

College of New Caledonia



NEWS RELEASE

For release on November 4, 2013

CNC hosts second “Start-Up Weekend” in Prince George

Local students and budding entrepreneurs will have a fantastic opportunity to learn and develop their ideas at the 2nd Start-Up Weekend hosted at CNC.

The event, from Nov. 15-17, is a chance for students and professionals to practise three skills essential to successful participation in the 21st century economy: innovation, entrepreneurship and collaboration.

“The selection of individual projects recognizes entrepreneurial innovation while the winning team must successfully collaborate, using the unique skills of individual members to effectively research and build a business plan in an extremely condensed time frame,” said John Neumann, a CNC instructor from the School of University Studies and Career Access.

“It is an exciting event for both contestants and judges, and at the same time provides hands-on, practical experience. The opportunity for students to work alongside local professionals to jointly develop a business plan for a brand new project is a great mentoring activity. It is the kind of experience difficult to provide in the traditional classroom setting and helps to round out the business student's education.”

The first Startup Weekend in Prince George was hosted at CNC last March. Startup Weekends are part of a global entrepreneurial movement, founded and supported by the Kauffman Foundation in the United States. Shauna Harper, Kaleena Ross, Chrystal Green, and CNC’s Zelda Craig have been working hard to ensure this event is a success.

These weekends have been called “an MBA in a weekend.” They start Friday night with a “Pitchfire,” where participants pitch their business ideas. The ideas are voted on and whittled down, and teams form around each of the surviving concepts. Each team “recruits” a variety of skill sets: from business and marketing knowledge, programming and coding knowledge, graphic design, and industry expertise. Teams have the week-end to conduct research and develop a business plan.

Coaches Will Cadell, a successful entrepreneur and owner of SparkGeo, and Renata King, Director of Business Development at Northern Development Initiatives Trust, will help the teams prepare to pitch their ideas to a panel of judges on Sunday night. The panel of judges includes local entrepreneur Pat Bell, Sean Simmons, the founder of Goldstream Publishing, Steve Botham, IT Manager at the Regional District of Fraser Fort George, and Zelda Craig, Industry Liaison at the College of New Caledonia.

According to Shauna Harper, the Prince George community was impressed with the results of the first Start-Up Weekend, and that has meant more support for this second event.

“We’re really pleased that in addition to CNC, a number of sponsors have stepped up to help fund this event, including the BC Innovation Council, Integris Credit Union, the Canadian Youth Business Foundation & Community Futures Fraser Fort George,” said Harper, who was

named business person of the year at the recent 2013 Prince George Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence awards.

“Any proceeds from the event go towards supporting innovation and entrepreneurship in Prince George.”

Registration for the event is now open at: <http://www.startupprincegeorge.ca/>

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