

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Meyers Norris Penny announces innovative new self-employment training program for Aboriginal entrepreneurs**

Dec. 6, 2006 – Edmonton, AB – Meyers Norris Penny LLP (MNP), in partnership with Alberta Economic Development, is pleased to announce the launch of the Aboriginal Self-Employment Training Program in Edmonton. Run as a pilot program in Calgary last year, the program was so successful that it is being expanded and offered in Edmonton.

This is the first time private industry and government have come together to provide the Aboriginal community with fully sponsored self-employment training in Edmonton. “Our goal is to offset the hurdles faced by new entrepreneurs and provide Aboriginals with the tools to help their businesses succeed,” says Clayton Norris, MNP’s director of Aboriginal services in Alberta.

Aboriginal people are starting new businesses at an impressive rate: over the past 25 years, the number of self-employed Aboriginals has jumped from 7,000 to more than 30,000 – four times the national average growth rate.

“Getting solid training to help their businesses get off the ground can be a major challenge, and that’s where this program will be an enormous asset,” says Norris. He adds that Aboriginal entrepreneurial training will mean continued growth, positive socioeconomic change and increased employment in Alberta.

The innovative, nine-week program includes management training, business plan assistance and networking support designed to assist Aboriginals with the launch of a new business venture. It will consist of 15 evening workshops, with a follow-up roundtable discussion and five hours of private business coaching for each participant from MNP’s experienced consultants. There is no cost for qualifying participants.

**About MNP**

Meyers Norris Penny is the only Top 10 chartered accountancy and business advisory firm based in the West. MNP lives in the West and believes in its potential. MNP provides its mid-market clients clear, straightforward business advice with a local perspective. For more information, visit [www.mnp.ca](http://www.mnp.ca).

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