



*Discover*

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*Build*

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*Share*

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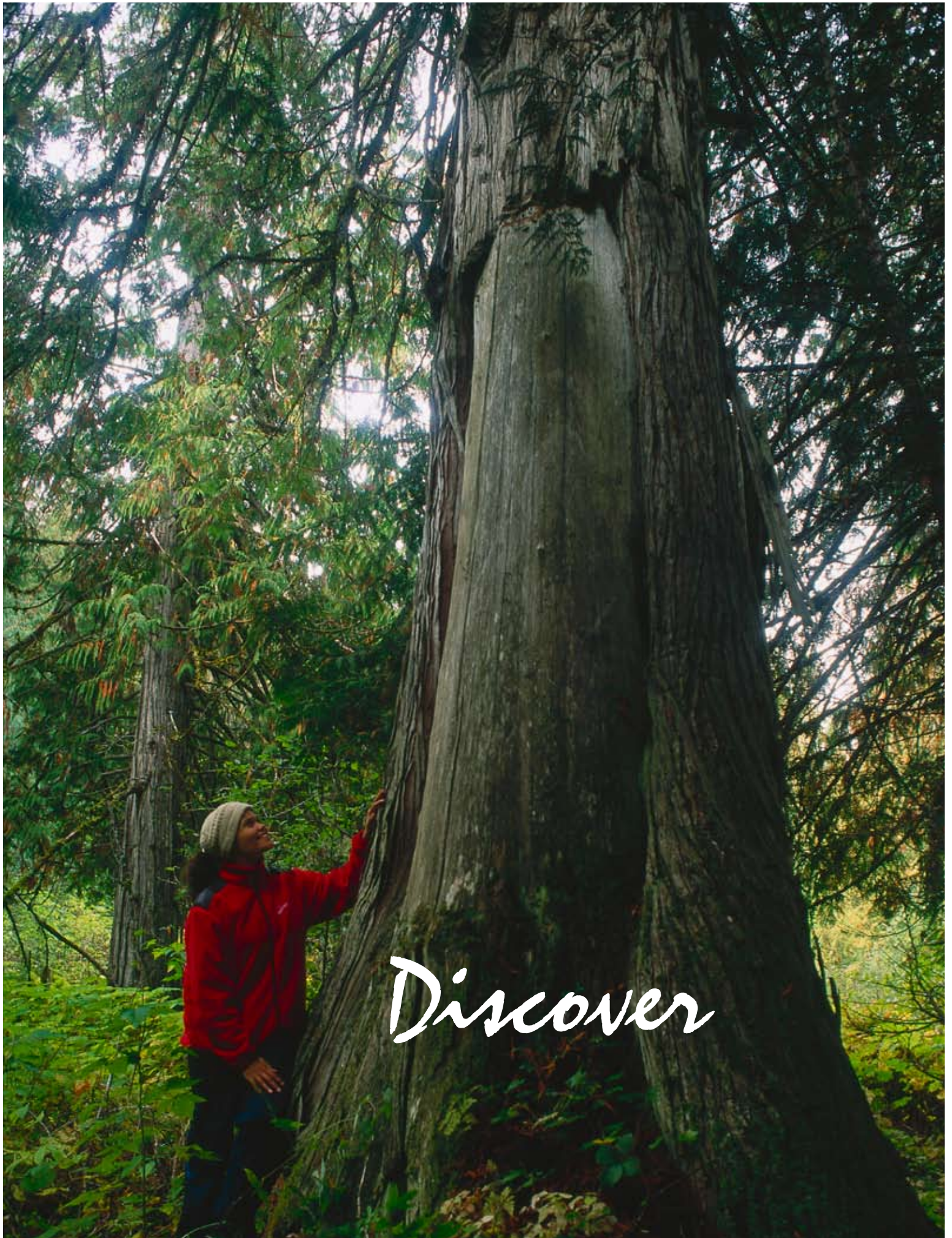


