

## INDIGENOUS YOUTH HONOURED WITH FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY SKILLS AWARDS

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**Vancouver, BC** – Earlier today, Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC), in partnership with the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM), recognized two new recipients of the *Skills Awards for Indigenous Youth*. The first honouree was Lance Black, Anicinape of Abitibi in Ontario. The second recipient was Zachary Julian of the Mi’Kmaq First Nations in Nova Scotia.

FPAC hosts its annual *Awards of Excellence* luncheon to recognize excellence in Canada’s forest products sector and to celebrate our industry’s stars and important community partners. The *Skills Awards for Indigenous Youth* are presented to individuals with a strong academic standing who demonstrate a commitment to the revitalized forest products industry and the opportunities that it provides for Indigenous communities.

“Our sector is seeing a growing number of Indigenous youth who are excited by the opportunities they see in the forest products industry,” said FPAC President and CEO Derek Nighbor. “FPAC is committed to creating opportunities where young leaders like Lance and Zachary can develop their skills and take our sector into the future,” Nighbor added.

Lance Black is a candidate of the Master of Economic Development and Innovation program at the University of Waterloo, Ontario. He is passionate about serving Indigenous people and giving back to those who need it the most. “Initially, I did not give much thought to forestry. However, this past school year has introduced me to many new ideas and I have a fresh perspective on forestry. First Nations can collaboratively work towards capturing the full value chain in wood harvesting and put our people to work. If First Nations had greater control over their economy, we likely could address some of the current issues such as housing and infrastructure. I want to be a role model for my community and show them that the greatest thing you can do today to honour your people is to get educated, protect the vulnerable, and listen to your elders.”

Currently, Black is working for Bizhiki Management where he is being mentored while learning about the sustainable and innovative products being created by the sector, how knowledge may be passed along to future generations and support Indigenous economies through collaboration and partnership. “From my experience, it is the best way to learn about a business when you take the time to learn about all aspects of the business,” says Francis Archibald, General Manager of Bizhiki Management. “Lance has the potential to become a

leader in the forestry sector and has shown that he is willing to learn from others. Furthermore, Lance has shown great maturity and humility.”

In 2017, Zachary Julian earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Acadia University in Nova Scotia and is currently involved in the Forestry Technician program at Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough, Ontario. He is eager to start his career in the forest industry by eventually becoming an Indigenous Liaison Forestry Technician in Nova Scotia. “I plan to use the connections I have generated in the past to provide as much support to our forests for the rest of my life,” said Julian. “I was born and raised in the Mi’kmaq culture and was taught to respect nature. The trees and forests are what provided us life in the past and we need to respect to them in our future”.

“Zachary’s commitment to his Indigenous community is exceptional and his work demonstrates his level of motivation,” says Josh Feltham of School of Environment & Natural Resources Sciences at Sir Sandford Fleming College. “I am confident that he will contribute to the industry and represent forestry professionally and with integrity.”

To see the full list of FPAC award recipients, please visit <http://www.fpac.ca/canadas-forest-sector-celebrates-its-best-and-brightest-in-vancouver>.

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FPAC provides a voice for Canada’s wood, pulp, and paper producers nationally and internationally in government, trade, and environmental affairs. The \$69-billion-a-year forest products industry represents 2% of Canada’s GDP and is one of Canada’s largest employers operating in more than 600 communities and providing 230,000 direct jobs across the country.

**For more information contact:**

Kerry Patterson-Baker  
Vice President, Communications  
e: [kpatterson-baker@fpac.ca](mailto:kpatterson-baker@fpac.ca)  
t: 613-563-1441 ext. 314

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