



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VISION QUEST CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW:

Canada's Longest Running Aboriginal Business, Community and Economic Development Conference Celebrating 20 years!

Winnipeg MB (April 5, 2016) -- The **Vision Quest Conference & Trade Show** is celebrating a milestone anniversary this year in brand new space.

The 20th Vision Quest happens May 17-19 at the newly renovated RBC Convention Centre Winnipeg. It is Canada's longest running Aboriginal business, community and economic development conference, and it's fitting that the special 20th anniversary event will take place in Canada's newest convention centre.

"We're thrilled to be in our 20th year and are planning some special initiatives to recognize this milestone anniversary," says **Kim Bullard**, Chair of Vision Quest Conferences Inc. "We're also excited to experience brand new conference space this year, at the RBC Convention Centre Winnipeg. To share this with our guests during such a special anniversary is pretty exceptional."

Vision Quest's goal is to educate, enlighten and entertain through a schedule packed with workshops and courses, inspiring speakers, an expansive trade show, cultural demonstrations, and entertainment. It's this winning formula that has granted Vision Quest a long and successful history.

Since 1997, nearly 14,000 participants have come together to discuss and promote Aboriginal business, community, and economic development. Vision Quest's delegation includes entrepreneurs, industry and business leaders, community organizations, innovators, and youth. Highlights of this dynamic three-day gathering include:

- Inspiring keynote speakers
- Workshops about business, leadership and personal development
- Two certification courses
- Trade Show with approximately 80 exhibitors
- Special delegate reception on Trade Show floor
- Networking and partnership opportunities
- Empowering youth program
- Gala banquet with entertainment
- Cultural demonstrations
- Award presentations

TWO KEYNOTE PRESENTERS

Inez Point is an award-winning pop music artist with powerhouse talent and universal appeal. As one of Canada's top Aboriginal musicians, her blending of traditional native sounds with a love for contemporary pop has brought the best of her culture to the mainstream world. She has achieved much in her career so far, including co-hosting the 2016 Indspire Awards in Vancouver. Her latest album, *Burn Me Down*, was nominated for a JUNO Award and Western Canadian Music Award, and received Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards for Best Pop Album and Best Producer/Engineer. Inez is also a registered nurse, mother of two, and a nationally-recognized role model, just as dedicated to realizing her own dreams as she is to inspiring others to reach for theirs.

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Joe Roberts is President and CEO of a successful multimedia company, who has faced and overcome many challenges. His business solutions have made millions for clients, across a variety of business sectors. He formed multimedia company Mindware, and in less than four years, led it to an 800% increase in business – making his first million before he was 35. Most amazing is that in 1989, Joe was living on the streets of Vancouver as a homeless skid row derelict. Through perseverance, determination and resilience, Joe pulled himself out of the darkness and despair, to become a highly respected business and community leader. He now uses his amazing story, insightful humour, and solid business experience to inspire individuals and organizations to achieve their own remarkable goals.

DELEGATE RECEPTION & GALA BANQUET

In honour of the 20th anniversary, Vision Quest has added a special Delegate Reception on the Trade Show floor on Wednesday, May 18 from 4:30 to 6:30 pm. Entertainment will feature Indigenous Music Award winner **Jaaji** and nominee **Chelsea June**, and the comedy of **Don Burnstick**.

The Gala Banquet on Thursday evening includes three-course dinner, presentation of awards for the **Dragon's Quest Business Plan Competition** and **Steve Prince Memorial Bursary**, cultural presentation by **Plains Ojibway Singers and Dance Troupe**, artistry by **Shawna Grapentine**, and entertainment by singer/songwriter **Don Amero** and Elvis Tribute Artist **Corny Rempel**, both of whom have garnered multiple awards and nominations.

CERTIFICATION COURSES

Vision Quest is pleased to offer certification courses as an exclusive opportunity for Conference delegates. Two courses will take place concurrently on Tuesday May 17 from 10:00am to 6:00pm.

Boat/Pleasure Craft Operator: Anyone operating a boat now must have a Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) regardless of the size of the boat or age of the operator. This study course will review the knowledge statements required by Transport Canada as you prepare to write the test. Upon successful test completion, you will be granted your Boat Operator Card.

Personal Safety and Self-Defense: The program begins with an interactive discussion on topics pertaining to personal safety. Participants will learn how to reduce their risk of becoming a target for crime and violence through Proactive Personal Safety (PPS). The course emphasizes avoidance and de-escalation over conflict, and includes self-defence training. The techniques that participants will learn are very simple, designed to give someone the opportunity to escape to safety.

TRADE SHOW WITH FREE PUBLIC ADMISSION

More than 80 exhibitors will be on display at Vision Quest's Trade Show, representing business suppliers, service providers, hospitality groups, career opportunities, economic organizations, educational institutions, information services, and a wide selection of artists and artisans. **FREE PUBLIC ADMISSION** on Wednesday May 18 (8:30am to 6:30pm) and Thursday May 19 (8:30am to 2:30pm).

DELEGATE REGISTRATION & EXHIBITOR/SPONSOR APPLICATIONS

Registration for the 2016 Vision Quest Conference & Trade Show is available online. Register by the Early Bird deadline of April 12 to save \$80. Exhibitor and sponsor applications, and full conference schedule, are also available online.

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ABOUT VISION QUEST

Vision Quest Conferences Inc. is a community based charitable organization formed through partnerships with Manitoba's five Aboriginal Community Futures Development Corporations (Cedar Lake CFDC, Dakota Ojibway CFDC, Kitayan CFDC, North Central CFDC, Southeast CFDC).

Vision Quest thanks the following Sponsors to date for their support: Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada, Province of Manitoba, The Winnipeg Foundation, South Beach Casino & Resort, First Peoples Economic Growth Fund, Aboriginal Business Service Network, City of Winnipeg – Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak, Enbridge Pipelines Inc., Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries and MTS.

Thanks also to the many Media Partners, banquet table sponsors, service providers, and other supporters. www.vqconference.com

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