

MEDIA RELEASE

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Skills Ontario recognizes National Indigenous Peoples Day, continues to provide opportunities for Indigenous youth to explore career opportunities

Ontario (June 21, 2020) – Today is National Indigenous Peoples Day in Canada, a day for all Canadians to celebrate the heritage, diverse cultures, and achievements of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

“In acknowledgement of National Indigenous Peoples Day, Skills Ontario recognizes the significance of celebrating the identities and successes of Indigenous peoples,” says Ian Howcroft, CEO of Skills Ontario. “We are pleased to continue to present opportunities through our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Initiatives to Indigenous youth so that they can explore the pathways in the skilled trades and technologies. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Skills Ontario has quickly adapted to provide opportunities to Indigenous youth through a virtual medium, and we look forward to continuing to deliver these initiatives.”

“Skills Ontario is committed to creating an environment that encourages openness and inclusivity,” says Ashley Pszeniczny, Program Manager of Skills Ontario’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) Initiatives. “Today and every day we will reflect on the outstanding contributions of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We will remain committed to reinforcing inclusion, acceptance and understanding.”

Throughout the year, Skills Ontario’s FNMI Initiatives bring experiential learning and mentorship together. Skills Ontario and its partners, including FNMI Program Sponsors, the Government of Ontario, Enbridge Gas, and Hydro One, provide several workshops, events, and activities in an effort to encourage Indigenous youth to consider the pathways in the skilled trades and technologies.

On May 12th, Skills Ontario offered its FNMI Student Conference, typically held in-person in conjunction with the Skills Ontario Competition, virtually. The recorded conference is currently available on the Skills Ontario website. Over the school year, Skills Ontario had also adjusted its In-School Presentation program to be accessible through live webinars hosted by Skills Ontario staff, and had developed the FNMI-focused presentation to be delivered specifically to Indigenous youth.

This year, Skills Ontario is pleased to celebrate Indigenous cultures through its virtual Summer Camp program, which will officially launch on July 6th. Skills Ontario will also be offering Traditional Skilled Trades and Technology Workshops during the summer, connecting youth to Indigenous mentors who have already chosen a rewarding career in skilled trades or technologies, and providing Indigenous recruiters from colleges across the province with opportunities to discuss what they offer to their students. All of these initiatives will be offered virtually. More information will be available on the Skills Ontario website soon.

Skills Ontario’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Initiatives engage industry and college partners, small businesses, school boards, and students to connect education, experience, and employment. For more information on Skills Ontario FNMI Initiatives, visit skillsontario.com/fnmi.

Skills Ontario – Promoting skilled trades and technologies in Ontario since 1989

For over 30 years, Skills Ontario has been growing a portfolio of programs including in-school presentations reaching 125,000 students across Ontario, career exploration summer camps, Young Women’s and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Career Exploration Conferences, and annually hosting Canada’s largest skilled trades and technologies competition which attracts 37,000+ spectators who cheerlead the 2,400+ competitors in 68+ trades and tech categories. To see how you can partner with Skills Ontario and help make a difference in the lives of Ontario’s youth, visit skillsontario.com/get-involved.

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