



For Immediate Release

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**Low-resolution photo attached. Hi-res photos available upon request.*

BCIT Named Winner of the 2018 Tourism Student Case Competition

Kelowna, BC – The team from BCIT’s Tourism Marketing Diploma Program was crowned the winner of this year’s provincial Winning Pitch competition at the BC Tourism Industry Conference today.

The Winning Pitch, hosted by go2HR, BC’s tourism human resource association, is a post-secondary student case competition. This year, student teams from around BC developed a business concept for a new tourism product or service that expands into and supports the development of shoulder- and off-seasons of the tourism industry in their respective regions.

The BCIT team, made up of students Kelsey Acres, Melissa Long, Mandy McArthur, and Daniella Potesta, took home first place and a prize of \$1,000 with their proposal of “Lakes and Land Cultural Adventures”, an immersive Indigenous learning experience in the Lillooet region.

Fourteen teams from eleven post-secondary schools presented their four-page concept paper to an industry judging panel at regional competitions held in Kamloops, Nanaimo, Vancouver and via online submission. The winner from each regional competition met at the provincial finals, held at the BC Tourism Industry Conference yesterday.

The finalists, which included Thompson Rivers University, Selkirk College, BCIT, and Vancouver Island University, presented their full business plans to over 100 conference delegates and a panel of judges including James Terry from Partners in Tourism Society, Marsha Walden from Destination British Columbia, and J.J. Belanger from Crystal Cove Beach Resort. Conference delegates had the opportunity to vote for their favourite business pitch, which contributed to the overall score. Other participating institutions include:

- the Thompson Rivers University team with their proposal of “42 Eau Resort & Spa”, a high-end rejuvenating escape combining cannabis and wellness in a sustainable resort near Lac le Jeune;
- the Selkirk College team with their proposal of “Kootenay Lake Rail Tour”, utilizing existing railway infrastructure to provide guided dining tours by train between Nelson and Cranbrook;
- and the VIU team with their proposal of “Nanaimo Bar Festival”, an affordable event creating exposure for local businesses, easily replicated in other regions of Vancouver Island.

“It’s wonderful to see the next bright young stars of tourism utilize their education and apply their strategic thinking to support the industry,” said Arlene Keis, CEO of go2HR. “We are very pleased with the quality of all of the proposals, and applaud these students for taking on the challenge of the Winning Pitch and displaying such consideration and insight in their ideas. We would also like to extend our thanks to our major provincial sponsors, Destination BC and Partners in Tourism Society, for their support of this event.”

About go2HR

go2HR is BC’s tourism human resource association, responsible for coordinating the BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy. go2HR provides tourism employers with resources in the area of recruitment and retention, as well as training and certification programs to develop relevant skills for prospective and current tourism and hospitality employees. For more information, visit www.go2hr.ca.

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