

## **RDI Brings Experts and Training to the Kootenays to Support Regional Workforce Development**

The Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute and the Kootenay Workforce Development Initiative are hosting a day-long Workforce Development Forum on Thursday, November 5 at the Prestige Lakeside Resort in Nelson. The morning session will feature a keynote speaker, an external experts panel, and a local experts innovative solutions panel that will highlight economic development, education, industry and local government innovations from within our region. In the afternoon attendees will participate in a hands-on workshop facilitated by the Purdue Centre for Regional Development. This day-long forum will provide community leaders, educators, industry and economic development practitioners with the opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss workforce development challenges and opportunities.

Dr. Greg Halseth will deliver the keynote presentation highlighting the need for strategic, regional-level thinking. Dr. Halseth is a Professor in the Geography program at the University of Northern British Columbia, Canada Research Chair in Rural and Small Town Studies, and Director of UNBC's Community Development Institute. His research examines rural and small town community development, and community strategies for coping with social and economic change. Greg will join Dr. Scott Hutcheson from the Purdue Centre for Regional Development and Dr. Keith Culver from the University of British Columbia-Okanagan on an expert panel that will examine responses to some of the workforce development challenges the Kootenay region is facing.

Educational, industry, economic development, and local government innovators from the region will then be featured on an innovative solutions panel. Panelists will share their innovations and discuss their motivations, impacts, partnerships, and opportunities to scale out their efforts. In the afternoon attendees will participate in a hands-on workshop facilitated by the Purdue Centre for Regional Development. This workshop will be structured to allow participants to develop strategic, achievable, local solutions to our region's economic and workforce challenges. To learn more and register visit: [www.cbrdi.ca](http://www.cbrdi.ca).

The team from Purdue will also be delivering a Strategic Doing training course in days leading up to the forum. Strategic Doing is a new, network-based model for economic and workforce development emphasizing the strategic value of focused collaboration and open innovation in today's global economy. Over the two and a half-day intensive training session, running November 2-4, attendees will learn how to harness new methods of open participation and leadership guidance to develop extremely complex projects. This multi-phase training provides a solid grounding in the Strategic Doing discipline, training in how to utilize the practice when working with colleagues or unfamiliar groups. Additional information, including the cost of the training course is available on the RDI website at [www.cbrdi.ca](http://www.cbrdi.ca). Seating is limited for the training course and the forum so please register early.

"A skilled and engaged labour force is a critical element of successful and prosperous communities and regions," says Dr. Terri MacDonald, Regional Innovation Chair at the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute. "By bringing together external experts with regional innovators it is anticipated our region will continue to build our collective capacity to keep pace with the increasingly complex and dynamic needs of the modern economy."

Carol Currie, Kootenay Workforce Development Coordinator highlights, "collaboration between educators, businesses, and communities is critical to best develop the kind of skilled workforce that will sustain and grow both our economy and our communities. We have much to learn from each other".

To learn more about the Kootenay Workforce Development Initiative visit:  
[www.cbrdi.ca/kootenay-workforce-development](http://www.cbrdi.ca/kootenay-workforce-development)

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