



## **INDIGENOUS YOUTH ACTIVATE FREE WI-FI HOTSPOT IN UGPI'GANJIG**

*Paid mentorship helps foster IT skills development for Indigenous youth*

**Eel River Bar First Nations, New Brunswick, May 25, 2021:** reBOOT Canada's plan to support connectivity in remote Indigenous community reached an exciting milestone this month as Eel River Bar activated a Community reLAY Wi-Fi access point in their Post Office. Located in northern New Brunswick, Eel River Bar First Nation, or Ugpi'ganjig, is a Mi'gmaq First Nation with a population of approximately 757 registered and 415 on-reserve.

Developed in response to the United Nations 2011 declaration identifying equal access to broadband access as a human right and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action* (#7, 66, and 92), Community reLAY offers paid mentorship for Indigenous youth to facilitate the deployment of a Wi-Fi hotspot while fostering skills development, networking, and knowledge-sharing among youth, their communities and Elders, and other remote communities.

The project is supported by the Canadian Internet Registry Authority (CIRA), Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), PLC Info, and Cisco Canada – a global leader in internet technology – and aims to demonstrate how multi-sector cooperation can support Indigenous Reconciliation and Resurgence.

"This year has us relying on the web more than ever before, but too many Canadians, especially in remote and Indigenous communities, still lack the basic connectivity needed to participate online. We're proud to support reBOOT Canada's innovative project," says Tanya O'Callaghan, CIRA's vice-president, Community Investment, Policy and Advocacy.

Elijah LaBillois, a community member involved in the project had this to say: "My hopes for this community Wi-Fi project were that we could improve not just connectivity for our youth but, our elders as well. I hope we can leverage the increased level of access afforded to our community to help connect the young and old, and foster intergenerational discussion so that they can learn from one another. Our Elders have much they can teach, and I hope that they can use the internet as an avenue to share those teachings. I hope that our Elders and youth find this new resource helpful, and that they find many new opportunities thanks to it."

"We began our outreach in 2020 despite the uncertainty of a global pandemic," says Program Manager Shazad Chaudhary. "Most Indigenous governments and communities were focused on implementing new and urgent measures to protect the health and safety of their communities. Many were interested in the project but lacked the staff, resources, and time to take on any new projects."

Despite these and other challenges, reBOOT Canada has developed meaningful and exciting partnerships with six remote First Nations youth and communities across Ontario, New Brunswick, Northwest Territories, Yukon and British Columbia.

###

For further inquiries, please contact: Shazad Chaudhary, Program Manager, Community reLAY at +1 647 949 5426 or [shazadchaudhary@rebootcanada.ca](mailto:shazadchaudhary@rebootcanada.ca).

**Ugpi'ganjig** or Eel River Bar First Nation is situated on unceded traditional Migma'gi territory on the northeastern coast of New Brunswick where one of the most beautiful bays in the world and the longest natural sand bar connects them to neighbouring communities.

**reBOOT Canada** is a registered charity (CRA 89111 4043) that refurbishes retired computer and electronics to provide non-profits, charities, and individuals, with access to subsidized technology, software, and training. Since 1995, we have distributed over 300,000 pieces of equipment while operating offices in Toronto, Peterborough and Mississauga. Please visit our website for more info ([www.rebootcanada.ca](http://www.rebootcanada.ca)).

Arrange a pick-up or drop-off donation of retired IT assets by filling out our online form (<https://www.rebootcanada.ca/donation>) or send an email to [pickup@rebootcanada.ca](mailto:pickup@rebootcanada.ca). For information on our IT asset recovery model, please visit TechReset ([www.techreset.com](http://www.techreset.com)).

