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Immediate Distribution

Lethbridge Community Network Receives \$325K to Create 29 Technology Internships for Youth Across Alberta

LCN will provide funding for employers to design and deliver activities for youth, to develop their skills and benefit from work experiences in technology, through Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy's Career Focus stream.

(Lethbridge, AB, October 7, 2016) -- Lethbridge Community Network entered into an agreement this week, valued at \$325,000 to create 29 paid youth internships in technology and digital skill roles throughout Alberta, with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada.

The ISEDC's Youth Internships Program allows youth to acquire technical and soft skills using digital technologies and supports a range of host organizations and businesses that are looking to engage in online activities.

"The youth demographic learns what is the next, best technology and application. We can learn from them, on how to apply emerging technologies at our workplaces and within our communities", said Alan Schneider, LCN's Executive Director. "We want to continue pushing the envelope on what youth can bring to organizations from a technology bent. This program makes it happen," he continued.

Internships are integral to Canada's Youth Employment Strategy; pairing youth with Information Communication and Technology (ICT) related job opportunities, for over 1000 young Canadians each year. The 29 intern positions are based on 600 hours of work. The hosting organizations are eligible to receive up to \$15 per hour to subsidize youth intern wages. LCN's agreement with ISEDC is retroactive from April of this year through March 2017. With the business sector now able to participate, Schneider anticipates the program will be fully subscribed earlier than in previous years.

This will be Schneider's fourth year at LCN, as a recipient of the federal program for Alberta. Adding the previous three years' contributions, Schneider estimates over 150 youth were engaged in technology related projects throughout the province Alberta, totally over \$1.2 million in wages distributed under the government program.

"It is rewarding to see the youth in Alberta demonstrate their skills and advance their awareness of ICT and Digital skills in real workplace settings, on actual projects because of this program and LCN's efforts. The contribution and value in this program reaches across the province; so valuable to the youth in gaining the skills and experiences while the hosting business receives a tech. project in return," said Schneider.



Preliminary projects this year from host organizations are encouraging youth to strive for advanced applications in web design, web and database development and in the execution of social media strategies. Host organizations have a responsibility under the program to ensure the tech. skills are being applied by the youth at their office and to provide guidance when required. LCN assists in creating milestones for the projects, vetting candidates and host organizations, while facilitating project ideas and monitoring deliverables by the youth.

"Across the province, we have seen youth work hands-on with leading-edge technologies that push the envelope in science and technology, and supporting the more practical applications in developing software programs, system automation, becoming fully immersed in 3D printing, computer refurbishing and web development. Youth intern have assisted many rural community organizations in their technological developments by teaching basic computer courses to deploying network and Wi-Fi services," Schneider concluded.

Interns and organizations interested in participating in the 2016-2017 Youth Internship program are encouraged to contact the Lethbridge Community Network office in Lethbridge, AB or visit www.YouthInternships.ca for program application forms.

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About the Society of the Lethbridge Community Network

Lethbridge Community Network is private not for profit society that provides public access to information and technology. It maintains a network of over 40 public access computers in the community, teaches basic computers skills, refurbishes computers as an Authorized Microsoft Corp. Re-furbisher, and provides employment and practicum opportunities to local youth in technology through computer repair and tech support for not for profits and small businesses in Lethbridge.

LCN provides computer tech. support and web site development as a fee for service, to generate operating income for the society. Work is performed by youths, who have graduated from technology programs at educational institutions.

LCN is pursuing a permanent EcycleDrive.com service for recycling and re-using computers, and is working on a strategy to provide free public Wi-Fi in the community and affordable, subsidized internet to low income families and individuals. Donations are accepted at its website:

www.LethbridgeCommunityNetwork.com



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