



# *Vision Quest*

CONFERENCES Inc.  
May 15-17, 2012 Winnipeg Convention Centre

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **VISION QUEST CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW: Popular Event for Aboriginal Business and Communities Continues To Expand**

Winnipeg, Manitoba (March 12, 2012) -- It's been 15 years since the first Vision Quest Conference, and it continues to grow in popularity. And size.

The 16<sup>th</sup> annual Vision Quest Conference & Trade Show takes place at the Winnipeg Convention Centre from May 15 to 17. This year's event will see a move into the larger third floor Hall A, accommodating as well as an expanded trade show.

More than 1000 Conference participants – including 100 trade show exhibitors – will come together at Vision Quest to discuss and promote Aboriginal business, community, and economic development. Delegates from across Canada and throughout Manitoba include entrepreneurs, innovators, business leaders, and youth. The desired outcome is building capacity, inspiring new initiatives, and encouraging success in Aboriginal communities. Since inception, more than 10,000 participants have taken part, and contributed to Vision Quest's national profile and highly respected reputation. Here are some of the highlights of this dynamic three-day event:

- Ø Two acclaimed and inspiring keynote speakers
- Ø 16 workshops in the areas of business, community leadership and personal development
- Ø Expanded trade show featuring more than 100 exhibitors
- Ø Networking and partnership opportunities
- Ø Empowering youth program
- Ø Culture and tradition
- Ø Award presentations
- Ø Opening Reception with entertainment
- Ø Gala Banquet with special performances
- Ø Meals and refreshments

### **KEYNOTE SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED**

Providing the opening keynote at Vision Quest on Wednesday, May 16 is **Waneek Horn-Miller**, a previous Olympic athlete who works and travels extensively throughout the Aboriginal world. Waneek was behind the line at OKA, is coordinator of the First Peoples House at McGill University, and is the IndigenACTION Ambassador. Through her work as a sports commentator for CBC and APTN, she has become a community advocate for sport, fitness and wellness.

Award-winning actor **Eric Schweig** will deliver the Vision Quest keynote on Thursday, May 17. Eric has appeared in numerous films and television shows over the past 20 years, and can be seen in *The Shaman's Source*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Tom & Huck*, and *Blackstone*. Eric travels Canada and the US sharing his life's experiences with various groups and organizations in order to increase awareness of Aboriginal issues. He is also a talented artist who carves Inuit art.

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### **HONOURARY CHAIR NAMED**

Each year, Vision Quest selects a notable leader from within the Aboriginal community to be named Honorary Chair. This year's designate is **Sky Bridges**, who was promoted to the position of Chief Operating Officer at APTN in 2011. Sky began serving as APTN's Director of Marketing in 2007, during which time he oversaw the expanded presence of APTN in various media formats throughout Aboriginal communities. He is Métis with a Blackfoot bloodline, was born in Winnipeg, and raised in Marquette, Manitoba. Sky is a graduate of Red River College where he completed a Diploma in Business Administration and an Advanced Diploma in International Business.

### **NEW IN 2012 – EXPANDED TRADE SHOW**

Due to its popularity, the Vision Quest Trade Show will expand in 2012. More than 100 exhibitors will take part, representing business suppliers, service providers, hospitality groups, career opportunities, economic organizations, educational institutions, and information services. In addition, a wide selection of artists and artisans will have one-of-a-kind gifts and artwork available for purchase. The Vision Quest Trade Show offers **free public admission** on the following dates:

Winnipeg Convention Centre, Hall A, Third Floor  
Tuesday, May 15 / 7:00pm to 10:00 pm – Opening Reception with Entertainment  
Wednesday, May 16 / 8:30 am to 4:30 pm  
Thursday, May 17 / 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

### **DELEGATE REGISTRATION & EXHIBITOR/ SPONSOR APPLICATIONS**

Registration is available online at [www.vqconference.com](http://www.vqconference.com). Register by April 9 and save \$75. Exhibitor and sponsor applications are also available online. With over 100 exhibitors and 1,000 Conference participants, the trade show floor promises to be a busy place in 2012.

### **ABOUT VISION QUEST**

Vision Quest Conferences Inc. is a community based charitable organization formed through partnerships with six Community Futures Development Corporations (Cedar Lake CFDC, Dakota Ojibway CFDC, Kitayan CFDC, Northwest CFDC, North Central CFDC, Southeast CFDC). Vision Quest thanks the following Sponsors to date for their support: Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada, Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba Telecom Services, South Beach Casino & Resort, The Winnipeg Foundation, First Peoples Economic Growth Fund, Aboriginal Business Service Network and the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation. Thanks also to the many Media Partners, service providers, and other supporters.

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**For more information, conference schedule, online registration, sponsor and exhibitor applications, visit [www.vqconference.com](http://www.vqconference.com)**

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