## News 2

Some tech-savvy
Dkanagan youth will
get a chance to tacke some of the most
pressing water issues

facing the valley and beyond.

For the first time, the national Aquatheracking Challenge is coming to West-

to a partnership being held across come, with the Okanagan Canada in 2019-20. see, Basin Water Board The program starts see (OBWB). with freshwater istit

water leaders and focuses on developing solutions. During the seven-month process, the multi-disciplinary teams of hackers will

have access to ex-pert-led water issue webinars, skills-build-ing webinars as well as facilitated leadership and collaboration

workshops.
"This hits a real sweet spot for us,"
OBWB executive director Anna Warwick
Sears said.
"It brings together so many of our interests, like raising

"As we expand our programming across Canada, we are

provided by the Real Estate Foundation of

thrilled to be working with the OBWB in the Okanagan to deliver

partnerships with post-secondaries and the tech community, doing something bold and innovative and engaging the entire community."

Founded by the De Gaspe Beaubien Foundation on the belief that innovation awareness around and solving - wat

the first AquaHacking Challenge in B.C." added Isabelle Bourduas, Aqua Forum chief operating offi-

to leverage young tech talent for the benefits of freshwater and to build lasting and im-pactful collaborative relationships between

"Our objectives are

leading water organizations and the tech

ind innovation sector in B.C. – and across

and across

and entrepreneurship are necessary for sustainable environmental change, the program initially had a five-year focus on the Great Lakes St. Law-Between 2012 2018, the program has resulted in 12 active startups with 75 per

Great Lakes St. Law-rence Basin (2015-19).
Since then, it has re-ceived funding from the RBC Foundation to bring the program coast to coast. Along with founding tech-nology partner IBM, funding for the BC AquaHacking Chal-lenge has also been Ten critical water issues are actively being worked on, including microplastics,

blue-green algae and sewage overflow.
"The challenges we face in the Okanagan are not so different than those in other regions," Sears said.

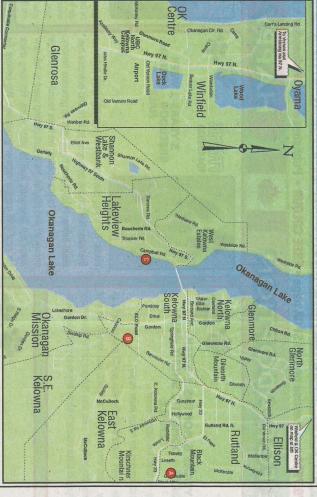
regions," Sears said.
"Looking at past outcomes from this program, the tech solutions coming out of this challenge could reach far beyond our own valley and deliver national, and even international, and even information on the AquaHacking Challenge can be found at AquaHacking."



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