EXPLORING EMPLOYMENT

GREEN *Employment Program*

Developed by Greenplanet Energy Analytics for Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation
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DRONE DELIVERY

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Article: Indigenous Entrepreneurs Using Drones

From CBC News · Nov 19, 2022 - Rhiannon Johnson

New technology is creating opportunities for Indigenous communities to become more self-reliant

Indigenous people are decolonizing the sky with emerging aerospace technology like drones and connecting communities through regional airlines. (Drone Delivery Canada)

Many remote Indigenous communities in Canada have been relying on the aerospace industry for everything from transportation of goods, mail and medical supplies for decades.

Evolving technology like the use of drones is creating opportunities for Indigenous communities to become more self-reliant by using the sky as a highway.

"It's really a decolonial effort where it returns the power into our hands so that we can again assert our own self-determination, determine how it unfolds within our region," said Jacob Taylor.

Taylor is a member of Curve Lake First Nation, about 150 kilometres northeast of Toronto, and is the founder and CEO of **Indigenous Aerospace.**

His vision is to help Indigenous communities take control of the transportation of goods and medicines through the use of drones.

Helping First Nations help themselves

Taylor's journey into the industry began while in Moose Factory, Ont., working on education programming for remote communities.

He said he learned a lot about the challenges of remote First Nations communities in Northern Ontario that are primarily accessible by plane.

Jacob Taylor envisions Indigenous people using drone technology to solve logistical problems facing remote communities. (Jacob Taylor/ Facebook)

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ENERGY ANALYTICS

In 2016, an [article](#) by the late CBC journalist Jody Porter about a woman who died at a Webequie First Nation after the oxygen ran out at the community's nursing station, spurred him into action.

"The nearest oxygen tank was 70 kilometers away, straight as the crow flies," said Taylor. Since it was nighttime when the tank ran out helicopters couldn't fly — but a drone could have.

"Remote piloted aircraft systems became a fascinating concept to solve some of the critical care logistics within the region."

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"I benefit from delivering this and the community benefits from delivering this — and in tandem, together, we can achieve greater things than anyone could do in isolation," Taylor said.

"There have been no treaties signed for the sky, so Indigenous people have an inherent right to participate in the aerospace industry."

He said that the drones have already proven useful in some communities he's worked with; they're using the technology for search and rescue missions.

"This type of work being done by local people is quite heroic, and so there's a real pride to it," Taylor said.

"There's no panacea, cookie-cutter solutions that really work in [all] our communities — we have to find the right fit for the right place and the best people to do that are the people that originate from there."

INDIGENOUS AEROSPACE

This began Taylor's efforts trying to solve how to bring a regular influx of essential supplies to a community in desperate need of those services. But he was also interested in finding a way to help communities help themselves.

The drone industry was, and still is, an emerging one. And Taylor said he didn't want to see Indigenous communities miss the chance to emerge as industry leaders.

In July 2021, Indigenous Aerospace launched with the goal of helping First Nations communities develop drone programs by offering education and employment.

EMPOWERING FIRST NATIONS WITH DRONE TECHNOLOGY

See the complete article here:

https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/decolonizing-the-sky-indigenous-aerospace-1.6655202