*Your Story*

**AYA**

ABORIGINAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR  
PROGRAM

TOURISM TRAINING CURRICULUM OUTLINE



*Discover*

# ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document is designed to provide a user-friendly summary of the *Aboriginal Youth Ambassador Program (AYA) Tourism Training Curriculum*. The *AYA Tourism Training Curriculum* is a lengthy set of documents which includes:

- *Aboriginal Youth Ambassador Program Outline*
- *Senior Ambassador Training Curriculum (5 Day Program)*
- *Junior Ambassador Training Curriculum (Six Week Program)*

## WHY THIS DOCUMENT WAS CREATED

AYA has been providing tourism training for Aboriginal youth for the last four years. The program has been extremely successful at engaging Aboriginal youth with the leadership, employment and life skills necessary to succeed in the field of tourism or the career of their choice.

However, until now the AYA curriculum has never been formally articulated. Over the last year the AYA curriculum has been studied and documented so that it can be better communicated to others, more easily modified/improved, and to ensure a long-term viability of the Program which transcends the involvement of any one individual.



## FUNDING

This curriculum was made possible through a grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education's Aboriginal Special Projects Fund and contributions from Capilano College, the Squamish Nation and the Spo7ez Cultural Centre and Community Society.

## ADVISORS

This curriculum was created with guidance from representatives of the following organizations:

- Squamish Nation Chiefs and Council
- Squamish Nation Stitsma Employment Centre
- Capilano College
- Native Education Centre
- BC Centre for Tourism Leadership and Innovation

*Build*



# THE ABORIGINAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

## MISSION

The *Aboriginal Youth Ambassador Program* provides Aboriginal youth with the tools and opportunity to discover, build and share their unique story with visitors in a way that bridges the Native and non-Native worlds, delights the public and fosters the Aboriginal leaders of tomorrow.

## GOAL

AYA will train 210 Aboriginal Youth Ambassadors in time for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

## LEADERSHIP

AYA is hosted by the Squamish Nation and mandated by Squamish Nation Chiefs and Council. The Squamish Nation Stitsma Employment Centre oversees the operations of the program.

## PARTICIPATING NATIONS

AYA is open to participants from all Nations. Over the last four years, Aboriginal youth from across British Columbia and Canada have participated.

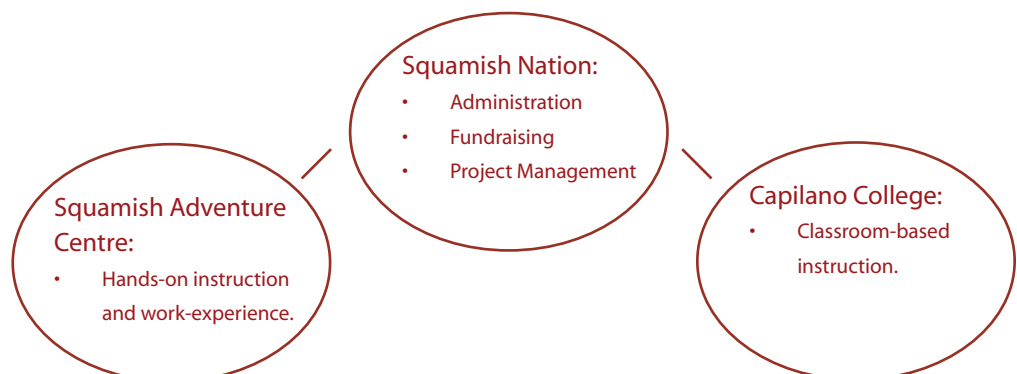


## PARTNERS

The AYA program is based on a partnership model which requires three key participants. These include:

1. Aboriginal Community - The Squamish Nation
2. Post-Secondary Institution - Capilano College
3. High Profile Tourism Venue - Squamish Adventure Centre

The roles of these partners is summarized below:



