gains.

### Moderator



**Luanne Whitecrow**  
Director, Progressive  
Aboriginal Relations  
(PAR), CCAB

### Speakers



**David Abbott**  
Director, Community &  
Indigenous Relations,  
Bruce Power



**Chief Lester Anoquot**  
Saugeen First Nation



**Chief Greg Nadjiwon**  
Chippewas of Nawash  
Unceded First Nation



**Kathleen Ryan**  
Manager, Saugeen  
Ojibway Nation  
Environment Office

### Key Messages

- PAR is a framework that helps organizations build out effective collaboration/partnership processes in a meaningful way, where there exists true consultation and engagement.
- The medical isotope partnership between Bruce Power and Saugeen Ojibway Nation reflects the true spirit and intent of what the PAR program aims to achieve as it guides companies on how they work with communities, creating a long-term sustainable impact. These cordial discussions have resulted in numerous partnerships, including one signed last summer, which saw Saugeen and Bruce Power officials agree to join forces and market new isotopes in the fight against cancer.

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### Quotes from panelists reflections as a result of using the PAR framework to build out partnerships in First Nation communities:

*"I think we've had interactions that have developed trust to get us to a point where we can have meaningful discussions regarding economic development," said David Abbott, Director, Community and Indigenous Relations, Bruce Power and a member of Pay Plats First Nation in northern Ontario.*

*"I'm really excited to see this economic relationship flourish," said Chief Lester Anoquot, Saugeen First Nation. "I'm looking forward to this new partnership and the new partnership we have with Bruce Power."*

*"In our territory we expected to be included in ideas," said Chief Greg Nadjiwon, Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. "We don't want to come in after the fact. I believe we're there. We want to find ways to work with it and to get equity out of it."*

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**Scotiabank**

## SESSION 7 Rebuild and Leverage Indigenous Land into Business Success

In this session, the game changing First Nations Land Management Act was discussed. The Act gives Indigenous communities the authority to develop their own land laws (land codes) so they are no longer managed by the government under the Indian Act. Speakers shared stories of overcoming barriers to economic development, before, during, and after COVID-19. They discussed how boosting revenues through self-governing taxation, and maneuvering through intricacies of land management legislation, will provide vital information toward economic prosperity as we rebuild and recover from this pandemic.

### Moderator



**Cherie Brant**  
Partner, Border Ladner  
Gervais LLP

### Speakers



**Paul Gruner**  
President & CEO,  
Det'on Cho Corporation  
(Yellowknife, NT)



**Nelson Derickson**  
Business Development  
Officer, Ntityix  
Development Corporation



**Adam Good**  
Band Manager,  
Shawanaga First Nation

### Key Messages

- First Nation Land Management Act (FNLMA) (1999) is legislation that is geared towards First Nation communities under Indian Act. First Nation communities can opt into this legislation.
- The greater goal for most First Nations is to pull away from the Indian Act and FNLMA is one pathway to do that. This builds a greater sense of confidence and ability to take risks for economic development projects.
- Land is an asset to create additional revenue for the community, provide sustainability and commercial opportunities. Land also attracts investment and can generate employment, wealth, and revenue back to the community.
- Best practices for communities opting into FNLMA: develop land codes and laws before going for big corporate development; include the community early in the land code development stages; and create a community comprehensive plan.
- Non-settled First Nations have increased challenges to land management and creating a land code. Indigenous land is not under a fee simple title. If it was fee simple, it could be transferred more easily. This affects the marketability of the Indigenous land, but a community's land code can change this.
- By removing the Crown from commercial activities through establishing your own land code enables the process to move much faster. It's better for business.
- As an example, Westbank First Nation has embraced the FNLMA to build their own land code. They have been collecting property tax since 1993. After creating the land code, growth in Westbank has been fast.

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## SESSION 8 Export & Trade

In an unprecedented global health crisis, export and trade are essential to rebuild the economy. Over 24% of Indigenous SMEs export, 1 in 5 sell to the U.S., and 1 in 7 sell to non-U.S. overseas markets. In the midst of significant uncertainty, how do we increase confidence in trade and global markets? How do we keep supply chains flowing? By examining research findings, speakers discussed how to help inform policy decisions through thoughtful discussion and objective evidence and analysis.

