

For Immediate Release

October 7, 2008

*Photo available upon request

**PROPEL, ITA ANNOUNCE MODIFIED PROVINCIAL
COOK TRAINING PROGRAM**

Program offers opportunities for all employers and cooks to participate in provincial cook training program and receive tax credit and incentives

Vancouver – Propel and the Industry Training Authority (ITA) formally announced the upcoming modifications to BC's existing cook training program at Vancouver Community College last evening. The event celebrated the year-long collaborative effort between industry and educators to ensure the next generation of professional cooks are trained to the highest standards, in order to meet the needs of BC's foodservice and hospitality industry.

Propel is a division of go2, as well as the Industry Training Organization for the province's tourism and hospitality industry. It was granted approval earlier this year by the Industry Training Authority for modifications to the existing accredited provincial cook training program.

"Employers who may not have previously felt the fit with a Red Seal program in their establishment can now support apprenticeship at three different levels of certification, and benefit from tax credits – something many employers are not aware of," says White Spot President Warren Erhart, whose restaurant chain will be the first to offer a fully trained in-house apprenticeship under an ITA pilot program.

Major changes to the program include the creation of two new distinct provincially recognized Certificates of Qualification, and a modification to the current accredited cook program. The new program structure will mean that a Certificate of Qualification will be issued for Professional Cook 1, Professional Cook 2 or Professional Cook 3 at each stage of training and work experience – with the interprovincial Red Seal for the cook profession affixed to the Professional Cook 3 Certificate. And there will continue to be the opportunity and process for those with industry experience but no formal training to challenge any one or more of the credentials.

These changes provide a number of opportunities for employers. The ability to participate in provincial industry training programs, tax incentives and credits and recruiting and training strategies with training institutions will be available to a much broader segment of the industry.

There will also be a full integration of the current Apprenticeship, Foundation and high school ACE-IT culinary programs. This means the pathway to provincially and nationally recognized credentials is clearly defined and equal in duration and assessment criteria regardless of which program apprentices enroll in.

"Propel's work, including the broad consultation undertaken to improve and contemporize the cook program, is a strong example of how industry input ensures that training programs meet the needs of employers and employees in today's workplace," says Kevin Evans, CEO of the ITA.

The target implementation date for province-wide integration of the newly modified program is September 2009.

Last night's event was from 5 pm to 7 pm at J.J.'s Dining Room at Vancouver Community College. Speeches from Dale Dorn, President, Vancouver Community College, Kevin Evans, CEO, ITA, Christopher Klufftinger, Regional Executive Chef, Aaramark Canada, and Jonathan Rouse, Dean, VCC's School of Hospitality were followed by appetizers prepared by culinary arts students from several training institutions at live cook stations.

About the Industry Training Authority:

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) is the provincial government agency responsible for all designated trades training in BC. It was established in 2004 to significantly expand training participation in the province through the development of an industry-led training model. Industry Training Organizations (ITOs) are the principal way in which the leadership is being delegated and have been launched in six key BC industry sectors to date.

About Propel:

PROPEL, a division of go2, was sanctioned by the Industry Training Authority (ITA) to take on an industry-driven training mandate for British Columbia's tourism sector. The apprenticeship programs for cook, baker and meatcutter currently fall under the jurisdiction of PROPEL. For more information, visit go2propel.ca.

-30-

Media Contacts:

Lynne Henshaw, go2
Email: lhenshaw@go2hr.ca
Phone: 604-633-9787 x234
Cell: 778-834-1735

Lisa Dooling, Industry Training Authority
Email: ldooling@itabc.ca
Phone: 604-214-8710