

**2009 – 2010
FEEPAYER PROGRAM**



**Amy Michano – Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation
BA/BED 2010 Graduate**

On May 29, 2010 Amy Michano graduated from Lakehead University in the concurrent program BA/BED program. AETS assisted Amy by entering her into the Feepayer Program while attending school. This program allowed Amy to collect EI benefits while attending her final year of school. Many students find it difficult financially and socially to leave their home communities to attend post-secondary programs in another community. The additional funds assisted Amy to cope financially with her home away from home living costs. Amy had a college diploma in Early Childhood Education in 2006 when she secured employment at Pic River Child and Family Learning Centre. She quickly found out that she enjoyed working with school aged children and this is when she decided to go further and obtain her BED. She “figured she was young enough and saw the advantage of furthering her education”. Her community Pic River First Nation “has always supported her goal is to return to Pic River and give back by teaching at the Pic River Elementary School”. She is presently working at Pukaskwa Park this summer and has applied for a position at the school.

WAGE SUBSIDY



**Brandy Ward – Pic Mobert First Nation
Technical Ecological Researcher**

Brandy Ward graduated in 2005 with a diploma in Aboriginal Law and Advocacy. She found employment with the food bank program in Pic Mobert but the program ended after a brief existence. She applied and was successful in the competition to train in a Wage Subsidy at Pic Mobert as the Economic Development Officer Assistant. It was difficult for her at times to stay in the program as transportation and childcare were constant issues. During this time she “met her man” who has been very supportive to her and her four children. Throughout the duration of her training she was to shadow the Economic Development Officer and assist with all programs and tasks. Brandy did an amazing job and truly blossomed in her position. She was an extremely involved, self-motivated and resourceful trainee. “I am not afraid to ask questions and am very straight forward”. Through the variety of tasks and assignments she was given she had the opportunity to truly grow. She quickly became an integral part of the Economic Development Department. Brandy has had excellent success upon completing her wage subsidy training program as she is now employed by Pic Mobert First Nation as the Technical Ecological Researcher. In this position she is gathering documents and elders videos to record the traditional ways and history of Pic Mobert. She “likes the fact that she is more involved with the community, one on one with the members, and learning about our heritage and traditions”.

**2009 – 2010
COURSE PURCHASE**



**1st Graduating Class of the Correctional Officer Training and Assessment Program held in the North
(NORTHERN COTA INITIATIVE) - August 28th, 2009**

Kari Fugere (Pic Mobert First Nation), Sandy Bouchard (Pays Plat First Nation), Michael Parsons (Red Rock Indian Band), and Aaron Potan (Red Rock Indian Band) all responded to the call for candidates for the Correctional Officers Training. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services had started a “recruitment initiative” to actively recruit Aboriginal Peoples for the positions of Correctional Officer in the Thunder Bay, Fort Frances and Kenora regions. All four went through the vigorous assessment to qualify for the training which included the Physical Abilities Test, medical clearance, reference clearance and security clearance to be accepted into the 7 week training period. On August 28, 2009 they graduated and were placed at the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre the following week. As of today they are all still employed and enjoying their new-found occupation.

Kari, married with 3 children, worked in various sawmills the last 10 years. With the decline in the forestry industry in Northwestern Ontario, he needed to pursue another career. Kari had an interest in Policing for quite some years and had researched Aboriginal Police Services as well as municipal police forces. When this opportunity became available where the training was being held in Thunder Bay, he applied

with the assistance of AETS funding. "I am glad to say that I have made the right choice to become a Correctional Officer. Not only is the work satisfying, there is a lot of training and room for advancement".

Sandy is a mother of 4 very young children and found it difficult to cover childcare and raise them properly on minimum wage jobs. Her previous job was a cashier at Walmart Corp. Since 13 yrs of age her dream career was to become a police officer and when she heard about the call for Correctional Officers she jumped immediately to the opportunity. With the support of her boyfriend, and their families, she was able to attend the training and graduate. "I love my job, it's a job where I go to work and love what I am doing". She hopes to move forward in the future by promoting the recruitment of Aboriginals into future training programs.

Mike, married with 2 children is a practical, hands-on type of learner who enjoys working behind the scenes. His previous employment included 20 years plus in the taxi industry and several years as a security guard. He wanted more for his family but the lack of transferable skills did not get him the jobs he wanted. Mike persevered by completing the seven weeks of training with no income. That shows determination. He knew in the long run the benefits with outweigh the belt tightening he and his family had to adjust to. "I finally have a decent and professional job, wearing a uniform and taking pride in my work. I work with good people and I also try to help some of the inmates by offering advice when I can"

Aaron, in a relationship and father of 2 children, was a truck driver for a local moving company. He had also held various labourer positions in the past. He read about the call for Correctional Officers in his community flyer and decided it was something he wanted to get into. He attended the program with no income support and relied on credit cards and his spouse's income so that he could complete the seven weeks of training. Now in his position as Correctional Officer "I feel like I am doing something better, having a career instead of just a job. I like helping the community in this way".