### Moderator



**Patrick Watson**  
Director of Public Policy,  
CCAB

### Speakers



**Paul Gaspar**  
Director of Small  
Business, UPS



**Heather Berthelette**  
CEO,  
Spirit Healthcare Group



**Chris Moran**  
Director General, Trade  
Portfolio Strategy and  
Coordination, Global  
Affairs Canada



**Graeme Moore**  
Client Partner, BDC  
Advisory Services,  
Business Development  
Canada



**Robert Fosco**  
Vice President, Partner  
Channels, Export  
Development Canada

### Key Messages

- Exporting can help small and medium-sized enterprises grow and be more resilient – increasing and diversifying customer base to manage risk.
- The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) can support businesses in preparing for international markets, assessing market potential, providing introductions to qualified contacts, and helping with business problem resolution. Companies that work with the TCS earn 20% more in value, export to 25% more markets, and export 11% more product varieties than non-TCS clients.
- A Trade Commissioner can provide valuable information and connect you with international opportunities or funding through CanExport. They also organize business delegations and trade missions for Indigenous businesses, and offer support to companies registered in Canada to reduce the cost and risk of expanding to new markets through the CanExport SMEs program, which covers 75% of project costs and provides up to \$75,000 for a range of export development activities.
- Research is vital! Before you export, it's important to evaluate the export readiness and export potential of your company and develop an export plan. Organizations like the TCS and Export Development Canada (EDC) have resources that can help, including a quiz for export readiness and a Step-by-Step Guide to Exporting. EDC have also underlined their willingness to work collaboratively with CCAB to support Indigenous export growth.
- Access to finance remains as a persistent barrier to export growth. Business Development Canada (BDC) and EDC resources and services may be able to fill some of this gap. Global Affairs Canada also supports Indigenous exporters.
- UPS has suite of free services for Indigenous customers that helps them overcome challenges with customs officials. These services provide real business solutions and insights that are critical to first-time exporters.

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*“Frankly, I learned from you! I think that the format was excellent – the length was right, the facilitation was dynamic and warm...”*

*Chris Moran, Government of Canada*

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Global Affairs  
Canada  
Trade Commissioner  
Service

Affaires mondiales  
Canada  
Service des  
délégués commerciaux

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## SESSION 9 Establishing Partnerships with Big Industry

Establishing partnerships to rebuild the economy, industry representatives unveiled their secrets to successful alliances.

### Moderator



**Mike Jacobs**  
Chairman and CEO,  
Cambium Indigenous  
Professional Services  
(CIPS)

### Speakers



**Terry Mitchell**  
Indigenous Relations,  
Director, Business  
Development (Canada),  
Graham Construction &  
Engineering



**Chief Harvey McLeod**  
Upper Nicola Band



**Melissa Hardy-Giles**  
Owner, Origin



**Craig Hallden**  
Indigenous Relations  
Manager, LNG

### Key Messages

- There is a need to get to know one another over time to form a true partnership. Two different worlds come together initially, so communication is key.
- Partnerships must have shared values. Respect is a key factor toward a positive partnership.
- It is helpful to keep an open mind and be willing to learn. The processes of big industry are often formal, but the approaches of Indigenous communities must still be respected.
- Recognize that a good relationship can take time, but once there is understanding, things move a lot faster in a partnership.
- Be an ally in economic reconciliation.
- Indigenous communities bring value to partnerships. There are untapped career opportunities amongst the Indigenous population.
- There is a need for appropriate and sufficient capacity funding to communities in order to facilitate effective partnerships.
- Business can be effective if working within the timelines that have been established by the community
- Programs like CCAB's Aboriginal Procurement Marketplace give Indigenous businesses an opportunity to deliver their product or service to consumers through vendor partnerships.

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*"Thank you for a great job presenting an educational and fun forum... it was a day well spent and the CCAB team did an outstanding job. You provided a good selection of timely topics to select from and I'm sure many of us have benefitted immensely from your efforts as we all adjust to the new normal."*

*Chris Huby, New Way Graphics*

Sponsored by **GRAHAM**

## SESSION 10 Indigenous Women in Business

In this session, speakers shared best practices for business continuity and recovery. Participants heard first-hand experiences from leading Indigenous women and their story behind the LIFT Circle. An initiative of the Indigenous LIFT Collective, the LIFT Circle created a sacred space for Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs to learn, love, and LIFT together through the COVID19 crisis and beyond. The LIFT Circle has a vision to co-create the conditions for Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs to THRIVE.

