

# Voices OF HOPE

## Equipping Indigenous youth in Canada

For many Indigenous youth in Canada, the dream of starting a business can feel just out of reach. Barriers like limited access to funding, mentorship, and culturally relevant support often stand in the way. But thanks to the Indigenous Youth Business Strategy Program, that dream turned into a reality for many young entrepreneurs.

Run by the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Economic Development Corporation (NEDC) in B.C., and supported by Alongside Hope, the program did much more than provide loans. NEDC walked alongside Indigenous youth, helping them build confidence, skills and sustainable businesses that reflect their passions and communities.

Since it began, the program has helped 22 young entrepreneurs, backing their dreams with \$307,049 in approved loans. The program made it possible for participants to launch everything from catering businesses to eco-tourism ventures, from art studios to small construction companies. These young entrepreneurs not only launched their businesses, they're thriving and making a real contribution to the local economy.



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