



From a painful past to a promising future

The 2010 Olympics gives hope and opportunity for Amelia

Amelia is a 52 year old Aboriginal woman living in Surrey, British Columbia, who looked to the support of the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Aboriginal Bridging Employment Program for Women to escape years of abuse and drug addiction. Knowing she needed to make a change, Amelia took the initiative to contact a social worker in Surrey who introduced her to the program where she enrolled immediately. Amelia found it was “hard to adjust to going to school again but I knew I wanted something better for my life.” Amelia spent most of her years as a stay at home mom with little work experience to attending four classes per week taking resume writing, job research, Food Safe and Level A First Aid certification. Amelia’s favourite experience while in the program was a visit to the Vancouver Public Library for a Job Fair organized by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Having never visited the Vancouver Public Library, Amelia quickly fell in love with its beautiful architecture and knew it would be a place she would like to visit again and again. The job fair had over 15 businesses taking part in providing information and on-site interviews. Using her skills she developed through the program, Amelia talked with several employers at the fair and was immediately offered a job at a food and beverage booth at the Olympic Athletes Village in downtown Vancouver.

Before Amelia enrolled in the Aboriginal Bridging Employment Program for Women she had registered as a volunteer for the 2010 Olympics in hopes to be a part of the action. Now, thanks to the program that helped her earn a paid position in the Olympic Athletes Village, Amelia is going to be in the centre of it



all. Just recently Amelia attended the venue's introduction party where she toured the facility, met other staff and received her new uniform. Amelia says she is "very excited about working at the Olympics where I will get to meet lots of people and feel like a part of the games," and adds "I can't wait to watch the Olympic hockey games since hockey is my favourite sport."

When asked where she sees herself after the Olympics has ended Amelia replied "I would really like to start an after-school daycare at home." She goes on to say "if I did not start the program I think I would still be in the same bad situation, without work and an unhappy life but now I can use what I've learned to maybe start my own business."

Funded by the Ministry of Housing and Social Development, the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Aboriginal Bridging Employment Program for Women is specifically designed for Aboriginal women, delivered in a culturally sensitive way in order for them to overcome the impact of abuse and make positive changes in their lives. The program includes workshops in personal development, career and education exploration, certificate training, counseling and practicum placement.

The S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Aboriginal Bridging Employment Program for Women is just one of the many programs provided by S.U.C.C.E.S.S., one of Canada's largest social services agencies. S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is a not for profit agency that also assists with settlement of new immigrants, promotes personal development of children and youth through programs; facilitates social participation of parents and seniors in the community; helps the unemployed in job and career development; facilitates entrepreneurs in business development; delivers education and employment related training; and promotes social change through community development and advocacy for both Canadians and immigrants.

Programs such as the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Aboriginal Bridging Employment Program for Women Program would not be possible without the support of S.U.C.C.E.S.S., government funding and donors. Each program supported by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is designed to help build bridges, harvest diversity and create harmony in multicultural communities through service and advocacy.

For more information visit www.success.bc.ca or contact Eileen Lao at eileen.lao@success.bc.ca