### Moderator



**Tabatha Bull**  
President & CEO,  
CCAB

### Speakers



**Teara Fraser**  
CEO, Raven Institute,  
CEO, Iskwew Air



**Nicole McLaren**  
Owner/Founder,  
Raven Reads



**Michele Crook Young**  
CEO, National Aboriginal Trust  
Officers Association (NATOA)

### Key Messages

- Financing is the most significant barrier for Indigenous women entrepreneurs and interest rates through alternative organizations are much higher than at other financial institutions, this should not be the case. Create better opportunities for access to capital for Indigenous entrepreneurs.
- Governments should seek out Indigenous-owned businesses to support and procure. More advocacy is needed.
- The idea of co-creating the conditions for Indigenous women entrepreneurs to thrive is the most natural, quick, effective pathway to economic reconciliation. Businesses need to co-create alongside these incredible women.
- Have an entrepreneurial spirit – simply dream it, design it, and do it.
- Think BIG and get into industries that are not usually occupied by women.

• • •

*"I'm so glad I had the opportunity to participate in CCAB's Business Recovery Forum. It was fun, interactive, easy to participate in the various events and Stan was an excellent host. Loved his energy! The theme of taking the time to build meaningful relationships really resonated with me and is needed now more than ever. Seeing all the PAR certified companies was impressive. Congratulations CCAB on a job well done!"*

*Marie-Beth Cay, Suncor*

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Barry + Laurie Green  
Family Charitable Trust



Women  
Entrepreneurship  
Knowledge Hub

Portail de connaissances  
pour les femmes  
en entrepreneuriat

## SESSION 11 Access to Capital and Financing for Indigenous Business

This panel of financial experts discussed how to understand the challenges that Indigenous businesses face in unlocking financial opportunities and how to best take charge of economic recovery.

### Moderator



**Tanja Perry**

District Vice President,  
Alberta North/NWT,  
Scotiabank

### Speakers



**Alicia Dubois**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Alberta Indigenous  
Opportunities  
Corporation (AIOC)



**Shannin  
Metatawabin**

CEO, National Aboriginal  
Capital Corporation  
Association (NACCA)



**Ryan Mclean**

Vice President,  
Financing, Interior,  
North, Indigenous,  
BDC



**Todd Evans**

National Lead,  
Indigenous Exporters,  
Export Development  
Canada



**Jeff Cyr**

Managing Partner,  
Raven Capital

### Key Messages

- All sectors have had difficulty due to COVID-19, but e-commerce has grown, specifically e-commerce for groceries and food (online shopping and deliveries) which has boomed.
- COVID-19 has exposed shortcoming in global supply chains, but there have also been some opportunities as buyers look for new suppliers.
- There has been pressure on corporate Canada to be more progressive and inclusive in its funding. More diversity mandates that had started a while back have been sped up from onset of COVID-19. Aside from profit, there is a need for some social good, a more balanced approach between social interest and profit.
- The COVID crisis has also revealed that the Indigenous market is one of the fastest-growing markets. Corporations need to take advantage of this fact.

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*"...CCAB truly set the gold standard on virtual conferences! The day of the event, I didn't move from my home office... I was busy keeping up with the networking rooms, breakout sessions and connecting with attendees via the attendee list... I truly believe that I made better and more meaningful connections, than if the conference was in-person..."*

*Monica James, Indigenous Banking Manager, Business Centre | BDC*

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## CONCLUSION & COMMITMENTS

The Business Recovery Forum set the standard for an experience that is still evolving. From informative presentations to opportunities for one-on-one networking, the live virtual forum was designed to create a positive result for attendees, speakers, and sponsors. The overall response to CCAB's social media marketing is reassuring as executives and business owners adapt to the new reality. Although the event metrics are largely positive, continued feedback from our members and sponsors is essential so that we can proceed in an effective and informative way. The analytics show that there is an appetite for more virtual events to help businesses overcome the isolation and avoid silos during the pandemic. Worth noting from the data and participant feedback is that CCAB's Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program appears to be of growing interest to Canadian organizations.

Overall, the event was a valuable forum that covered a lot of relevant topics to help businesses manage and come out stronger from the pandemic. The consensus was that the Forum was well executed with a good platform and retained high energy throughout the day, which is a significant achievement when bringing people together virtually. Participants said they enjoyed networking with CCAB members in virtual rooms or in private conversations. Many made strong connections and comments were positive that they would welcome further opportunities to engage in additional CCAB virtual business forums.

A key message predominant throughout the Forum was that Indigenous businesses want meaningful partnerships that ensure they are in the initial consultation stage and not an afterthought. CCAB's PAR program is the framework that will help organizations build effective and meaningful partnerships.

One of the important next steps based on session outcomes is to continue to strengthen a procurement relationship between Indigenous business and both government and corporate Canada. This is vital for both a prosperous Indigenous economy and to strengthen and recover Canada's wealth and marketplace.

