

Government of Canada Congratulates Two Local Organizations on Projects to Assist Unemployed Older Workers

PRINCE GEORGE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, April 8, 2008 - The Honourable Jay Hill, Secretary of State and Member of Parliament for Prince George-Peace River, and Mr. Dick Harris, Member of Parliament for Cariboo-Prince George, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, congratulated the Prince George Nechako Aboriginal and Employment Training Association and WCG International HR Solutions on the approval of their two projects to help 135 unemployed older workers to retrain for new careers.

"The Government of Canada is committed to creating the best-educated, most-skilled and most flexible work force in the world, and that work force includes older workers," said Secretary of State Hill. "That is why we're proudly investing in these projects, which we expect to benefit up to 135 unemployed older workers from the Prince George area, and specifically help former workers from the forestry industry."

Together, these organizations will receive up to \$1,327,916 (\$1,115,336 from the Government of Canada, and \$212,580 from British Columbia's Ministry of Economic Development) to deliver two projects carried out under the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers. Hubodulh'eh and Community Connections will provide employment assistance services, as well as a combination of other activities such as specific skills training based upon labour market demands and work experience.

This investment is made possible through the two-year \$9.7-million Canada-British Columbia Agreement on the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers, signed in July 2007.

The Initiative helps workers aged 55 to 64 who have lost their jobs get the training they need to get back into the workforce. Eligible workers include those who live in areas of high unemployment and/or single industry communities that have been affected by a plant closure.

In Budget 2008, the Government of Canada provided an additional \$90 million to extend the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers until March 2012. This is above the original \$70-million investment the federal government made to launch this initiative in Budget 2006.

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