



28 October 2020
For Immediate Release

Yukon Employees' Union Supports Preferential Hire of Yukon First Nation and Indigenous People

The Yukon Employee's Union (YEU) understands that the September 28, 2020 announcement by the Government of Yukon of a preferential hiring pilot program for Yukon First Nations/Canadians of Aboriginal Ancestry has come as a surprise to some of its members.

We recognize this pilot as a proactive and positive measure, and we see its potential to address chronic employment inequity. We welcome the government's commitment to increased representation of indigenous workers historically disadvantaged in the workplace.

While YEU applauds the work of the Yukon Government in developing this plan in collaboration with Yukon First Nations, we are disappointed that consultation with the YEU on this matter did not take place. That failure to consult means we learned about the program at the same time as the public learned about the program and were unable to participate in the discussion alongside other key partners. In the Yukon, 11 Final and Self Government Agreements hold the requirement for a Representative Public Service Plan to address the underrepresentation of Yukon First Nations in the Yukon Public Service. The Breaking Trail Together plan is a renewed version of the Representative Public Service Plan. Yukon, First Nations and Canadian governments are signatories to these legally binding agreements.

In today's era of Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, it benefits us all to learn about the role of Employment Equity in achieving reconciliation. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (Article 22) provides: "Indigenous people have the right to special measures for the immediate, effective and continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions, including the areas of employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security." Canada officially adopted the UN Declaration in 2016.

More information is available about Aboriginal Employment Preferences Policy from the Canadian Human Rights Commission here:

<https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/aboriginal-employment-preferences-policy>

The full Breaking Trail Together: an Inclusive Yukon Public Service Plan can be found here:

<https://yukon.ca/en/breaking-trail-together-inclusive-yukon-public-service>

Steve Geick, President
Yukon Employees' Union
Office: 867-667-2331
Cell: 867-335-2631