There were several other prominent key messages and insights derived from the Forum and the feedback following provided some key observations that were invaluable to CCAB's work going forward. Based on these conversations and suggestions, CCAB stands by the following commitments to its members and Indigenous business and communities:

- Work with government to advise them on ways to simplify the procurement process and reduce barriers for Indigenous business
- Continue efforts with all levels of government and all departments so they understand and advocate for Indigenous business and an increased Indigenous economy to benefit all.
- Develop more research and collaborate with organizations, institutions, and governments to support Indigenous business and export growth.
- Further promote supply change and the Aboriginal Procurement Marketplace to connect Indigenous businesses with corporations committed to supporting Indigenous businesses through procurement and established vendor partnerships.
- Reinforce cultural awareness so that companies share rebuilding opportunities with Indigenous businesses and communities.
- Continue to collaborate with other Indigenous organizations to achieve socio-economic prosperity.
- Support outreach for the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program to establish real and meaningful Indigenous partnerships.
- Strive to communicate with and connect more people virtually and in meaningful ways.

# BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM

A VIRTUAL LIVE EVENT SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

IT WAS A GREAT DAY TO CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS BUSINESS!

## Aboriginal Business A W A R D

EXCELLENCE IN  
ABORIGINAL  
RELATIONS



CCAB congratulates **PLATO President and CEO, Keith McIntosh**, founder of PLATO Testing, the world's first Indigenous-led and staffed software testing company. Keith has introduced more than 85 corporations, over the last four years, to the value and capabilities of Indigenous people as technology professionals, and has helped to advance cultural awareness and understanding in boardrooms from Vancouver to Halifax and beyond. His goal in founding the company was to address two important issues: our country's shortage of technology professionals and the high rates of unemployment among Indigenous youth.



## Aboriginal Business A W A R D

ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION



CCAB congratulates **Ntityx Development Corporation**, the general partner that manages the corporate division of Westbank First Nation. It exists to serve the social, cultural, and economic interests of the community. The corporate division of Westbank First Nation (formerly Westbank Indian Band) began in 1973 with the formation of Westbank Indian Band Development Company. Today, the corporation manages multiple divisions including 59,000 hectares of forest tenure, a construction division responsible for the majority of the WFN community core institutional buildings and residential housing needs for band members, two shopping centre partnerships, and a retail gift store.



# BUSINESS RECOVERY FORUM

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## Aboriginal Business A W A R D

INDIGENOUS  
WOMEN  
IN LEADERSHIP



CCAB congratulates **Dr. Deborah Saucier**, a proud Métis who is committed to advancing reconciliation on university campuses and in academia. As the president of Vancouver Island University, Dr. Saucier is working toward closing the education gap for Indigenous youth so they may achieve their full potential and strengthen their communities. Previously, she served as president of MacEwan University, where she worked to incorporate UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action into institutional decision making. She implemented both policy and physical changes on campus to ensure that Indigenous students saw their heritage reflected in campus spaces.



## Progressive Aboriginal RELATIONS

Canadian Council for  
Aboriginal Business

### Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) Awards

CCAB recognizes and honours the achievements of 2020 PAR-certified companies



Progressive  
Aboriginal  
RELATIONS **BRONZE  
LEVEL**

Canadian Council for  
Aboriginal Business

Bird Construction  
Hatch

Progressive  
Aboriginal  
RELATIONS **SILVER  
LEVEL**

Canadian Council for  
Aboriginal Business

Hydro One  
Mosaic

Progressive  
Aboriginal  
RELATIONS **GOLD  
LEVEL**

Canadian Council for  
Aboriginal Business

BMO  
ESS  
Brook McIlroy  
Bruce Power  
Cameco  
Leaders International Indigenous  
Markets  
Suncor

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CCAB is a national member-based organization. Our membership includes Indigenous businesses, community owned economic development corporations, and companies operating in Canada.

Our office, located in Toronto, Ontario, has extensive outreach across the nation and beyond. We are governed by a voluntary Board of Directors that are representative of our membership as patrons, Indigenous business members, and senior industry leaders.

The staff is a team of dynamic professionals dedicated to economic reconciliation and growing the Indigenous economy for the benefit of all Canadians.

CCAB is a non-partisan/non-profit organization. It is supported through corporate funding, event sponsorship, and membership dues, with some support from government for research and program development. Please contact us regarding individual donations.



**www.ccab.com**

T: 416-961-8663 E: info@ccab.com

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