# THE LEARNING MODEL

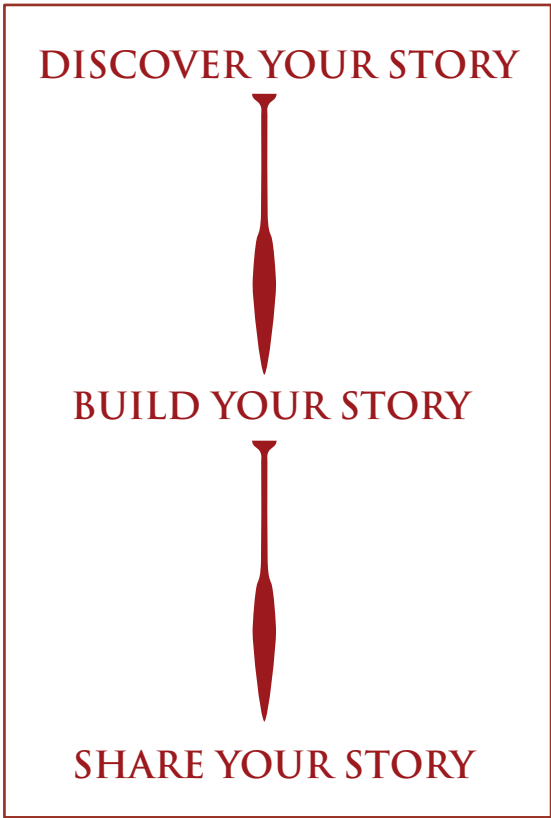
## OVERARCHING THEMES

AYA's tourism training model is founded on the idea that each person has a unique and intriguing story to share and that in being empowered to share this story and in having it received in a positive way by the outside world, the teller can gain confidence and a host of other skills necessary to succeed in tourism or the life pursuit of their choice. The sharing of this story becomes the anchor from which a diverse set of skills ranging from public speaking to personal accounting can be developed.

The training of AYA participants is therefore focused around activities which will facilitate the successful sharing of their story with visitors. Participants go through a structured series of exercises designed to assist them to:

- Discover their story
- Build their story
- Share their story

These basic themes are used as the anchors for a series of training activities designed to make participants proficient in the basic skills necessary to succeed in the tourism industry. Upon completing the program participants have a new sense of confidence, diminished fear of the outside world and a host of practical skills which makes them highly desirable employees in the tourism industry and more likely to succeed throughout their life path.



The AYA Tourism Training Model is based on the three basic themes shown left. Each theme includes a rich collection of experiences designed to increase confidence as well as develop skills integral to success in the tourism industry.

# THE LEARNING MODEL

## DISCOVER YOUR STORY

“Discover Your Story” activities are designed to assist participants to explore their unique cultural and life experiences and to develop the strong research and fact-finding abilities required in the tourism industry. “Discover Your Story” activities include:

- Internet Research Skills
- Library Research Skills
- Personal Interview Skills
- Interviews with Elders and Community Leaders
- Personal Biography Development and Presentation



## BUILD YOUR STORY

“Build Your Story” activities increase participants’ sense of having something valuable to offer the visitor. These activities provide participants with stories and anecdotes that they can share and also give participants a sense of personal accomplishment, satisfaction and an expanded perception of their personal limits. These activities also serve as familiarization tours so that Ambassadors have a first hand familiarity with the offerings of various tourism attractions. “Build Your Story” experiences include:

- White Water Rafting
- Canoe Trips
- Familiarization Tours to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Tourism Attractions
- Cultural Activities: Paddle Carving, Cedar Weaving, Drum Making.

