

MEDIA RELEASE

Partnering to Mentor Indigenous Students in Canada

(Calgary, January 10, 2022)

CCIS is honoured to announce a new partnership with Influence Mentoring Society.

The vision of Influence Mentoring is to work collaboratively, across cultures, to create better opportunities for Indigenous post-secondary students throughout their post-secondary careers, and to create measurable opportunities for reciprocal mentoring, in the spirit of reconciliation, in order to increase awareness of Indigenous culture, history and issues.

Since the inception of seed funding from actors and philanthropists Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively, the program has been successful in collaborating with several notable and national organizations to provide one-on-one and group mentorship to post-secondary Indigenous youth in a variety of industries and sectors.

This national program will match a mentor with an Indigenous student for one academic year, with the opportunity for the student to match with the same or other mentors in the same industry for each year of their educational journey.

"In the spirit of partnership, caring and reconciliation, we are excited to work with Influence Mentoring, so they can continue their mission to build capacity, talent, and career opportunities among urban, Indigenous, post-secondary students, through group learning activities and one-on-one mentoring with industry veterans", says Fariborz Birjandian, CEO of CCIS.

Influence Mentoring Society Chairperson, Colby Delorme emphasizes that "traditionally, mentorship has played an important role in the Indigenous community. Culture, traditions, spirituality, teachings, and stories have all been shared and best understood through the Elder and protégé relationship. This transference of knowledge has been integral to Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Influence Mentoring is built on this foundation."

Influence Mentoring is actively recruiting protégés, mentors, and additional funders, and pursuing strategic partnerships with post-secondary institutions, employers and associations that share these same values of collaboration,

reconciliation and creating opportunities for shared learning.

About Influence Mentoring

Influence Mentoring is an Alberta society governed by a volunteer Board of Directors with substantial experience working with Indigenous communities and across the not-for-profit and corporate sectors.

Influence is a collaborative organization whose goals are to create better opportunities for Indigenous post-secondary students, and to create opportunities for mentors to raise their awareness of Indigenous issues, culture, and history. The Influence Mentoring program itself is a new initiative aimed at building capacity, talent, and career opportunities for eligible Indigenous students, who are committed to achieving their career goals. This innovative program is delivered through an online platform thereby allowing protégés and mentors to participate in the mentoring program from anywhere in Canada.

About CCIS

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS) is a non-profit, multi-denominational organization that offers settlement and integration support to immigrants and refugees in Southern Alberta. Since our establishment in 1981, CCIS has grown to become the largest immigrant serving agency in Alberta, and one of Canada's leading organizations in the field of settlement services.

CCIS is comprised of over 300 staff members and 1,500 volunteers who collectively speak more than 60 languages. We work in partnership with local organizations, educational institutions, and members of the business community to deliver 60 programs and services out of 7 locations and 25 outreach locations in Calgary and Southern Alberta. CCIS serves over 11,000 newcomers each year.

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