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For Immediate Release



A new technology-focused approach to assist youth in securing employment

Sagamok Anishnawbek to deliver hospitality skills training program in the Algoma region as part of provincial ALiGN network

In response to the critical labour shortages facing many of Ontario's key sectors, Sagamok Anishnawbek and OTEC, in partnership with Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA), has announced an innovative youth-targeted employment model called the ALiGN Network. Recently launched across Ontario, the initiative has brought together industry partners from across the province to develop a psychometric-based talent-to-role fit assessment and job-matching model designed initially for the hospitality and tourism industry.

The ALiGN pre-employment skills training program will be delivered at Sagamok Anishnawbek, beginning with a first cohort of 15 participants. Employers throughout the Algoma region can connect with Sagamok Anishnawbek, or, directly with OTEC, to identify and recruit ALiGN graduates.

"Sagamok Anishnawbek is proud to be a contributing partner of the ALiGN Network, allowing us to actively participate in the development of a regional workforce, to successfully respond to the labour demands of Ontario," says Andrea Hajt-Jacobs, ASETS Coordinator, Sagamok Anishnawbek. "This is a fantastic opportunity to be an integral part of building a strong, competent workforce, able to showcase our culturally enriched region."

The ALiGN network will be supported by Ryerson University's Magnet platform to bring this first-of-its-kind youth employment model online, making ALiGN accessible to businesses and job seekers anywhere in Ontario. Through the ALiGN Network, youth will be matched to live job postings based on their own unique personality attributes and interests. Work-ready job seekers will be fast-tracked into employment. Candidates with skills or qualifications gaps based on the assessment process will receive industry-designed training and certification, either through the network of regional training partners, or, through an online suite of industry training programs that can be accessed remotely.

"The fact that our youth unemployment rate is over 14 per cent in this province while employers are struggling to fill entry-level positions demands that we start looking at things differently" says Adam Morrison, V.P. Projects and Partnerships, OTEC. "Businesses have been telling us for years that, if candidates are the right fit, they will hire them and train them for advancement. We now have a system that matches youth to real opportunities based on their unique attributes, attitudes and goals."

Key industry partners include Magnet/Ryerson University, ORHMA, Mobilize Jobs, and a roster of prominent, independent and global brands. ORHMA which represents over 11,000 hospitality employers across the province has partnered with ALiGN. Since the assessment methodology is based on a behavioural and attitudinal benchmark established by industry, it will enable ALiGN's employment and training partners to refer candidates to participating employers with confidence in the job seeker's suitability for the position. It will also open up a new pool of potential candidates for



employers: youth who might not have experience in the role, but are a natural fit for the work and the industry culture.

“The ALiGN Network will support their members and unemployed youth in the Algoma region,” says Tony Elenis, President, ORHMA. “By working with key industry stakeholders and partners, we will address the issues of youth underemployment and labour shortages in the hospitality industry.”

Funded in part by the Government of Ontario, with support from the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth, the ALiGN project will represent a significant investment in hospitality training programming for four other regions including Toronto, Ottawa, Thunder Bay and Niagara, while also seeking to address the overall labour shortage Ontario is facing for front line hospitality roles.

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For more information about the ALiGN network, please contact:

Adam Morrison, V.P. Projects and Partnerships, OTEC. amorrison@otec.org

416.622.1975 ext: 236

Emmanuel Rey, Manager, Workforce Development and Industry Partnerships, OTEC. erey@otec.org

416.622.1975 ext: 210

ABOUT OTEC:

OTEC is an Ontario-based independent, not-for-profit training, consulting & workforce development organization that delivers high quality, creative and branded solutions for the development and growth of a professional, skilled workforce. It is the leading source support for communities to build workforce capacity and for companies to attract, retain, and develop high performing employees and become Employer of Choice organizations.

OTEC is the premier source for Customer Service training and strategy development, Tourism Ambassador training, leadership skills training and certifications and education products and services for tourism, hospitality and service oriented organizations in a wide range of industry sectors both nationally and internationally.

E. www.otec.org T. 416.622.1975

ABOUT ORHMA:

The Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA) is the largest provincial hospitality association in Canada. With over 4,000 members, representing more than 11,000 establishments across the province, the ORHMA is uniquely positioned to represent the issues that most impact your business.

ORHMA represents the industry's interests at both the Provincial and Municipal levels of government. Through our specialized in-house government relations experts, our provincial Board of Directors and our local Regional Boards, the Association provides pertinent and timely advice on industry-specific issues to politicians across the province. The Association's dedicated and professional Membership Team provides ORHMA members with meaningful cost-saving programs and unique educational services.



ORHMA is dedicated to fostering a positive business climate for Ontario's hospitality industry, while providing value-added services to its members.

E. www.orhma.com T. 905.361.0268

ABOUT SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK

Sagamok Anishnawbek is located on the north shore of Lake Huron on the eastern end of the Algoma Region, adjacent to the town of Massey, Ontario. It is a First Nations community whose name means 'two points joining'. Sagamok's culture and language is Anishnaabe and is made up of the Ojibwe, Odawa and Pottawatomi tribes. Also known as the Three Fires Peoples, the community members of Sagamok number well over 2000. A little over 50% of the membership lives on reserve, with the remainder living in various urban locations.

The community of Sagamok seeks to capitalize on the success of achieving ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management Certification, meeting globally recognized requirements in setting and maintaining quality standards. Sagamok works to bring these quality standards to the tourism and hospitality industry of our local region. The community is a proud member of the Great Spirit Circle Trail, an investment partner in the Manitoulin Hotel and Conference Centre, and owner/operators of the Ritchie Falls Resort.

Sagamok has over 20 years of experience in coordinating and delivering local training programs as a Local Delivery Mechanism of the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy, and has been a promotion partner of OTEC's Service Excellence Programs for over 10 years.

E. www.sagamok.ca T. 705.865.2421 ext. 240