

## ‘Real Work for Real Pay’ for Youth with Barriers to Employment

With funding from the Government of Canada’s **Youth Employment and Skills Strategy**, CBI Consultants Ltd. has launched the CBI Learning Employment Action Plan (L.E.A.P.) program to deliver strength-based customized employment skills development training to youth between 15 and 30 years of age (inclusive) who are experiencing barriers to employment. Youth accepted into the program may be living with developmental and mental challenges, be Indigenous or have other barriers to employment. L.E.A.P. is a three-year program that CBI will offer throughout the Lower Mainland, and in partnership with WJ Stelmaschuk and Associates Ltd (WJS), in Edmonton, AB and Kenora, ON.

Guided by the customized employment principle of ‘zero exclusion’, the primary objective of the L.E.A.P. program is to help youth with barriers secure employment with inclusive employers. Work gives individuals a sense of purpose and self-worth, and financial independence. It helps define who we are and is a major source of pride. Through the L.E.A.P. program, participants will gain employment and actively participate in the current and future labour market obtaining ‘Real Work for Real Pay’ opportunities. They will also develop their self-awareness; discover their strengths and interests; and increase their social interactions and relationships. All individuals, regardless of disability, deserve the right to self-determination and the opportunity to be full members of their community where they can live, learn, work and play.

CBI Consultants Ltd. has been providing person-centered inclusive practices for persons with disabilities since 1990. CBI has provided training and technical assistance to more than 10,000 family members, school personnel, and other agencies throughout the world and has been a leader in inclusive employment practices with youth with barriers to employment.

CBI’s partnership with WJS will further strengthen service delivery in targeted communities by providing links to communities through service in the provinces of Alberta and rural Ontario. WJS Canada has been nurturing change and healing in children, youth, adults and families in communities across Canada for more than 30 years and have proven experience in providing high-quality, personalized and culturally responsive care in even the most complex cases.

*“For more than a decade now, CBI has been at the forefront of ensuring youth are prepared for the future of work. The CBI L.E.A.P. program is tied in with our mission of ‘improving the quality of life of people worldwide’, and it would be instrumental to ensuring that unemployed and underemployed youth in BC, Alberta, and Ontario have access to the career paths, training, and ultimately job offers that will set them up to have inclusive, sustainable careers.”*

*-Mike Bote, CBI Executive Director and Project Executive Sponsor, CBI L.E.A.P. Program*

For more information about joining the program or becoming an inclusive employer please contact:

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