## SHARE YOUR STORY

“Share Your Story” activities include experiences to assist participants to develop the communication, public speaking, interpersonal and visitor-relation skills necessary to successfully communicate with visitors. This theme area also involves providing the opportunity and obligation for participants to present their story at a high profile tourism venue. “Share Your Story” activities include:

- Public Speaking
- Tourism Visitor Information Training
- SuperHost
- FirstHost
- Visitor Presentations



*Share*





# THE PEOPLE

## PARTICIPANTS

The program includes two distinct age cohorts of youth in order to create a mentorship dynamic between older and younger members of the group.

### SENIOR AMBASSADORS (21-35 YEARS)

Senior Ambassadors are responsible for working alongside the AYA Instructors to facilitate successful training sessions that are appropriate and relevant to Aboriginal learners. They are also in charge of group dynamics, team-building, administration and visitor presentation development. In order to prepare for their role they are provided with a 5 day intensive training program at the beginning of the program (See *Senior Ambassador Training Curriculum*). The majority of Senior Ambassadors begin with the program as Junior Ambassadors.

### JUNIOR AMBASSADORS (15-21 YEARS)

Junior Ambassadors are younger members of the team who ideally are either attending Secondary School or have recently graduated. The AYA experience is intended to launch them into a successful career in tourism or the career of their choice.



## INSTRUCTORS

AYA Instructors consist of tourism specialists and Aboriginal community representatives.

Tourism specialists provide accredited training and certifications which assist participants in their quest to "Share the Story" but also prepare participants for employment in the tourism industry. AYA tourism instructors include:

- Post-secondary instructors from Capilano College
- Tourism BC accredited trainers from the Squamish Adventure Centre.

AYA also engages Aboriginal Community representatives such as cultural practitioners, elders and community leaders to assist the youth with cultural activities (i.e., cedar weaving, drum making) and to help them apply their skills to the embetterment of their communities. Instructors from Aboriginal communities are chosen based on a combination of their expertise in a given field and their ability to explain and exemplify how teachings in their field can be applied to tourism and to life in general.

# Your Story



# LEARNING MODEL STRENGTHS



## BLEND OF HANDS-ON AND THEORETICAL EXPERIENCES

*AYA's Tourism Training Curriculum* effectively blends theoretical and practical training experiences throughout the program. Over the course of the program for example participants receive classroom-based instruction at Capilano College in the mornings and acquire work experience in the afternoons at the Squamish Adventure Centre. This allows participants to be actively applying the skills they are learning. Work experience includes:

- Providing presentations to visitors in the theatre.
- Providing visitor information at the Visitor Information Centre.
- Conducting cultural demonstrations such as paddle carving or cedar weaving in the outdoor amphitheater.
- Welcoming visitors at the entrance and explaining the significance of the cultural demonstration activities for visitors.

## APPROPRIATE FOR ALL NATIONS

All *AYA* activities are appropriate for Aboriginal learners from diverse communities. The songs practiced are non-proprietary songs shared by many Nations and where possible the cultural activities are made relevant to a broad range of Aboriginal communities.

## CUSTOMIZED FOR ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

Senior Ambassadors work closely with all instructors to ensure that content has maximum relevance to Aboriginal participants and is delivered in a way which meets the needs of Aboriginal learners.

## SPRINGBOARD TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

*AYA* works closely with Capilano College to ensure that course content prepares and motivates participants for postsecondary education. In some cases *AYA* training can be used as credit toward post-secondary education.

In addition, *AYA* provides a valuable opportunity for Aboriginal youth to familiarize themselves with the post-secondary learning environment as all of *AYA's* classroom activities are conducted on-campus. Participants are therefore more comfortable in the campus environment and are more likely to explore and take advantage of the opportunities that the college has to offer.



# PARTNERS



Squamish  
Nation



Squamish Nation  
Stitsma Employment Center



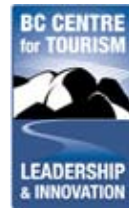
Aboriginal Tourism BC



Native Education Centre



Spo7ez Cultural Centre  
and Community Society



Western Economic  
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie  
de l'Ouest Canada



## Ambassador

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