

RIO TINTO

Indigenous training and employment



Building a **local workforce**

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Since the Diavik diamond mine was developed in the Northwest Territories of Canada, it has helped create a variety of community based training partnerships with communities, contractors, governments and educational institutions. During the construction phase, classroom study was made available for employees, along with hands on training on community infrastructure projects. Many graduates reported increased levels of self esteem and confidence. Diavik's community based training partnerships have created some 230 graduates, most of whom have found employment with Diavik contractors or local community governments, or at other mine sites. A number of these graduates ultimately joined the Diavik operations workforce.

This commitment to local employment has continued into mining operations. As part of its agreements with local communities, Diavik committed to employing a 66 per cent northern workforce with 40 per cent Aboriginal during mine operations. By the end of 2005, 70 per cent of Diavik's mine workforce was northern with approximately half of this number Aboriginal.

Given the low level of education in local communities around the Diavik mine, the majority of Aboriginal workers occupy entry level, relatively low skilled jobs. In an effort to help equip Aboriginal workers for more responsible positions, Diavik launched the Aboriginal Leadership Development Programme with SAIT Polytechnic of Alberta. The inaugural programme concluded in December 2005 with seven graduates.

Diavik also operates a workplace learning centre on site, where two full time workplace educators assist employees develop career plans, find specific training, and upgrade programmes to assist employees in managing their careers. The centre focuses on teaching the essential skills workers need to do their jobs including:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Document use
- Oral communication
- Computer use

Workers are also encouraged and supported to continue learning in their home communities during off-rotation. Adult educators have ongoing contact with community college educators so learning can extend beyond the two week rotation at site.

In 2005, the Conference Board of Canada awarded Diavik its Award of Excellence in Workplace Literacy. Judges described Diavik's literacy programme as well planned, well executed, innovative, customised to employees' rotational work schedule, and one which successfully serves people in remote areas.



Above left: A heavy equipment operator course prepared northerners for jobs constructing the Diavik diamond mine.

Above: Anne Marie Nitsiza.



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Designed by Tor Pettersen & Partners.
Printed in England by Beacon Press
to ISO 14001 environmental standards.