

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Vernon Winter Carnival Indigenous Youth Project Underway

Vernon Winter Carnival Society is announcing a new and exciting project underway for 2021.

Thanks to the support of the Government of BC and the Community Workforce Response Grant (CWRG) Program, along with support from the Okanagan Indian Band, Vernon Winter Carnival Society will have the opportunity to provide skills training to a local Indigenous Youth over the next 3 months. The Project was created for a local Indigenous Youth who can help with the integration of Syilx Culture and Education into events for the 61st Annual Vernon Winter Carnival.

Funded by the Government of Canada through the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement (WDA), the CWRG Program provides up to \$10 million a year in funding for communities and sectors to support in-demand skills training leading to secure and sustainable employment for unemployed and precariously employed (part-time, seasonal or casual) British Columbians.

The Youth Community Partnership Stream of the program is designed to support communities and youth impacted by COVID-19. Through this stream, communities can provide youth with opportunities to contribute to their community while gaining work-related skills and experience for future job opportunities or their return to school.

Vernon Winter Carnival was successful in receiving the CWRG to hire a qualified participant – Justen Peters to run the project. “We’re thrilled to have Justen join our team for the next three months. I’m excited to teach him on the job skills in event management and community outreach, however this project is as much of a learning experience for us as it will be for Justen.” Says Vicki Proulx, Executive Director at Vernon Winter Carnival.

Justen Peters is a member of the Okanagan Indian Band and has a bright future ahead of him. He is a part of the BC Assembly of First Nations and is serving as the Male Youth Representative, giving the youth perspective on issues such as economic development, government and environmental policies. Justen is also an appointed member of the OKIB Youth Council, which is a new Band project.

“This opportunity will further increase job skills and knowledge to empower Syilx youth to become self-reliant and self-sufficient,” said Victor Rumbolt, Executive Director of the Okanagan Indian Band. “We continue to seek further opportunities to strengthen the foundations of community-to-community engagement while creating the platform for positive role modeling for future youth ambassadors.”

“Vernon Winter Carnival is looking to create an event that will be sustainable for many years to come that incorporates Indigenous Culture, History and Peoples which can be shared as well as celebrated throughout our community.” Says Proulx.

The project will work closely with Okanagan Indian Band Elders and Members, Vernon Winter Carnival Society is looking forward to making positive steps towards reconciliation in promoting the Syilx community and culture to the citizens of the City of Vernon and visitors to the region.

VERNON Winter Carnival

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About Vernon Winter Carnival Society

In 1961 an idea was born to foster community spirit and promote Greater Vernon through a 10 day Winter Festival. That idea still lives with The Vernon Winter Carnival Society. Vernon Winter Carnival is one of the largest events of its kind in Canada. We are proud to continue to deliver classic and anticipated events that generations of families and tourists have come to love, showcasing the winter beauty of Vernon BC. For more information on Vernon Winter Carnival events, sponsorship or volunteering, visit vernonwintercarnival.com

About Okanagan Indian Band

The Okanagan Indian Band is located at the head of Okanagan Lake in Vernon, B.C., and totals 11,282 hectares. Currently there are 2,000+ registered band members; approximately half of our members reside on reserve. The Okanagan Indian Band presently consists of seven (7) reserves with Okanagan #1 being the largest reserve. Salmon River and Duck Lake (Winfield) are the other populated OKIB reserves. Our band is one of largest band in the Okanagan Nation, which is composed of seven bands in the Southern Interior region of BC.

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