

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virtual Assistant Wins Business Award



Local North End virtual assistant receives recognition from the Aboriginal community for business creativity and entrepreneurship.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, May 19, 2009 - Virtual Assistant Jacki Azure-Townsend was announced as the winning recipient of the Aboriginal Business Plan Competition 2008. *Azure Virtual Assistant Services* was selected as the outstanding business plan for the city of Winnipeg by fellow First Nations and Métis business colleagues. The presentation ceremony took place May 12, 2009, at the 2009 Vision Quest Conference.

The competition is sponsored annually by the Aboriginal Business Services Network as a way to inspire entrepreneurship among Aboriginal people. This year's theme was "Dream it. Plan it. Start it. Is there an entrepreneur in you?" Single prizes are awarded in the urban (City of Winnipeg) and rural categories to business owners who can best demonstrate their creativity and business acumen according to the competition criteria.

Receiving this award has opened up new opportunities for Azure-Townsend and the virtual assistance industry in western Canada. Since winning the competition and being featured on Aboriginal Peoples Television Network's National News, Azure-Townsend's business has grown steadily and sparked more interest in this unique business service. As a relatively new industry, and the first of its kind in the Aboriginal sector, virtual assistance is not widely known in Manitoba and often confused with other administrative fields.

"Generally a virtual assistant provides admin functions for small or home-based business owners in a way that was not accessible in the past. There is no need to rely on help from the kid down the street, using temp agencies or going through the entire hiring process and the associated costs. A virtual assistant is an excellent choice for those who only need assistance a few times a month or on a project basis. But instead of a one-time job, a virtual assistant builds working relationships over a long period of time," Azure-Townsend explains.

Azure Virtual Assistant Services launched in October 2008. Based in her home office, Azure-Townsend offers business staples such as letter composition, converting business cards to electronic address books, email marketing, research, transcription and data entry. For those business owners that need a little more, in-house services such as office organization and filing are also available. As a Master certified Microsoft Office Specialist, Azure-Townsend's specialty is advanced software needs and training.

Azure-Townsend obtained an honours diploma as an Administrative Assistant Software Specialist from Saskatoon Business College and has extensive continuing education to better meet the client's needs. She has over five year's experience in the clerical field. For more information on Azure-Townsend and Azure Virtual Assistant Services, go to <http://www.azurevaservices.ca>.

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