



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **MOU increases trades education and employment opportunities through the Gitxsan Development Corporation**

Hazelton, B.C.– As part of its commitment to support success in trades education and apprenticeship for First Nations, and actively working towards reconciliation, Industry Training Authority (ITA), in partnership with the Gitxsan Development Corporation (GDC), is pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

“This MOU will allow GDC to support numerous Gitxsan community members in their trades training paths towards Red Seal accreditation,” said Rick Connors, President & CEO, Gitxsan Development Corporation. “Over the past quarter, GDC has sponsored carpentry and heavy equipment operators at our Commercial Complex in South Hazelton and looks forward to continuing to support these and other trades training from our new training facility. We are working with training providers to innovate training programs to meet the accreditation standards while ensuring trainees are prepared for jobsites. Workforce ready is our goal.”

Through this MOU, Gitxsan Development Corporation will become the sponsor of apprentices working on local projects, ensuring employment for their communities, and creating an appropriate cultural approach to an apprenticeship pathway and experience.

The Gitxsan group of companies has a history of engaging with a number of industry and First Nation partners throughout northern British Columbia to create training and career opportunities for Indigenous peoples and community members in their respective regions.

This MOU enables GDC to strengthen employment opportunities in trades professions and support community members in obtaining certification and Red Seal endorsement in their respective trades careers. By partnering with ITA, this MOU expands on GDC’s priorities of creating rewarding employment opportunities and experiences and reflects its values in fostering partnerships and relationships.

“Fostering First Nations, employer, business, and industry collaboration through this partnership will strongly support increased apprenticeships and trades success for Indigenous people of the region,” said Michael Cameron, Director of Indigenous Initiatives with ITA. “Increasing community-based training and employment raises the profile of trades professions as a high-opportunity career not only Indigenous people but for all British Columbians.”

Providing access to quality training and supporting apprentices through to certification, helps apprentices obtain good paying jobs and in turn, increases their standard of living.

### **About the Gitxsan Development Corporation**

Gitxsan are an Indigenous Nation that consists of Frog, Eagle, Wolf, and Fireweed Clans. Each clan consists of a series of independent Houses (Wilp), each with their own Hereditary Chief, traditional territories, and fishing sites in Northern British Columbia.

Award winning Gitxsan Development Corporation (GDC) is the economic vehicle through which the Gitxsan people will exercise their rights affirmed in the landmark *Delgamuukw* Supreme Court Judgment (1997) on their 33,000 sq km traditional territory. It is the holding company for Gitxsan enterprise and is governed by a board of directors appointed by the trustees of the Gitxsan Lipgyet Trust. The directors manage GDC and oversee each of its operating subsidiaries.

Gitxsan Development Corporation's mission is to create profitable, sustainable economic development that leads to job creation and training opportunities, ultimately creating economic resilience for the Gitxsan people.

GDC focuses on improving the Gitxsan economy while following the community's values.

### **About the Industry Training Authority (ITA)**

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) leads and coordinates British Columbia's skilled trades system. ITA works with apprentices, employers, industry, labour, training providers and government to fund training, issue credentials, support apprenticeships, set program standards and increase opportunities in the trades. For more information, visit [itabc.ca](http://itabc.ca).

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### **Media Contact**

Nicole Adams  
Director of Communications  
Industry Training Authority  
604-364-1039  
[nadams@itabc.ca](mailto:nadams@itabc.ca)