**2009 – 2010
COURSE PURCHASE**



**Fernand Twance – Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation
Common Core 1/Heavy Equipment Operator/AZ**

Like many others Fernand had been working at a lumber mill for 9 years plus. Recently laid off and on EI, Fernand entered into a Course Purchase training program in Common Core/HEO/AZ (partnered with AETS and Service Canada). With the growing construction and mining industry and forestry going downhill, he felt this would be a great choice to further his skills in. Individuals with HEO and AZ training are in high demand and are given preference for employment. The only barrier he had to overcome was not having any experience in heavy equipment as he could only operate a small forklift previously. Now that he has put in his hours on heavy equipment, he feels confident and qualified as a Heavy Equipment Operator.

Upon completion of his training program, Fernand is now employed full time with Pic River Development Corporation on the Barrick Gold Mine contract. He operates three machinery – a loader, a 777 truck, and Drills. He “loves his job, the money is GOOD and the people I work with are just as good”. He works 12 hour shifts, 4 days on and 4 days off. “Plenty of time to relax.”

COURSE PURCHASE/EMPLOYMENT START UP



**Keewaden King – Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek
Community Fire Officer**

After several meetings involving Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek, AETS and MNR , KZA was able to secure a pilot project that would place one MNR position in a First Nation community. This position was titled “Community Fire Officer” with the Fire Management Program of the Ontario MNR. Keewaden King was the successful applicant because of his extensive training in firefighter, work experience in tree thinning and silviculture. AETS had assisted him throughout the years in obtaining his S100, S200, First Aid, Pre-fit and employment start up . Although this is seasonal work, he is accustomed to this as it is a part of life and work in Northwestern Ontario. For the last five years he worked in the forestry industry whether he was a forest fire fighter, tree thinner or silviculture worker. “Forestry has always been there, in my face, all my friends were doing it”. Keewaden feels that “forestry work is all about just being anishinabe”. His biggest barriers included transportation and lack of education. He always relied on other people or his employer/coworkers for rides. It was hard to ask but he had to do it.

As the Community Fire Officer, Keewaden is getting to know people, promoting fire smart safety, and developing KZA’s values property plan in case of a forest fire in the area. This valuable information will allow MNR to make decisions on where and number of water sprinklers needed based on land layout.

GROUP COURSE PURCHASE



Larry Lapham – Michipicoten First Nation Underground Mining Nipper

Larry Lapham is a Michipicoten band member living with his family in Dubreuilville, Ontario. Like so many others, he worked years at a saw mill in his community until the steadily decline of the forestry industry became evident. When he received his lay off papers, he and his family travelled out west and he temporarily found employment in the steel industry. They decided to move back to Dubreuilville after one year away. He needed to learn some new skills, a skill “that was useful and universal, that can be applied to mining or the construction industry”. He chose Heavy Equipment Operator training and was funded by AETS under the Group Course Purchase program with two other individuals.

He graduated in August of 2009 and found full time employment three months later as an Underground Mining Nipper for Richmond’s Island Gold Mine. At first he had to overcome getting over the claustrophobic feeling he felt working underground. After a few weeks, his mind and body adjusted to working below surface in this dark environment. The job entails him driving an underground boom truck, moving different types of materials (tires, parts, etc) to various levels of the mine. He is never in one spot for long, always on the go. “This job is steady and close to home, about a 12-15 minute drive. What can be better than that?”

SELF-EMPLOYMENT BENEFIT



**Ray Sasines Sr – Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek
Partnership owner of "Chummies Restaurant"
Beardmore Ontario**

Ray Sasines a truck driver for approximately 11 years and was recently laid off. While on EI, he decided to applied to the Self-Employment Benefit Program offered by AETS . His goal was to start up a restaurant in partnership with his wife Alice. They decided to take a hugh risk and buy the one and only restaurant in Beardmore. While on the program Ray was able to receive Self-Employment Benefits biweekly from AETS. This allowed him to work diligently on getting his business started and running smoothly. Without having to pay himself he was able to invest all incoming cash flow back to the business. To this day the restaurant is operating successfully servicing the residents of Beardmore, truckers and people passing by Hwy 11.

**2009 – 2010
WAGE SUBSIDY**



**Victoria Peunish – Pic Mobert First Nation
Accounts Payable Clerk**

Victoria Peunish, a Constance Lake band member, has been living in Pic Mobert for the last 2.5 years. She applied to an AETS funded Wage Subsidy program being offered at Pic Mobert First Nation. Firstly, she trained in the occupation of Economic Development Officer and then as a Bookkeeper. She learned all about budgets when in the EDO training position. She was “surprised to discover the skills she had and didn’t know about them before”. Vicky also realized she had a high stress tolerance level, was very organized and loved working with numbers. Even though she had a Grade 12 Diploma and previous band administration experience, a barrier that she had to overcome was her shyness, nervousness and low confidence which resulted in poor interviews with employers. She needed to build up her confidence which she accomplished working at the Pic Mobert Band Administration office. Upon completion of her wage subsidy program in October of 2009, Victoria is now a full time Band employee. She works in the Finance department as the Accounts Payable Clerk. This entails invoicing, cheque writing, accounts payable and receivable, and report writing.