

NATIONAL CHILD BENEFIT

The National Child Benefit (NCB) is a partnership between First Nations who deliver social assistance and federal, provincial and territorial governments.

Through NCB, First Nations may reinvest in programs and services that fit the needs of low-income families and the community. First Nations' reinvestment falls into five broad areas: child care or day care, child nutrition, early childhood development, employment and training opportunities, and community enrichment, including cultural and traditional teachings.

For more information about First Nations and the National Child Benefit, please contact your regional office of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. E-mail us at: childrensprogram@inac.gc.ca, or check out www.ainc-inac.gc.ca.

SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARY GUIDE

After completing high school, many students still need help to reach their dreams. In some cases, a scholarship can make the difference between going to and finishing university or college. A new electronic directory, known as the e-directory, gives Aboriginal students a listing of more than 400 awards totalling more than \$2 million.

The e-directory of Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards for Aboriginal Students can be found on the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Web site at www.ainc-inac.gc.ca, or call toll-free 1-800-567-9604.



GOVERNANCE LEGISLATION

No one would be happier than I would be if tomorrow every First Nation in Canada signed self-government agreements that would allow us to relegate the Indian Act to the dustbin – as a relic of an earlier time and outdated ideas.

But wishing won't make it happen ... it's important to deal with the Indian Act – at the very least to remove the impediments to progress that it represents. That is why we are moving forward with what has come to be known as the First Nations Governance Initiative, which will supply the modern tools missing from the Indian Act and pave the way for greater self-reliance, economic development and hope among First Nations communities.

There is no doubt that moving forward on treaties is important – and we are doing so.

But this is not an either-or proposition. We can do both. Indeed, the governance initiative is not intended to replace treaty negotiations, nor to implement self-government under the inherent right policy. What it will do is provide First Nations operating under the Indian Act with the tools they need to foster effective, responsible and accountable governance.

– the Honourable Robert D. Nault, P.C., M.P.,
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development,
“Beyond the Indian Act” Conference, Spring 2002.

For more information on the proposed First Nations Governance (FNG) legislation, call toll-free 1-800-550-1540, e-mail us at Governance@inac.gc.ca, or log onto the Web site at www.fng-gpn.gc.ca.

Copies of the existing *Indian Act* and subsequent amendments are available from:

General Enquiries and Publications Distribution
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H4
Telephone: (819) 997-0380
Web site:
www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/leg/lgis_e.html.



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update

Developments of interest to Aboriginal people

SUMMER 2002

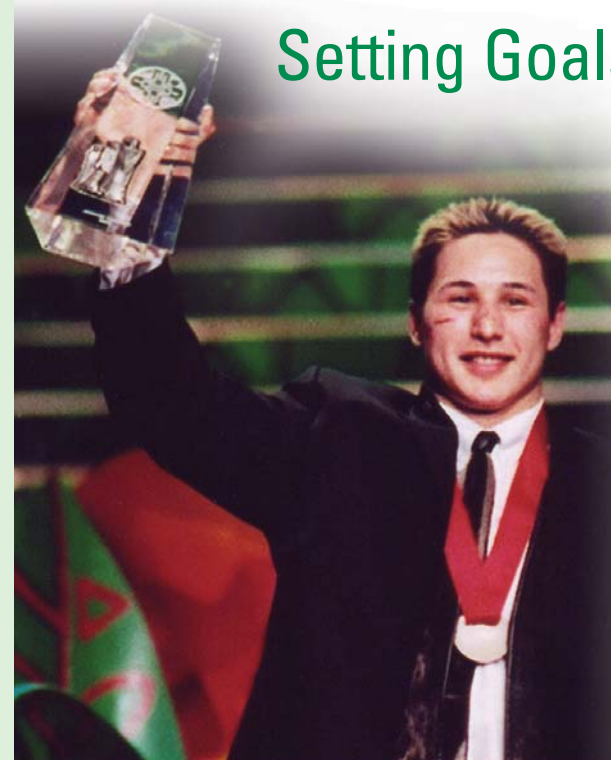
Jordin Tootoo:
Setting Goals and Reaching Them!

