

Local 793 partners with Chiefs of Ontario

A statement of partnership has been signed by representatives of Local 793, the Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario (OETIO) and the Chiefs of Ontario (COO).

Local 793 business manager Mike Gallagher and president Joe Redshaw signed the statement at the Assembly of First Nations Annual General Assembly in Niagara Falls on July 13.

Regional Chief Isadore Day signed the document on behalf of the COO, which represents 133 First Nations communities in Ontario.

The agreement is for a three-year period. By signing it, Local 793, the OETIO and COO agreed to work collaboratively to connect each other's infrastructures and help First Nations people get into pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and fee-payer training programs.

The ultimate long-term goal is to help First Nation operators take training through the OETIO and obtain a career by operating a piece of heavy equipment or mobile/tower crane.

The OETIO has trained 626 Aboriginals over the last 12 years.

According to the statement, both the COO and IUOE believe the recruitment, retention and advancement of First Nation people is a positive approach to supporting a made-in-Canada solution to close the skills gap for the heavy equipment and crane industry.

The focus will be on training First Nation people to employment, coupled with the recruitment of experienced First Nation heavy equipment and crane operators.

Regional Chief Day received a mandate to enter into a statement with Local 793 and the OETIO from a resolution passed at the all-Ontario Chiefs Conference that was held from June 28 to 30, 2016. The officers and the executive Board of Local 793 expressed their desire to enter into a statement after attending the Anishinabek Seventh Generation Charity Gala held in October 2013 in Toronto.

The recognition of First Nation governments and related socio-economic



Above (L to R): Local 793 president Joe Redshaw, union business manager Mike Gallagher, Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day and Koocheching First Nations Chief William Harper signing the Statement of Partnership. Below (L to R) OETIO director of marketing Carla St. Louis, Local 793 president Joe Redshaw, union business manager Mike Gallagher, Aboriginal co-ordinator Brian Pelletier, and International rep Patrick Campbell at a trade show at the Assembly of First Nations annual general assembly.



development needs is a key principle of the statement.

The statements says that First Nations have a "critical role" to play in making sustainable development a reality in Canada and also that the IUOE recognizes the constitutionally protected Aboriginal treaty rights of First Nations, and will communicate to its members to respect these rights, jurisdictions, and territories.

The statement also says that the IUOE recognizes that particular projects have non-union contractors requiring heavy equipment and crane operators and IUOE supports decisions of First Nation operators to work for these contractors, however, should the project have union contractors, it is anticipated that First Nation operators will abide by the regulations of union contractors.