

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 11, 2018

INNOVATIVE PILOT PROJECT RECEIVES SECOND YEAR OF FUNDING

Brackendale, BC – Cheakamus Centre is delighted to announce a \$25,000 contribution from the RBC Future Launch program for a second year. This generous funding will allow for continued opportunities for indigenous youth to explore, build, and share indigenous cultural practices in an environmental education setting.

“We were very pleased with the success of our program last summer, and are thrilled to receive a second year of funding,” says Dr. Sarah Bainbridge, senior development officer for the Cheakamus Foundation. “The *Interconnected Nature* project brings people together in a teaching longhouse providing for a powerful way to share Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) traditional ways of knowing to better understand each other and how all of us are part of the Natural World.”

The pilot project was launched in July 2018. It grew out of *Skw’une-was*, Cheakamus Centre’s long-running Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) cultural immersive program where students learn from Indigenous interpreters the traditional way of life and historical practices of the Coast Salish people of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Valley. “There were many great aspects to it; my favourite was meeting new people and working with specialists throughout the program”, said Mya Bordeau, a 2018 program graduate who is sharing newly learned skills as a cultural interpreter at Cheakamus Centre.

The *Interconnected Nature* project is part of a multi-stage approach to support the continuity of traditional practices, and to develop a framework for environmental education centres throughout Canada. This funding ensures continued programming that creates meaningful employment opportunities, strengthens connections to post-secondary institutions, and contributes to the Truth and Reconciliation movement.

[RBC Future Launch](#) is a 10-year, \$500-million initiative to help young people gain access and opportunity to the skills, job experience and career networks needed for the future world of work. “With this common goal of empowering Canadian young people for the jobs of tomorrow, RBC is excited to partner for another year on the *Interconnected Nature* project,” says Carmen Ryujin, manager of community investment for RBC.

Established in 1969, Cheakamus Centre is an environmental and indigenous cultural education organization located on the traditional territories of the Ch’iyákmesh people near Squamish, British Columbia. Cheakamus Centre serves over 15,000 visitors annually from the Sea to Sky Corridor, Lower Mainland and beyond. The Centre also hosts visitors from around the world for special events, workshops, conferences, meetings, and retreats.

The *Interconnected Nature* pilot project is part of a larger, multi-year campus renewal initiative at Cheakamus Centre that includes new construction and renovations, enhanced programming, and public events and learning offerings associated with the [Friends of Cheakamus](#).

For additional information related to campus renewal, please contact:

Cathy Jenkins, Project Manager
Ph: 778.772.0157
cjenkins@sd44.ca

For additional information related to partnership and sponsorship opportunities please contact:

Sarah Bainbridge, Senior Development Officer
Ph: 604.848.5668
sarah@cheakamuscentre.ca