

**\*Mark your calendar for our March 28th NODN Economic Development Practitioners Conference\***

## NODN AGM September 26, 2007

We would like to thank the Members, attendees and Speakers Jack Allston, Dave Farrell, and Anthony Friedrich for making the NODN 2007 AGM a success.

Partnerships, as we all know, are important. One of the most important partnerships is between governments and the Northwestern Ontario Development Network. Representing the intersection between public policy and the private sector, the place where we come together to create economic opportunities for Northwestern Ontario.



## NMA

Granite Tops Inc. fabricates, distributes, and installs marble, granite and natural quartz countertops, furniture, and flooring. They have been serving Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario for over 15 years and have also had great success in exporting to the United States and more recently Alberta.

After some of the bumps were smoothed out, Granite Tops was able to increase their sales by about 35 percent over the first three years of exporting to the U.S. But with the recent drastic drop in the housing market in the U.S. and the high Canadian dollar, their exports to the U.S. have recently dropped.

“Our exports have remained steady since we began but have recently started to fall to about 25 percent due to the slow housing market,” John said “Now, with us entering the market in Alberta, our sales again increased by about 40 percent and we are also entering into some

Northeastern Ontario markets such as Hearst.

Granite Tops have often utilized the services of Northwest – Midwest Alliance (NMA) when attending trade shows, collecting market information, or with any other export related question or problem.

“Trade shows, such as the Arrowhead Home and Builders Show put on by Arrowhead Manufactures and Fabricators in Duluth Minnesota, have been very successful for Granite Tops.,” John said “NMA has really helped us participate successfully in these types of shows that get our name known in other markets.

“NMA has been a great tool for us. We utilize their knowledge and expertise to help make our export endeavours run more smoothly. It’s nice to have a liaison between the business owners and all of the government programs out there. It can get confusing, and NMA was able to help us sort out all of the government programs available to us.”



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## **CHAMBER EMBRACES EXCELLENCE**

The Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce the winners of the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Business Awards. The following awards were handed out at the Awards Banquet Saturday, November 3, 2007 at La Place Rendez-Vous:

Business of the Year (1-15 Employees) .  
Sponsored by Bell  
Domino's Pizza

Business of the Year (16+ Employees) .  
Sponsored by B93 fm  
Canada Safeway

Entrepreneur of the Year . Sponsored by the Rainy  
River Future Development Corporation  
Kevin Nielson, Shopper's Drug Mart

Customer Service Award (Individual) . Sponsored by  
Good Impressions Printing  
Lori Pachailo, Howarth's Home Centre

Customer Service Award (Business). Sponsored by  
the Business Development Bank of Canada  
Super 8 Motel

Business Woman of the Year . Sponsored by the Busi-  
ness Women's Network  
Sherry Kaun, Share Bears Place

Employee of the Year . Sponsored by The Westend  
Weekly  
Joe Hendrikx, Northland Basics

Tony Beyak Memorial Volunteer of the Year . Spon-  
sored by the Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce  
Gordon Armstrong

Small Business Trainer of the Year . Sponsored by  
NCDS Career Works  
Revco Carpet Centre Ltd.

Accessibility Award . Sponsored by the Town of Fort Fran-  
ces Accessibility Advisory Committee  
Kevin Busch, Fort Frances Curling Club

Safety Award - Business or Individual . Sponsored by  
Abitibi-Bowater  
Kayne Shaw, Daryl's Custom Landscapes

"We are proud to host this event each year as it recognizes businesses, organizations and individuals for outstanding achievement and the contributions made to the economic growth and prosperity of the Rainy River District. We sincerely congratulate all 84 nominees as each is just as deserving of the title as the next" stated Chamber Manager Dawn Booth.

"The event was another success with over 180 guests in attendance, great food and service from the staff at La Place Rendez-Vous, entertaining music by the Borderland Orchestra Ensemble during cocktail hour, another great video presentation by Shaw, and lots of smiles, laughs and cheers".

"I want to personally thank and congratulate our emcees for the night, President Christine Denby and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Nancy Daley for a great job. They kept the night running smoothly and quickly and worked really well together. We'll have to look at bringing them back again next year!" Booth laughed.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual banquet is tentatively scheduled for November 8 next year.



**RAINY RIVER FUTURE**  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
A Community Futures Development Corporation





# NODN NEWS



## FI:RE2007 Conference

### FUELING INNOVATION:RE-IGNITING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

On September 27 & 28 in Dryden, Ontario FI:RE (Fueling Innovation:Re-igniting Entrepreneurship) was the talk of the City and beyond.

