

Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camps in Manitoba *Strong and Meaningful Community Partnerships*



In the summer of 2009, with support from the Manitoba Ministries of Education, Citizenship & Youth and Aboriginal & Northern Affairs, Frontier College ran a summer literacy camp in Hollow Water First Nation, an Anishinaabe community 290km north of Winnipeg. Hiring from the community, we worked in partnership with the Recreation Coordinator at the Health Centre, Wanipigow School, Community Holistic Circle Healing, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, community members and parents.

The Frontier College summer literacy camp model is a flexible framework that enables camp staff, in each community, to easily adapt the curriculum to best meet the needs and interests of children and youth in the community. This approach ensures that the camps are relevant to the learners' lives and respectful of local cultures and traditions. As part of the *Little Miskwaadesi (Turtle) Camp*, in Hollow Water First Nation, *Anishinaabemo* language and cultural traditions were incorporated into the daily routine.

Activities at the camps included group reading, journal writing, pen pal letters, arts and crafts, literacy and word games, along with physical activities including baseball, dodgeball, soccer, a three-legged relay race and more.

The camps provided a learning opportunity for over 60 children and created employment opportunities for 6 community members as part of our commitment to community capacity building. We're delighted with the success of the camps – said one parent: "*I can't believe my kids are excited to go to the school in the summer.*" – and look forward to building upon our partnerships so that more children can reach their potential.