



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **New Bursary Supports Indigenous Learners in Industrial Trades**

*NBCC Launches New Bursary to Reduce Barriers for Learners, Thanks to the Generous Support of Strescon Limited*

**SEPT. 26, 2024 – SAINT JOHN, NB:** New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) is grateful to partner with Strescon Limited and the Six Wolastoqey First Nations in New Brunswick to establish a new industrial trades bursary fund, titled *Strescon Wolastoqey First Nations Industrial Trades Bursary Fund*. Two bursaries, valued at \$5,000 each annually, will be available in Spring 2025 to learners from any of the six Wolastoqey First Nations in New Brunswick who are enrolled in any of NBCC's industrial trades programs. The creation of this bursary fund will help in breaking down barriers to post-secondary education and training in skilled trades, fostering growth in New Brunswick.

"Bursaries play an essential role in reducing barriers to post-secondary education," said Mary Butler, President and CEO of NBCC. "We are grateful for generous partners, like Strescon, who support our commitment to ensuring that every New Brunswicker has the opportunity to develop the skills necessary for meaningful work. Through this gift, more learners will experience a transformative education, equipping them with the skills needed to have a greater impact in their communities and beyond. As part of our ongoing commitment to truth and reconciliation, we are dedicated to creating more opportunities for Indigenous learners to thrive at NBCC."

The President of Strescon, Mr. Hans Klohn, stated that "Strescon is pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the enrichment and success of the communities where we work and live." Mr. Klohn added "Strescon believes that investing in education is one way to create a stronger and more prosperous Province".

Mr. John Irving, the Chief Executive Officer of Strescon, commented "the bursary was a unique opportunity to contribute both to the growth of the New Brunswick workforce and to reconciliation with New Brunswick's First Nations communities." Mr. Irving added "the intent of the bursary is to encourage First Nations students to pursue a career in the industrial trades sector and provide them an opportunity to participate in New Brunswick industries".

Chief Patricia Bernard of Matawaskiye stated that the six Chiefs of the Wolastoqey Nation are "very pleased that Strescon responded to the efforts by the Wolastoqey Nation for recognition of our rights to our historic lands by engaging in a productive dialogue with us. This bursary, which is the result of those discussions, will help provide education for our community members and more skilled trades people who will help contribute to the growth of New Brunswick for all of us." Chief Bernard added that "Strescon's commitment to reconciliation and support for our First Nations' communities has allowed the Wolastoqey Nation to resolve the company's involvement in our Aboriginal title claim."

This initiative is part of a long-term commitment from Strescon that will total up to \$120,000, providing educational opportunities for 24 learners, over the next 12 years. In Spring 2025, the first bursaries will be available to two Wolastoqey First Nation community members enrolled in any of NBCC's industrial trades programs, such as welding, electrical, plumbing, and more.

**Strescon Wolastoqey First Nations Industrial Trades Bursary Fund:**

- Enrolment in any industrial trade program offered by NBCC qualifies.
- Awarded to two students, from the six Wolastoqey First Nations in New Brunswick, for a total of \$5,000 each.
- Applications for the first two bursaries will be open in Spring 2025 and applied to the 2025/2026 semester.

Learners that fit this newly founded bursary's criteria are invited to apply starting in Spring 2025. Stay tuned for more information about the bursary and application process on [nbcc.ca](http://nbcc.ca).

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**MEDIA CONTACT(S):**

Strategic Communications Team, NBCC  
[communications@nbcc.ca](mailto:communications@nbcc.ca)

Strescon Limited  
[info@ocil.ca](mailto:info@ocil.ca)

Wolastoqey First Nations  
[media@wolastoqey.ca](mailto:media@wolastoqey.ca)

Wolastoqey Tribal Council Inc.  
[media@wolastoqey.ca](mailto:media@wolastoqey.ca)

**ABOUT NBCC:**

As one of New Brunswick's largest postsecondary education institutions, NBCC drives social and economic wellbeing across the province. NBCC welcomes more than 12,000 learners each year through quality-assured, relevant training opportunities. NBCC is committed to accelerating skills development, innovating educational delivery, and reaching unprecedented numbers of New Brunswickers. Find out more at: [www.nbcc.ca](http://www.nbcc.ca).

**ABOUT STRESCON LIMITED:**

Established in 1963, Strescon Limited has grown to become the largest precast, pre-stressed concrete manufacturer in Eastern Canada. Its primary market covers the Atlantic Provinces, and the New England region of the United States. Strescon manufactures a wide range of both architectural and structural precast/prestressed concrete products including bridge girders, wall panels, complete parking garages, hollow-core planking, piling and deck slabs.

**ABOUT THE WOLASTOQEQY FIRST NATIONS:**

The Wolastoqiyik in New Brunswick, or people of the beautiful and bountiful river, includes six First Nations' communities situated along the banks of the Wolastoq River: Matawaskiye, Neqotkuk, Bilijk, Sitansisk, Welamukotuk, and Wotstak. As one of the nations to sign the Peace and Friendship Treaties in the early 18th century, the Wolastoqey Nation remains committed to a relationship of peace, friendship, and mutual respect.

**ABOUT THE WOLASTOQEQY TRIBAL COUNCIL INC.**

The Wolastoqey Tribal Council Inc. (WTCl) is a not-for-profit organization whose role is to provide capacity-building opportunities for its member communities within the traditional Wolastoqey territory in New Brunswick. These member communities consist of Matawaskiye (Madawaska Maliseet First Nation), Wotstak (Woodstock First Nation), Bilijk (Kingsclear First Nation), Sitansisk (St. Mary's First Nation), and Welamukotuk (Oromocto First Nation).