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Government of Canada Strengthens Aboriginal Business in B.C.

June 30, 2009

Vancouver, British Columbia

Aboriginal communities across British Columbia will benefit from federal government funding for joint ventures and business partnerships aimed at strengthening economic opportunities for Aboriginal businesses.

Federal funding of \$149,000, delivered through Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), will help the Industry Council for Aboriginal Business (ICAB) identify business partnership opportunities for 50 Aboriginal communities and 100 Aboriginal entrepreneurs in B.C.

Today's investment will enable the Industry Council for Aboriginal Business to implement a leadership exchange program, dialogue forums and an on-line resource tool, engaging industry and Aboriginal business leaders. This will better inform decision makers in developing more effective Aboriginal joint ventures, business partnerships and community benefit agreements.

"We are greatly encouraged by WD's support of our highly innovative programs," said Marlane Christensen, ICAB President. "Our membership from Aboriginal economic development corporations has been growing rapidly in anticipation of our proposed programs because they address needs that are obvious to everyone working on Aboriginal economic success. WD's support will turn great good ideas into life-altering realities."

The Industry Council for Aboriginal Business is an industry association mandated to remove barriers to economic development in Aboriginal communities. They aim to help Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people conduct productive business negotiations; resulting in collaboration, partnership and wealth creation.

Western Economic Diversification Canada works with the provinces, industry associations and communities to promote the development and diversification of the western economy, coordinates federal economic activities in the West and represents the interests of western Canadians in national decision making.

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