



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Memorandum of Understanding creates pathways for Indigenous youth learners

SQUAMISH B.C. June 27, 2024 – [Capilano University](#) is pleased to announce it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with [Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre](#) (SLCC) and BCIT to formalize a partnership that will create opportunities for Indigenous youth learners.

The partners gathered earlier this month at the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre in Whistler, BC, to recognize the training and experience of the SLCC [Indigenous Youth Ambassador](#) program graduates and to establish pathways for advanced learning.

The Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre shares the traditional cultures of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and Lil'wat7úl (Lil'wat Nation) and invests in employment, training and cultural revitalization programs for the two Nations.

SLCC's 14-week Indigenous Youth Ambassador program provides youth with an immersive cultural experience and skill development in a number of industries including tourism, communications and business. Since opening in 2008, more than 600 youth have participated in SLCC's Indigenous Youth Ambassador program.

The MoU will formalize opportunities for Indigenous Youth Ambassador program graduates to obtain credit toward applicable programs at Capilano University and BCIT.

"The agreement is an important step in supporting Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. We are delighted to recognize SLCC's intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge and skills through their mentorship program and to provide course credits toward continued learning," says Aurelea Mahood, vice-provost and associate vice president academic of Capilano University.

"The agreement is historical, and the first formal agreement for our Indigenous Youth Ambassador Program (IYA Program) graduates to gain accreditation for the hard work and dedication they provide when taking on the role of Youth



Ambassadors during the 14-week program. This recognizes their training certificates, their on-the-job work experience and their connection to knowledge keepers along their learning journey with us at the SLCC. Many graduates have continued their education following the completion of the program and this will ensure proper recognition for their efforts and hard work,” says Cheximiya Allison Burns Joseph, Indigenous youth ambassador manager, SLCC.

“My hands are up in gratitude for all involved making this a possibility for our youth,” she adds.

“BCIT is proud to partner with the Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre and Capilano University, creating formal pathways for Indigenous Youth Ambassadors to explore credit for prior learning and cultural knowledge,” says Justin Williams, associate vice-president, academic at BCIT. “We are committed to empowering diverse journeys to post-secondary education. This initiative exemplifies the BCIT commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and the BCIT Indigenous Vision.”

“Our goal is to remove barriers and increase access to post-secondary education for Indigenous learners. Granting transferrable course credits, alongside opening our new campus in Squamish, will support that journey,” Mahood notes.

Capilano University will open the doors to its new Squamish campus in September, and has curated its program offering to help meet the interests and needs of the Sea to Sky region. The programs offered for the 2024-25 academic year include:

Fall term (September 2024)

- [Adult Basic Education](#)
- [Associate of Arts Degree](#) (curated select courses, including those focused on the environment and sustainability)
- [Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Interdisciplinary Studies](#)
- [Bachelor of Early Childhood Care and Education Degree](#)
- [Early Childhood Care & Education Diploma](#)
- [Tourism Management Co-operative Education Diploma](#)

Spring term (January 2025)

Additional programs added for Spring term include:

- [Business Administration Certificate](#)
- [Business Administration Diploma](#)
- [Global Hospitality & Tourism Management Post-Baccalaureate Diploma](#)



About Capilano University

Capilano University is a regional university based in North Vancouver, British Columbia, with additional programming serving the Sunshine Coast and the Sea-to-Sky corridor. With industry-leading instructors, small classes and over 100 programs across five distinctive faculties, CapU is a unique place where students are encouraged to make their mark, in and out of the classroom. Capilano University is named after Sa7plek (Chief Joe Capilano), an important leader of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation of the Coast Salish Peoples. We respectfully acknowledge that our campuses and learning centres are located on the territories of the Lílwat, x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), shíshálh (Sechelt), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

For more information, or to schedule interviews, please contact:

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