THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE WAWZONEK **NO.: 7-19(2)**
MINISTER OF FINANCE **DATE: February 10, 2020**

Student and Youth Employment Initiatives

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to supporting and providing employment opportunities to northern students and graduates. As part of this commitment, the Department of Finance manages programs and initiatives aimed at creating employment opportunities for northern students, and at helping to provide diverse work experiences for young people.

Part of the success of these programs depends on people knowing about them in order to access them. The Department of Finance wants to improve our communication about all available programs, and to set an example I will spend a couple of minutes highlighting the existing summer student and internship programs.

Our government's Summer Student Employment Program offers priority hiring to northern students between the months of April and August every year. Students pursuing post-secondary studies can apply to this program for government summer work placements. Students can register for the Summer Student Employment Program through the GNWT Careers website beginning December 1st every year. Last year 351 students were hired by the GNWT throughout our territory; meaning over half of the registered students received a summer placement. Beyond providing employment, the program also provides students with valuable real-world work experience which can enhance employment prospects upon graduation.

Another program that provides meaningful opportunities for students is our internship program. The GNWT Internship Program allows departments to recruit post-secondary northern graduates into positions related to their field of study for up to 2 years. Interns gain valuable work experience and have the opportunity to apply their theoretical, practical and academic knowledge within the context of the GNWT workforce.

Last year the GNWT hired 34 interns, which was in line with the Department of Finance's funding availability. Departments may access the Internship Program without funding; however these placements will be dependent on departmental budgets. This year we are looking to increase the number of interns. Recruitment efforts for 40 internship positions are underway within our departments. Intern pay varies and each position is evaluated based on the job duties and the knowledge and skills required for the position. An Intern job description is developed as an entry level position in that they are learning the role and gaining experience in the field. Once the intern has fully learned the role and gained the experience required they are then qualified to take on the substantive role should a vacancy arise. This method of recruitment assists GNWT departments with succession planning and building the workforce of the future.

More information about these programs including how to apply can be found at gov.nt.ca/careers.

Mr. Speaker, the Summer Student Employment Program and the GNWT Internship Program are two important ways that our government supports northern youth and students. These programs provide opportunities for northerners to be part of our public service; expose students to the GNWT as an employer; and assist the next

generations to develop knowledge, skills and job experience that benefit our entire territory.

By providing northern students with exposure to what it is like to work for the GNWT, we are supporting northerners with job opportunities and are doing our part to make sure that our public service reflects the people it serves.

Making this statement to communicate available programs that provide employment opportunities for northerners is a first step in an ongoing effort to provide Members of this House and the public with this important information.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.