The FI:RE conference attracted over 100 business people from the region to participate in some serious discussion on how Northwestern Ontario can re-invigorate its economy.

With keynote speakers from all over Canada and local successful entrepreneurs the participants were WOWED by the level of expertise who believed this region has the potential to explode simply by adopting a forward thinking philosophy.

The experts shared that people are looking for safer, cleaner,

stress free environments to do business. And Ontario's Northwest has it all to offer.



The new culture allows us to always be available, distance is disappearing.

Jim Bottomley presented "Future Success Strategies" and inspired the audience to reflect and respond to change - embrace it.

The venue was loaded with these

types of messages. With the Editor of Profit Magazine, Ian Portsmouth; former United Nations development consultant Brock Dickinson and Globe & Mail business columnist and host the CBC business reality show "The Dragons Den" Sean Wise.

The conference also included presentations, workshops, case studies, panel discussions and one-to-one mentoring.

Never before had Ontario's Northwest seen a conference of this magnitude.

The conference was a regional initiative with the planning committee having regional representation and with the support of all levels of government it was considered a great success.



## 2008 Conference Confirmed

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After the FI:RE Conference the planning committee received several requests for the date of the next conference from those who participated and those who missed out. Therefore, steps have already been taken to find an organization that could coordinate another event.

Northwest Training and Adjustment Board (NTAB ) has agreed to undertake this task setting next years date for the week of September 22nd, 2008.

However, discussion is still being had to determine whether the conference will be expanded.

So if you are interested in participating at next years event, visit the website at [www.FIRE2007.ca](http://www.FIRE2007.ca) or NTAB at 807-223-3813 or toll-free at 1-800-305-1923.



## CHUKUNI SHIFTS FOCUS

As 2007 comes to a close and the New Year quickly approaches, the Chukuni Communities Development Corporation (CCDC) in Red Lake is creating quite a buzz. When the Municipality of Red Lake recently chose to take control of the area's economic development initiatives, the CCDC, who was previously the area's leader in economic development, suddenly found themselves in transition. The CCDC continues to support the communities of Red Lake and Ear Falls through its very successful Business Development funding program, assisting new businesses with start-up costs and helping existing businesses improve and enhance their services. As well, Chukuni's tourism marketing program, the Red Lake Touring Region, is heading into its 6<sup>th</sup> year and is continuing to make leaps and bounds in the enhancement and promotion of tourism in the Red Lake and Ear Falls area. However, in addition to these current initiatives, Chukuni Communities Development Corporation is now shifting away from Economic Development and taking on the role of leading the area in **Community** Development. You may be wondering, what exactly is the difference between Economic Development and Community Development? Well, although subtle, there is a difference. Community development can be seen as assisting a community in strengthening itself and developing towards its full potential; whereas, Economic Development is the stimulation of economic activity through expanding job opportunities, etc. Chukuni Communities Development Corporation is very excited to be filling a gap that seems to currently exist within the local communities. The CCDC has a very dedicated Community Development Committee that is currently working very hard to identify specific projects to pursue and to create a new direction for the Corporation. A Community Development Officer has been selected to begin work in January 2008, to act under the guidance of the Community Development Committee and Chukuni Communities Development Corporation Manager, Cathy Quesnel. The opportunities for community development in the Red Lake and Ear Falls area are endless and the Chukuni Communities Development Corporation is eager to strut their stuff!

NMA on the web  
[www.nmatrade.com](http://www.nmatrade.com)

NODN on the web  
[www.nodn.com](http://www.nodn.com)



## NODN Welcomes KC Woilford

As the newest member of the NODN Team, I would like to introduce myself. My name is KC Woilford and I am excited to work with NODN as a Development Officer (Youth Intern). I will be working closely with Dan and Kim to increasing membership and awareness of NODN. I will be using my media background, along with the skills I acquired from the Business-Marketing program at Confederation College.



I was born and raised in Thunder Bay, with family throughout Northwestern Ontario including Kenora, Eagle River, Dryden, and Ignace.

I look forward to my year ahead with NODN.

Sincerely,

KC Woilford  
[intern@nodn.com](mailto:intern@nodn.com)

## Upcoming Events

### February

- EDCO 51st Conference February 5 - 7, 2008 Toronto, ON

### March

- CEDC Discovery Day March 29, 2008 DaVinci Centre Thunder Bay ON
- NODN EDP Conference March 28, 2008 Thunder Bay ON

### April

- University of Waterloo 1st Year Course April 7–11, 2008 Thunder Bay ON
- NOACC Spring Meeting April 24–26, 2008 Geraldton, ON
- PARO Northern Ontario Women's Economic Development Conference April 29–30, Valhalla Inn Thunder Bay, ON