

Naomi Yamamoto, Minister of State for Tourism & Small Business, Talks Tech with ASTTBC



Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business, Naomi Yamamoto, met this Fall with ASTTBC's President, Dave Rutherford, AScT, CLS, BCLS (right) and Executive Director, John Leech, AScT, CAE.
The Minister was presented with an eagle feather carved by Salish artist Len McKay.

Earlier this Fall ASTTBC President, Dave Rutherford and Executive Director John Leech met with [Minister Yamamoto](#) (MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale) to talk about the needs of small business particularly as it applies to skills shortages and skills utilization. ASTTBC applauded the Minister and Government for its plan to reduce the small business tax rate by 40% by 2016/2017. In its role as a professional regulator and in support of technology education and careers ASTTBC committed to working with members who run small businesses, to assure their viability. The MoU signed between ASTTBC and [Small Business BC](#) a couple of years ago was identified as tangible evidence of ASTTBC's commitment to support BC's small businesses.

"Minister Yamamoto expressed keen interest in ASTTBC's work in a number of areas," said ASTTBC President Dave Rutherford. "I am confident ASTTBC's message was heard and that the Minister will be supportive in a number of areas where ASTTBC carries out its mandate to serve the public interest in the field of applied science and engineering technology."

Minister Yamamoto, who knows of ASTTBC and the work of the Association, was interested in connecting with ASTTBC again. During the meeting the three reviewed the important contribution made by ASTTBC's 10,000+ technologists, technicians and technical specialists and talked about industry's need for technology professionals in many areas of the province.

On the matter of technology education and careers, ASTTBC highlighted:

- * the need for new technology programs in northern and central BC
- * the need to grow existing technology programming as there has been no change in graduate numbers (700 a year) for the past decade
- * the Association's support for Government's intention of developing a 10 years skills plan
- * support for the implementation of technology programming in K-12

On the connection between technology careers and small business, ASTTBC discussed with Minister Yamamoto:

- * the Association's work to enhance the experience of Internationally Trained Technology Professionals
- * ASTTBC's support for the BC JOBS Plan and the Association's request that Government add greater emphasis to technology careers
- * ASTTBC's work in supporting First Nations through the [First Nations Careers Council](#)
- * the fact that 10% of ASTTBC members are female and the work of the [BC Women in Technology](#) to improve awareness and increase levels of participation

ASTTBC made a proposal in an earlier meeting with [Minister Wilkinson](#), Minister of Technology, Innovation & Citizen's Services, that employers be allowed to claim training tax credits for technologists and technicians, an initiative that was reinforced in the session with Yamamoto.

On the topic of professional recognition and practice, ASTTBC asked for the Minister's support of Professional Technologist in BC similar to the Alberta model. At a high level ASTTBC asked for the Minister's general support for recognition of ASTTBC members' practice within their competencies