Photo: Bruce Monk. Used with the permission of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.

“It’s ironic being picked by the Predators. I look at myself as a predator on ice. It’s going to be a great ride,” said the first Inuk – and Nunavut player – to be drafted by the NHL.

While the community of Rankin Inlet does have an arena, there weren’t even two teams. So Tootoo grew up playing shinny against his older brother’s friends, before leaving home at 14 to pursue his dream.

He knows his success may help others reach for their dreams.

“Hopefully, it will open some doors for Inuit and show them if they set goals they can achieve them,” added Tootoo.

Tootoo’s jersey was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame as the first Nunavut player to represent Canada overseas. The Wheat Kings awarded him the Most Popular Player trophy not once, but twice! Most recently, he was honoured with the National Aboriginal Youth Achievement Award.

As if all of that wasn’t enough, he’s even opened his own business with his brother, Terence. Team Tootoo sells everything from caribou jerky to T-shirts that say “Team Tootoo.”

Jordin Tootoo, of Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, is not only a gifted athlete; he’s also a young entrepreneur, co-owner of a retail business called Team Tootoo.

Jordin, who plays for the Western Hockey League’s Brandon Wheat Kings in Manitoba, was drafted in the 2001 NHL entry draft by the Nashville Predators.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Complete the reply card, clip it out and send it in (postage is already paid) or call INAC General Enquiries at (819) 997-0380. You can also send us a fax at (819) 953-2305, or drop us an e-mail message at Update@inac.gc.ca.

For information on Government of Canada programs and services, call toll-free 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232); TTY/TDD: 1-800-465-7735; or visit www.canada.gc.ca.

You can also read the *Update* at www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/index_e.html.

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Government Services Canada
QS-6172-010-EE-A1
Catalogue No. R2-209/2002-2E
ISBN 0-662-32104-9

Cette publication peut aussi être
obtenue en français sous le titre :
Dernières Nouvelles



1000009929-K1A0H4-BR01

THE EDITOR UPDATE
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NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS GAMES

Winnipeg hosts the 2002 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) from July 25 to August 4. Aboriginal athletes will take part in 16 sports, three of which will be traditional.

The event will also celebrate Aboriginal culture. Performers will share the dance, music and languages of Métis, Inuit, First Nations and Native American peoples.

Check out the Web site at www.2002naig.com, or contact the 2002 NAIG Office at 1760 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2V 1Z7. Or call toll-free 1-877-682-2000.

Canada

OFF TO A GOOD START AT AWAHSUK

In 2000, the Government of Canada and the provincial and territorial governments reached a landmark agreement to foster and report on early childhood development across Canada. The Government of Canada agreed to transfer \$2.2 billion over five years to support provincial and territorial programs and services for young children and their families.

Most provinces and territories have announced how they will use the new federal funding to reach out to families with young children who have special needs, including Aboriginal families.

This past December, the Government of Canada announced an additional \$100 million to enhance programs such as Child Care and Head Start.

The following is just one example of a program in action.

Pride is a value that translates into lifelong learning. And for Robbie Brown, that is what Awahsuk preschool is all about.

"When an Aboriginal child is proud of their heritage and has self-esteem, then they learn more," Brown says.

As Program Co-ordinator for the Awahsuk Preschool in Surrey, British Columbia, Brown and her co-workers

are working hard with parents and community members to meet the early education needs of young Aboriginal children aged three to five.

Awahsuk relies on the Aboriginal community, Elders and cultural teachers. Brown says their involvement provides children and adults with a connection to the past, and reinforces the importance of mutual respect. The children learn about, and take part in, cultural activities such as dancing, singing, language, art and spiritual teachings.

"By developing pride in their Aboriginal heritage, along with getting the necessary skills, these children will have a head start and be ready for school," says Brown.

For more information on Awahsuk Preschool or for an application form, please telephone Robbie Brown at (604) 584-1152, or e-mail awahsuk@telus.net. For more information on Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Children's Programs, check out the Web site at www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pe-cp/index_e.html, e-mail childrensprogram@inac.gc.ca, or contact your nearest INAC office.



Nations Education Steering Committee in British Columbia and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations distributed funding to First Nations for education.

