

ABORIGINAL JOB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (AJDP)
Edmonton Police Service

The AJDP program was developed by members of the Edmonton Police Service in the early 1990's. It addressed the need to increase the competitiveness of Aboriginal applicants to the service. Realizing that a number of qualified applicants were not as strong as should be in the selection process we ventured out to train them in many areas. Every thing we did was done to help make them successful in competing for a spot in our recruit class.

The program was a partnership between HRDC (funders) and the Edmonton Police Service. Seed money was obtained from the funder and placed in EPS financial budget. This allowed EPS to ensure payroll, benefits were all paid in a timely fashion. It also provided an opportunity for the participants to start building their seniority with the service. EPS being an equal opportunity program could not go out and train only one segment of the population with budgeted dollars. The average cost for each program was about 185,000 dollars for six months.

EPS contribution was about 90% in kind services such as supervision and on the job training by hand picked officers from many different units. Instructors from EPS such as first aid, report writing, public speaking, physical fitness and nutritional lifestyles were provided free of charge to the students. Confidence building courses and activities were supported. A Sergeant and I all played a role in the program. The Sergeants salary as well a part of mine as a mentor were incorporated into the in kind grouping. Gym attire and use of all facilities were extended to participants and their family.

We advertised for participants who wanted to join the EPS. We had them write all our tests. They did our physical testing and all interviews. We put them through **all** phases of the process. At the completion we scored all applicants and selected those who we felt had the potential to become members of our organization.

They were brought on staff given a payroll number, access cards to all areas of the service. We began by assigning each participant with a senior officer who could supervise, instruct and welcome them into the EPS police family. A schedule was drawn up so that they had fitness every morning. They then got dressed in their professional business attire and went to the office they were assigned to. We had expectations for them to write reports on each day, week and monthly. We had them take the Christopher leadership program. Courses such as writing classes, computer training courses, and driver training classes were provided. We delivered class room instruction on many avenues that were tested in our exams. Instructions on surviving interview skills were also provided. During the course of the six months any area that they were initially weak in was visited and as they successfully navigated each area they moved on in our process. We never thought of reducing standards and I would suggest that it is totally inappropriate to do so. I suggest bringing the participants standards up to meet the accepted service level. This preparation made each person more then competitive, and not one of these persons came in on the bottom of their recruit class level.

This program was run three times under the HRDC and EOPS partnership. Of the 19 participants two ended up with the RCMP as they were not selected for our recruit class. I and the Sergeant approached Calgary Police who hired one who was not selected by EPS. Since then one of our female members transferred to Calgary for family reasons. We also dealt with The City of Edmonton Personnel Officers to have another hired in The City of Edmonton parking patrol section. We were hoping that this would allow the individual to further develop their officer-violator skills. This person then was accepted by the RCMP, where they still work. We would have hired another of the participants but due to a family medical condition they chose to withdraw to look after a seriously ill child. Last I heard this person was in the recruiting process with Saskatoon Police Service. Lastly one of the participants went back to where they used to work. They gave it a good effort but it did not work out for them. Did we help this person? I believe we did in a big way.

Were we successful with this program? I would venture to say it exceeded even my expectations. I would never want to pay lip service to any community and we did not. I think we more then showed it

could be done. In fact we were so successful the EPS ran two different programs for visible minorities and again were blessed with success. This was all possible by having a partnership with HRDC. Through these programs we ended up with 14 Aboriginals in EPS uniform, as well as eight out of ten visible minorities are also officers with us.

I would like to see the program run again but due to the methodology of funding distribution I would be facing a varying amount of issues. Because we select the participants from all regions of Canada and differing Aboriginal Status we would have to select, find funding for each participant by negotiating with a number of different partners. Issues such as not enough funding dollars, differing criteria would have a major affect on the program. If we were not able to secure funding for a participant it would be impossible for the person to go through this program.

What do I see that would fix this issue?

I believe that all Police Agencies may want to explore this program. I think it would be more appropriate and not as time consuming as well it would be comforting to know that we get the operating capital submitted to our budget personnel so that all would be dealt with as an employee of the service.

For More Information please contact:

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