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SCO LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO CELEBRATE FIRST NATION ENTREPRENEURS

Manitoba's economic well-being dependent on First Nations– Grand Chief Daniels

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ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — Today, as part of National Small Business Week, the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) is launching the first small business directory of authenticated southern First Nation businesses.

“Through economic development we are emerging from more than 150 years of systemic economic apartheid and this forms a significant part of our mandate,” stated SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. “I am delighted to honour these dedicated and hard-working relatives and I know their stories will serve as inspiration to future small business owners. These are businesses that all Manitobans should support.”

Small Business Week is an annual celebration of entrepreneurship, and one of the primary goals is to learn about and celebrate the people building businesses. This year, SCO is casting the spotlight on our very own business owners including Sean Rayland of Red Rebel Armour Clothing. Rayland's family roots are in Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation.

“My mission statement says we want to bring you some fresh and Indigenized streetwear designed in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, culture reclamation, social justice, and inter-generational healing,” said Rayland. “I firmly believe that by embracing core values of who we are, and where we are from, First Nation entrepreneurs can chart a path to success.”

Red Rebel Armour is one of more than fifty businesses that are now featured on a **growing** list that can be found [on our website](#). The featured businesses cover everything from retail to real estate.

Cheryl Hoffman is the founder of KC Dyslexic Learning Centre. The Berens River First Nation member's business offers information, tutoring, and testing for those living with dyslexia.

“As a First Nation woman, I am more than aware of the systemic gaps that exist when it comes to delivering health care, and the need for follow-up services,” said Hoffman. “I created this initiative to serve our people and our communities, and I look forward to helping to improve the quality of life for people with dyslexia for years to come.”

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Along with the new section of our website, SCO will be highlighting several of our entrepreneurs on our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages. The goal is to not only celebrate the successes of our small business owners, but also to motivate aspiring entrepreneurs and help them launch successful businesses that contribute to sustainable economic development in our communities and urban centres.

“There is no denying the positive financial impact that First Nation entrepreneurs and people now have on Manitoba,” added Grand Chief Daniels. “The most recent data from a [joint study](#) by SCO, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) and Brandon University shows we are creating tens of thousands of jobs, providing more than \$1 billion in salaries, and contributing \$9.3 billion to the provincial economy. Those numbers are irrefutable, and I am excited about the potential for continued growth.”

If you know of a business owner by a southern First Nation entrepreneur that is not yet in our business directory, please let us know by emailing Media@scoinc.mb.ca.

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The Southern Chiefs' Organization represents 34 First Nations and more than 80,000 citizens in what is now called southern Manitoba. SCO is an independent political organization that protects, preserves, promotes, and enhances First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.

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