

# Barriers and Successes to Employment

## Barriers Identified

- † **Literacy and education** high school and basic literacy skills are requirements for nearly all jobs. The graduation rate of Inuit youth in Canada is 24% of 15 to 24-year-olds, compared with 84% in the non-native population;
- † **Cultural differences:** employers and co-workers may not understand or respect the unique cultural differences of Inuit which can create a worksite atmosphere of disrespect, resentment or distrust;
- † **Stereotypes:** this is one of the fundamental barriers to Inuit people getting a job and remaining in the job, and it is directly related to the attitudes passed down since European settlers arrived in North America. There are a number of myths and misconceptions about Inuit people and perceived special treatment that some non-Inuit still believe are truths;
- † **Self-esteem:** poverty, broken families, racism, stereotypes, discrimination, few role models all contribute to low self esteem. It's hard to present well in a job interview when one is struggling with low self-esteem.
- † **Poor housing and poverty:** fifty percent of Inuit children, living in communities start each day in an overcrowded, inadequate home that likely is in need of repairs, has asbestos, mould, and may not have drinking water. Unhealthy living conditions affect a person's mental and physical well being.
- † **Lack of a driving license:** a real stumbling block in remote communities; just getting to the nearest office to write the initial test can be challenging; taking driver's training is similarly a challenge as there may not be easily accessed training providers or, for that matter, a vehicle on which to learn;
- † **Transportation:** few remote communities are serviced by public transit; vehicle insurance is expensive and out of reach for many in pre-employment situations; again, owning a vehicle or having access to a vehicle is frequently not a reality; all communities are only accessible by air and public transport is not readily available.

## Barriers Identified...continued

- ‡ **Child care:** safe, affordable child care is a challenge for mainstream Canadians - it is even more of a challenge for parents in Inuit communities.
- ‡ **Medicals checks :** the lack of medical services and accessible medical insurance makes the requirements for entry into a workplace arduous.
- ‡ **Background checks:** avoidance to apply to the RCMP for a criminal background check as there is a belief that whatever is found will work against a job application
- ‡ **Language barrier:** comfort level in conversing and comprehending the English language is viewed as working against an application to work.
- ‡ **Gender discrimination :** fewer role models and success stories of females in the mining industry make it difficult to attract and retain female employees to an industry that is male dominated.

These are just some of the more obvious barriers that stand between Inuit and their ability to attain meaningful, lasting careers.

Next slide we will offer some of the work identified by Baffinland to address these barriers.

Barrier	Initiative
Literacy and education	ABE and mentoring programs
Cultural Differences	Introduction of Inuit HR Advisors and Cultural Advisors roles, Inuit Engagement program and Cross Cultural awareness
Discrimination	Respectful workplace roll out and Leadership workshops to train and educate leaders in understanding cultural sensitivity and workplace relations
Self Esteem	Workplace readiness and job shadowing
Poverty and Housing	In partnership with QIA for employment and training initiatives to increase employment
Lack of a driver's license	In partnership with QIA to investigate learner driver program delivery
Transportation within the community	Currently charters in each point of hire community. Access from other communities to the pick up locations are supported through HR and travel agents on a case by case basis, Supporting local business to provide transportation (taxi) to the local airport.

Barrier	Initiative
Child- care	In partnership with QIA investigate child care programs and assistance at the community level
Access to Medical checks	Investigating methods to provide access to medical services
Fear of back ground checks	Education through BCLO's and HR tours on the process to support background checks (in summary : recurrence and severity as well as timeline of offence play a role in determining outcome of screening).
Language Barrier	Offer interpreter and translator services and identifying opportunities for training in Inuktitut and conversation where possible, in the workplace.
Gender Discrimination	Accessibility of female role models and mentorship program

Questions?

