



Media Release

For immediate release

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Aboriginal Tourism BC's Stakeholder Forum and AGM Showcases Growing Industry, Elects Five New Board Members

VANCOUVER/COAST SALISH TERRITORY, BC – Aboriginal Tourism BC's (AtBC) annual Stakeholder Forum and AGM showcased its significant development in marketing and product development to businesses and dignitaries, and elected five officials to its board.

“AtBC's continued growth has been a great success, and we hope to continue this trend in the years to come,” said Keith Henry, CEO of AtBC. “Aboriginal tourism is a sector that is growing both overseas and in our backyard. Our stakeholders continue to provide the best quality Aboriginal tourism experiences on the market.”

The November 7 and 8 forum at the Coast Coal Harbour Hotel was attended by the biggest audience in recent history with close to 100 guests from all over the province. Attendees included representatives from the Tourism Industry Association of BC, Regional Destination Marketing Organizations and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. NDP Tourism Critic Spencer Chandra Herbert and the Honourable Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation Pat Bell also attended at various times and provided comments supporting the importance of Aboriginal cultural tourism to the British Columbia economy.

An evening travel-trade networking event at the Bill Reid Gallery on Tuesday attracted a sizeable audience of over 65 industry partners as well as travel writers and guests from the tourism industry.

At the forum, AtBC stressed its continued support of new initiatives that recognize the authenticity of the Aboriginal tourism experiences, updated regional planning, presented about the development of an Aboriginal travel agency, and other exciting projects.

Five AtBC board positions were filled through an election process. The Vancouver Coast and Mountain region position was won by Wade Grant from the Musqueam Nation; the Thompson Okanagan region position went to Sharon Bond of the Kekuli Café; the Northern BC region position went to Leslie Brown of the Haida House at Tllaal and West Coast Resort; and the two At Large positions went to Julie Baker of the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre and Lori Simcox of Takaya Tours.



AtBC CEO Henry concluded “AtBC continues to showcase how the new AtBC Five Year Plan *The Next Phase* is effectively increasing the value of Aboriginal tourism to the British Columbia and Canadian economy. AtBC continues to have strong governance and the new board members bring significant added value to the organization. Aboriginal tourism businesses continue to build upon the Aboriginal cultural revitalization throughout many of the communities and support for our industry will ensure this success as we work towards the priorities together with our industry. We look forward to continued partnerships with the Provincial and Federal Governments, Tourism industry partners, and of course the Aboriginal communities throughout BC.”

For more information, visit www.aboriginalbc.com.

- 30 -

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