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BC'S TOURISM INDUSTRY LAUNCHES RECRUITMENT DRIVE

Industry needs to fill 84,000 new positions by 2015 to support industry growth

VANCOUVER – Facing a skilled labour shortage that threatens to curtail growth and affect service levels, BC's tourism industry today launched a \$500,000 career awareness marketing campaign to attract more young people to careers in tourism.

The province-wide campaign, called MOVE ON UP™, is an initiative of go2, the British Columbia tourism industry's human resources association. It includes radio and print advertising, public relations initiatives, attendance at provincial career fairs and presentations to high schools, colleges and agencies representing immigrant, aboriginal and other under-represented labour groups.

“Right now, tourism operators across the province can't find the people they need to fill all their positions. We're at a critical point and need to turn this trend around,” said Arlene Keis, CEO of go2.

BC's tourism industry is projected to create 84,000 new job openings over the next decade in a wide range of professions – that's an average of one job every hour for the next 10 years.

“The best part about pursuing a tourism career is that the possibilities are truly limitless,” said Olga Ilich, Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts. “It's such a diverse industry that you can build a successful career doing exactly what you love, whether that is running a busy downtown hotel, guiding tourists in our spectacular outdoors or sharing local cultures at museums and attractions.”

The ministry has contributed \$100,000 in funding to the MOVE ON UP campaign. Other financial contributors include Tourism British Columbia, the British Columbia & Yukon Hotels' Association, the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association, the British Columbia Restaurant and Foodservices Association, Whistler Blackcomb, Vancouver Premier College, the Tourism Training Institute, and Canadian Tourism College.

According to a 2005 Omnibus survey of BC residents, only 16 per cent of teens (aged 16-17) and 22 per cent of young adults (18-24) would consider a career in tourism.

“The campaign aims to change some out-dated stereotypes that persist about the tourism industry,” said Keis. “There are well paying tourism jobs at all levels and a growing market means that people with the right mix of education, experience and drive can move up quickly.”

Of the 84,000 new jobs expected to open up in BC over the next decade, the positions in highest demand are: 11,500 more professional chefs and cooks; 12,600 more managers and supervisors for the food and beverage sector; 5,000 more managers for the accommodation sector; and 3,700 more leaders in the outdoor recreation sector.

The campaign will direct people to an interactive website, www.MoveOnUp.ca, with comprehensive information on tourism careers, including job descriptions, career profiles, salary levels, and training and education programs, as well as a job board linking job seekers with employers.

A lack of human resources already has some tourism industry operators feeling stretched to the limit.

“BC spends millions of dollars attracting visitors to the province and we need to make sure we have enough people in place to continue to deliver a consistent quality experience,” said James Chase, CEO of the British Columbia & Yukon Hotels’ Association.

Tourism in BC ranks as one of the province’s largest and fastest growing economic sectors, directly employing 117,900 people and generating a projected \$9.8 billion in revenues for the provincial economy.

About go2

Established in April 2003, go2 is the BC tourism industry’s human resources association. go2’s mission is to assist the tourism industry address challenges in attracting employees and retaining its workforce in order to support industry growth.

For more information on go2 and human resource development initiatives for BC’s tourism industry, visit www.go2hr.ca.

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