Communities across the country are also helping students receive the kinds of life skills they need to lead healthy, happy lives. The Kativik School Board worked to improve Inuit students' self-esteem by teaching them traditional skills. The students built a qajaaq (kayak) and qamutik (sled) with the support of school staff and community Elders.

To address children's special education needs, programs funded included *None Left Behind – Addressing Special Needs Education in First Nation Schools*, a program of the First Nation School Association.

At a national level, INAC is working in partnership with the Chiefs' Committee on Education of the Assembly of First Nations. To date, the department has allocated \$126 million to support more than 1,700 initiatives.

For more information on Education Reform call your local INAC office, or check out the Web site at www.ainc-inac.gc.ca.

THE CHANGING FACE OF EDUCATION

Between 1991-92 and 1998-99, the enrolment of First Nations children in elementary and secondary schools increased by 20,407 to 117,000.

To meet the changing needs of First Nations students and educators, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada introduced a program called Education Reform in 1998. Since then, several programs and initiatives – some large, some small – have creatively transformed the face of Aboriginal education.

Funds are available to First Nations schools and education authorities to improve the quality of education, and help more students to stay in school and graduate.

Initiatives focus on four major themes:

- strengthening First Nations education management and governance capacity;
- improving the effectiveness of classroom instruction;
- supporting community and parental involvement with schools;
- aiding the "School to Work" transition.

Projects range from technology upgrades in First Nations schools to partnerships and capacity-building initiatives involving First Nations, regional Aboriginal education organizations, school districts and provincial ministries of education.

Last year, First Nations managed three-quarters of the Education Reform budget. For example, the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, the First

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Since 1996, Canada's Youth Employment Strategy (YES) has supported more than 66,000 First Nations and Inuit youth in their search for lasting and rewarding careers.

YES helps youth make the move from school to work by funding programs that give them on-the-job experience. Canada's Aboriginal Digital Opportunities (CADO) is one such program.

CADO gives young Aboriginal people (aged 15 to 30) the chance to gain work experience by producing Web sites about Aboriginal culture, traditions, values and modern life. This pilot project is open to First Nations and Non-Status Indians, Métis and Inuit youth. Industry Canada awards up to \$25,000 per project through proposals from registered legal entities, such as incorporated companies, registered non-profit companies and governments. Proposals must be carried out by teams. Projects must be about, and by, youth members of Aboriginal communities in Canada.

While CADO has wrapped up for this year, you can get more information about it, and future possibilities; just call Industry Canada toll-free 1-800-575-9200; e-mail collections@ic.gc.ca; or visit the Web site at <http://collections.ic.gc.ca/cado>.

The First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy (FNI YES) consists of five programs to help youth make the transition from school to work. For information on the FNI YES Summer Student Career Placement Program, Science and Technology Camp Program, Youth Business Program, Youth Work Experience Program and the Co-Operative Education Program, contact your local INAC office.

WE ASKED FOR YOUR SUGGESTIONS ...

Thank you for your story ideas. You'll see some of them here (Children and Education) with more to follow.

If you have an idea or a comment, just pop the enclosed card in the mail. No stamp needed.

We appreciate your patience as we develop our mailing list to reach Aboriginal households.



LITERACY

Readng to, and with our children, is a special time to connect with our little ones. There are many books available to help keep Aboriginal traditions alive. Teachers and students can order from a list of free publications through the Learning Circle at learningcircle@inac.gc.ca, or call INAC General Enquiries at (819) 997-0380. You can also use the enclosed reply card to request the copy of the list.

For more information about literacy, including our *Aboriginal Book List for Children* listing more than 125 titles, visit the INAC Web site at www.ainc-inac.gc.ca.

We would like to receive your comments and suggestions.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Did you find this issue informative? yes no
 What other important topics would you like to see covered in future issues?

Comments: _____

Send Government of Canada information to my e-mail: _____

Send *Update* to my friend at this address: _____

It's okay to use my name and address for other government updates.

I would like to be kept informed on Government of Canada initiatives by:

- community television
- community radio
- community newspaper
- mail to my home
- Internet
- friendship centre
- band office