

Manitoba News Release

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PROVINCE RECOGNIZES NORTHERN ABORIGINAL MINING GRADUATES

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Workers to Provide Much-needed Skilled Labour for Manitoba's Mining Industry:
Chomiak

Wabowden—The province recognized the critical role of northern and Aboriginal people in the mining industry as seven Aboriginal students received certificates in underground core mining at a ceremony here today attended by Innovation, Energy and Mines Minister Dave Chomiak.

"Meeting the demand for skilled labour in our northern mines is critical as our industry enters a period of rapid growth," said Chomiak. "Aboriginal workers are taking up this challenge through this unique training initiative that pulls together northern communities, educators and industry partners all working toward the same goal."

The program, led by Aboriginal instructors, is the product of a unique partnership between the University College of the North, Northern Manitoba Sector Council, Employment Manitoba, Cross Lake First Nation, Wabowden Community Council, Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin, Crowflight Minerals, Dumas Mining Contractors, and the Manitoba Métis Federation.

The seven students graduating today will immediately begin a six-month work experience with Crowflight Minerals at the Bucko Lake Mine for the third and final phase of their training. Thirty-five miners have successfully been trained through the program to date, Chomiak said.

The program is part of a \$4.5-million Northern Essential-Skills Training Initiative that is helping address skilled-labour shortages in the north by providing focused, industry-driven training for Aboriginal and northern residents, he added.

Manitoba has also recently contributed \$1 million to the Training and Workforce Retention Initiative for mining companies and their employees to implement customized training and workforce-retention initiatives to help bridge periods of downtime through up-skilling or re-skilling opportunities that match current and future job demands.