



FOR RELEASE
December 1, 2014

Award celebrates outstanding Aboriginal employees in the Yukon government

WHITEHORSE—Premier Darrell Pasloski presented two Yukon government employees with the Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour at the sixth annual year-end gathering of the Aboriginal Employees Forum.

"I am proud to present the 2014 Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour to these deserving individuals," Pasloski said. "Their outstanding commitment to public service and the contribution they have made to the Yukon government and to their communities is commendable."

The recipients of the 2014 Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour are:

- John Burdek, Assistant Deputy Minister, Governance Liaison and Capacity Development, Executive Council Office
- John P. Jones, Heavy Equipment Operator II, Department of Highways and Public Works

The award, which is presented yearly, recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding Aboriginal employees in the Yukon government. It was established in 2009 through the Aboriginal Employees Forum, which works to increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees.

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See backgrounder below.

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Backgrounder

2014 Aboriginal Employees Award of Honour recipients

John Burdek

ADM, Governance Liaison and Capacity Development, Executive Council Office

John Burdek was recruited by the Yukon government in 2007 for the important task of establishing the Government Liaison and Capacity Development (GLCD) branch with the Executive Council Office. In this leadership role John helped build positive relationships and supported First Nations in building capacity as it relates to self-government and implementation initiatives.

Among his many achievements John successfully managed the implementation of the *Cooperation in Governance Act*, which established the Yukon Forum. His work with Chief Diane Strand of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nation and the Yukon College led to the establishment of the Executive Development Pilot Program Certificate in 2008. This certificate in turn led the creation of the First Nation Governance and Public Administration Initiative at Yukon College.

As a step toward creating a northern university, the college recently announced that the first degree program it will offer is in policy studies in indigenous governance. This degree will build on the Executive Development Program and has its roots in the work of the Government Liaison and Capacity Development branch.

Through his leadership excellence and his success in collaborating across boundaries, John has had a positive effect on the relationship between the Yukon government and Yukon First Nations and significantly advanced the principles of diversity and inclusion in Yukon.

John Jones

Heavy Equipment Operator II, Department of Highways and Public Works

John Jones began working for the Department of Highways and Public Works with the Yukon government in 1996 as a labourer at the Blanchard Highway Maintenance Station on the Haines Highway. He has since become one of the best grader operators in the territory and has worked in almost every maintenance station in Yukon. His dedicated services and versatility are always in high demand.

John has shown great commitment to his work, his community and his family over the years. To become a grader operator John took the training course in Eagle Plains, and for five months he drove home to Haines Junction every weekend to be with his pregnant wife. When he was called at 8 a.m. on Christmas Day to sand the slippery highway after freezing rain, he was expecting the call and was ready to go.

He is well respected in the workplace and in the community. John is helpful with co-workers and has been a role model for new employees and taught many of them the "tricks of the trade." He is also highly regarded in the Champagne and Aishihik First Nation community and has had a positive influence on young people.

As a longstanding public servant John has made significant contributions throughout his career and has consistently provided high-quality service to Yukoners.

News Release #14-274



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