

## **Technology & Innovation Minister Andrew Wilkinson Meets ASTTBC**



Andrew Wilkinson MLA for Vancouver-Quilchena and Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services (centre) met with ASTTBC's President, Dave Rutherford (left) and Executive Director John Leech. The Minister holds ASTTBC's gift of an eagle feather by Salish carver Len McKay.

Andrew Wilkinson, Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services met this summer with ASTTBC's President, Dave Rutherford and Executive Director, John Leech. The topics included areas of interest to ASTTBC and to the Minister's primary areas of responsibility and included technology education and careers; enhanced productivity through the effective utilization of skills; science and technology culture and strategies/plans and small business - ventures and the contribution of small business to BC's economy.

During our conversation ASTTBC:

- *encouraged added emphasis on technology education and careers, in addition to trades*
- *asked the Minister to support new technology programs in northern and central BC*
- *agreed to continue to partner with the BC Government in addressing the needs of Internationally Trained Professionals*
- *asked Government to make more effective use of ASTTBC-registered professionals through Qualified Person recognition*
- *'talked up' PTech and its application in BC*

- *asked that the Training Tax Credit be extended to include technologists and technicians*
- *encouraged the Minister to support a continuing role of the regional science and technology councils in promoting STEM careers*
- *supported Government's decision to develop a ten year skills plan*
- *encouraged the Minister to get behind the development by Science World and other stakeholders including ASTTBC in creating a 'Science Charter' for BC*

"This was a great conversation with many areas of common interest," said ASTTBC President Dave Rutherford. "We found the Minister very engaged and helpful in offering suggestions as to how ASTTBC might most effectively address our areas of common interest," Dave promised that ASTTBC would stay in touch, and the Minister agreed to help advance many of ASTTBC's suggestions. ASTTBC's John Leech noted that ASTTBC has built up a reputation of 'getting things done' and working in collaboration with BC's elected officials to achieve common goals. "ASTTBC's significant efforts over the past 7 years has led to enhanced recognition and awareness of technology education and careers and to the contribution made by BC's technologists and technicians," said Leech. "At a two day conference in 2005 the nearly 100 delegates told ASTTBC that technologists and technicians are 'invisible' and that ASTTBC must take a lead role to affect change. We took these two messages to heart and have acted decisively to change that paradigm."