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FEEL THE ENERGY: A SUMMARY OF THE 2013 YOUTH FORUM

Last October, Calgary played proud host to the 4th International WPC Youth Forum. After a successful bid in Doha, Qatar in 2011, a team of young energy professionals set out to create the largest and most memorable WPC Youth event yet.

Calgary followed on the heels of Beijing, Paris and New Delhi, and had a home advantage of being the largest energy hub in Canada. There's also something unique about Calgary – it's a city where volunteerism and ambition thrive. That is exactly what set the vision for how the event would be organised.

Under the theme “Unconventional Solutions for an Unconventional World”, the 4th WPC Youth Forum was determined to highlight topics that are relevant to both aspiring young professionals and our experienced role models and mentors. Three pillars were identified as the basic foundations of all energy issues: Technical Innovation, Business Leadership, and Sustainability.

In the spirit of being unconventional, the programme was entirely designed and executed by young professionals working full-time in the industry. The session topics, the speakers, the layout and the social events, were all orchestrated by local ambassadors who wanted to engage with their global peers and senior leaders in a way that was meaningful to all.



THE FUTURE OF ENERGY IS IN YOUR HANDS



A panel of industry leaders address the Youth Forum in Calgary

Calgary created 'Fusion Talks': small, intimate sessions with top level executives that allowed closer access to inspirational leaders. Calgary also debuted 'Ignite' sessions: brief, high-energy segments on topics that captivated the audience and kept them hanging on every word.

Prior to the programme opening, seven unique tours and technical courses were offered to participants. Private and chartered tours to the Canadian Oil Sands in Fort McMurray were unique opportunities for delegates, and an amazing offering by sponsors to allow exclusive access to their state-of-the-art facilities.

Evening social events were enjoyed by all – whether at the historical and famed Glenbow Museum in the city centre, or at the home for Calgary's well-loved hockey team, Flames Central. But the days weren't all work and no play. The exhibition hall, dubbed the "innovation centre", hosted exhibitors, knowledge cafés, fine dining and entertainment.

The results speak for themselves: 1,611 participants enjoyed the 4th WPC Youth Forum, the largest North American event to date. 120 speakers, many of whom were in leading government and industry roles, joined in the programme to share their perspectives with eager delegates. 61 countries were represented and 100 international students joined us through generous sponsorships.

The legacy of the 4th WPC Youth Forum is

one of empowerment and inspiration for future leaders of our industry. It shows that young professionals have the influence and knowledge that can already impact our industry. They are capable of leading profound conversations, and are significant contributors to the future that is evolving before them. Current leaders and organisations are not only receptive to young leaders, but willing to support them as they challenge themselves to such new heights. Leadership does not have an age or level. It is the beautiful result when capability and motivation strike.

In closing, one couldn't reflect on the 4th WPC Youth Forum without giving tremendous credit to those that gave so much of their time and energy to make this a success.

To the Youth Forum Team: Thank you for your countless hours of hard work, your dedication, and for sharing your many talents with us. The networks forged through this journey are a testament to your influence and capability. What a pleasure it was to watch you develop your leadership skills.

To our Sponsors, Employers and personal champions: thank you for supporting us, the young professionals and future leaders of your organisations. Thank you for believing in us, and entrusting us with that amazing support, which allowed us the opportunity to hone our skills and discover new ones! ■