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June 04, 2013 17:14 ET

MABC and the BC Mining HR Task Force Celebrate the Winners of the 2013 BC Mining HR Diversity Award at the Grand Opening of the New BC AMTA Offices in Williams Lake BC

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA--(Marketwired - June 4, 2013) - The Mining Association of BC (MABC) and the BC Mining HR Task Force (Task Force) are pleased to celebrate the winners of the 2013 BC Mining HR Diversity Award (HR Diversity Award), sponsored by Ernst & Young. The award was presented to the BC Aboriginal Mine Training Association and New Gold on May 1st, 2013, during BC Mining Week, at the Women in Mining Gala in Vancouver.

The award recognizes that the BC AMTA/New Gold initiative has had a significant, positive impact at the New Afton operation, on its employees, and for nearby communities. "This award is about recognizing work that is being done to create opportunities for people who might not have found their way to our industry otherwise," said Zoë Younger, Vice President of Corporate Affairs at MABC, and HR Diversity Award co-chair. "One of the neat things about this program is that it can continue to grow, and the approach can be duplicated in communities across BC where mines are opening or operating," she added.

While each submission had its strength, the joint BC AMTA and New Gold nomination presented the strongest emphasis on encouraging and supporting diversity within the workplace, with tangible results. The metrics associated with the BC AMTA initiative speak for themselves, and their vision in creating a program that provides skills, training and work experience for Aboriginal people in our industry is being duly recognized. The initiative has resulted in the successful transition of 65% of candidates from unemployment to gainful employment, with an extraordinary 93% retention rate. Those are truly remarkable achievements to be proud of. With 24% of the workforce at New Afton self-identified as Aboriginal, it is clear that this initiative has had support at all levels in the company and in the communities.

"It was difficult for the adjudication committee to make a decision," commented Ms. Tsolinas, "Although it was a welcome challenge because it demonstrates how many companies are making diversity a priority and a part of their day-to-day business."

About the BC Mining HR Diversity Award

2013 is the inaugural year for what will be the annual BC Mining HR Diversity Award. It was created to recognize an organization's outstanding commitment to encouraging and supporting diversity within the workforce in the BC mining industry. HR diversity is the focus of attracting, recruiting, and retaining a diverse work force, as well as the advancement or development of individuals within a workforce. The BC Mining HR Diversity Award is supported by the Mining Association of British Columbia and the BC HR Task Force: Exploration, Mining, Stone, Sand & Gravel and proudly sponsored by Ernst & Young.

About the Mining Association of British Columbia

Established through an act of the B.C. Legislature in 1901 to represent the interests of B.C.'s mining industry, the Mining Association of British Columbia (MABC) is one of the oldest industry associations in the province. MABC represents the collective needs and interests of operating coal, metal and industrial mineral mining companies. In doing so, it has come to be regarded as the predominant voice of mining in British Columbia.

Mining is an essential part of the provincial economy and keeping it there is one of the primary goals of the MABC. Public and political attitudes figure prominently in the activities of the association. We liaise with government legislators, lobby for regulatory advancement and publicly promote the economic and social value of mining. We are tireless in our efforts to keep the interests of our members and the value of mining forefront in the minds of those who need to know. Our job is to help clear the public and political paths essential to our industry's future growth and development.

The Mining Association of BC also provides our member companies with a wide variety of services such as: participation in key government/industry committees, updates on regulatory change, access to meetings that provide the opportunity to exchange information among members, joint industry action on issues of common concern, and the availability of staff expertise in the areas of greatest interest.

About the BC HR Task Force: Exploration, Mining, Stone, Sand & Gravel

The BC HR Task Force: Exploration, Mining, Stone, Sand & Gravel (BC Mining HR Task Force) was initially formed in 2007 to identify the labour shortage facing the industry in B.C. Following identifying the looming shortage (14,000+ new hires by 2022), the BC Task Force expanded its mission to include planning, developing and implementing pilot programs to ensure the mining industry in B.C. has the human resources needed to support the growth of the sector. Initiatives are funded and supported largely through the Canada-B.C. Labour Market Development Agreement.

The BC Task Force is a broad sector partnership involving over 40 senior business leaders, employee representatives, Aboriginal representatives and industry associations from the B.C. mining industry, along with representation from training and education providers and government agencies as needed.

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