



Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014

For Immediate Release

### **Aboriginal Tourism National Voice Takes Next Steps**

**(Whistler, BC)** – The Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC) continued to make progress as the national Aboriginal cultural tourism industry voice this week. The majority of ATMC members, with members from all provinces and territories in Canada, met April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 this week and attended the International Aboriginal Tourism Conference (IATC) hosted in Whistler, British Columbia.

ATMC members continued to finalize and prepare the launch of a new national cruise ship strategy that includes a new website to assist Aboriginal communities and businesses to more effectively work with the cruise ship industry in the five major regions of Canada. The project is being finalized and will be made public by mid May 2014.

ATMC leadership reviewed the final development of the new national ATMC website. The website was approved by ATMC members and is now available to the public.

ATMC representatives presented the work of ATMC during the IATC to delegates from approximately twelve (12) countries. A key feature of ATMC presentations during the conference was the overview of the cruise ship project and official announcement of the new ATMC website.

Finally ATMC was excited to announce the launch of a new National Aboriginal Tourism Award for 2014. The *National Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Award* is introduced for the first time to recognize an Aboriginal tourism experience provider that has demonstrated a commitment to the development and promotion of authentic, innovative and enriched Aboriginal cultural tourism visitor experience. There was a number of submissions from across Canada and the award was handed to Haida House at Tlaal in Northern British Columbia.

ATMC Chair Keith Henry stated; “ATMC members continue to work together and set the priorities of our industry with the Federal Government to better align support with the Federal Tourism Strategy. We are an industry led group working for Aboriginal communities from across the country and there is continued progress. We are seeing Provincial and Territorial governments putting new Aboriginal tourism strategies in place due to increasing visitor demand which will benefit all of Canada”

ATMC Chair Henry concluded; “Our priorities going forward are research, communications strategies, governance, support for the IATC 2015 with Quebec Aboriginal Tourism, cruise ship project implementation, air access study on the impacts to rural and remote Aboriginal experiences, Aboriginal Tourism Working Group (ATWG) Meeting with AANDC, and working with strategic partners such as Canadian Tourism Commission and Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC). We have set a clear path forward and renewed our commitment to working together.”



For more information about ATMC or the tools developed to support Aboriginal communities, organizations and entrepreneurs please view at [www.aboriginaltourismmarketingcircle.ca](http://www.aboriginaltourismmarketingcircle.ca).

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