

eaglefeathernews

Renew your subscriptions

CPMA #40027204

Call to Action

Jolene Creely felt unsupported after giving birth in 2017 and is now a birthing support and doula as a way to revive Indigenous birthing practices (Photo submitted by Jolene Creely)

By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News

For those who decide to have children, there can be uncertainty around what to expect during pregnancy and childbirth.

This was the case for Jolene Creely who felt unsupported after giving birth in 2017.

She thought women should have more options available to them.

Unsure of where to start Creely spoke with her kokum, mom, and aunties, about their birthing experiences.

"I think that's where my passion started," she said. "Hearing the stories of how things were done back in the day (then) going into spaces trying to relearn and revitalize our Indigenous birthing practices."

This led her to becoming both a birthing sup-

port for women and a doula.

"I loved how a doula's role is nonmedical, but it is supportive and encompasses all supports," said Creely.

That's when things really started to resonate with her.

"The spiritual part of birth is what ignited that fire that I have," she said. "I thought there has to be Indigenous birthing practices and pregnancy care."

While providing birthing support for women and working as a doula, Creely realized certain things were lacking in the delivery room because, all too often, the focus is only on the physical act of labour.

"I have found the mental and spiritual aspect is missing," she said. "What we are going through is a beautiful process and it is a spiritual process."

continued page 2 ...



DENE HIGH SCHOOL LA LOCHE INNOVATES

"You can connect with others knowing they are also fully immersed. It's a new, innovative approach, and we know some of our past approaches aren't working, so it's time to consider new options."

- page 16

February 2022 is our
Health & Wellness month

March 2022 Issue:
Women's Issue
25th Anniversary Issue



NEWO YOTINA FRIENDSHIP CENTRE Finding Pride in Hoop Dancing

"I like the feeling of being there and being able to dance. Sometimes the kids will watch me and be amazed."

- page 3



FAYE SIOUX JOHN Strength in Passion

"I told myself, 'You're appearance doesn't matter, but how determined are you? You have grandchildren.'"

- page 17

Revitalizing the old ways of childbirth

... continued from page 1

For those who decide to have children, there can be uncertainty around what to expect during pregnancy and childbirth.

This was the case for Jolene Creely who felt unsupported after giving birth in 2017.



Jolene Creely seated with her baby. She felt unsupported after giving birth in 2017 and is now a birthing support and doula as a way to revive Indigenous birthing practices (Photo submitted by Jolene Creely)

She thought women should have more options available to them.

Unsure of where to start, Creely spoke with her kokum, mom, and aunties, about their birthing experiences.

"I think that's where my passion started," she said. "Hearing the stories of how things were done back in the day (then) going into spaces trying to relearn and revitalize our Indigenous birthing practices."

This led her to becoming a birthing support and doula.

"I loved how a doula's role is non-medical, but it is supportive and encompasses all supports," said Creely.

That's when things really started to resonate with her.

"The spiritual part of birth is what ignited that fire

that I have," she said. "I thought there has to be Indigenous birthing practices and pregnancy care."

While providing birthing support for women and working as a doula, Creely realized certain things were lacking in the delivery room because, all too often, the focus is only on the physical act of labour and delivery.

"I have found the mental and spiritual aspect is missing," she said. "What we are going through is a beautiful process and it is a spiritual process."

She knows the physical part of childbirth is important but so are other things.

"What is missing is the Indigenous side and that disconnect is because of



Jolene Creely seated looking down at her baby. She felt unsupported after giving birth in 2017 and is now a birthing support and doula as a way to revive Indigenous birthing practices (Photo submitted by Jolene Creely)

colonialism," said Creely. "My work today is to revitalize and to remind families this is a spiritual process as well. When it comes to bringing a life earth side that should be amplified more than the physical side."

Through the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute, a community youth-led health grant was put out and, in February of 2021, Creely started teaching a youth sex education class online.

"Indigenous youth need all the information they can get about their bodies and consent," said Creely.

She continued this work after being hired at White Raven Healing Centre as a community resource coordinator where she teaches sex education along with the prenatal and parenting programs she has created.

She relies on personal experiences to help guide her in her role at the centre.

"I had a lot of pregnant friends in high school and there was no programming for them," said Creely. "They were always left out."

She hopes the work she is doing now will help others.

"Even today there is not much for young Indigenous moms," said Creely. "So my role is to fill in those gaps."



Box 924 Saskatoon, SK S7K 3M4
306-978-8118, 1-866-323-NEWS (6397)

This issue was printed on:
Feb 9, 2022
Next issue to be printed on:
Mar 9, 2022

Eagle Feather News

is published monthly by Eagle Feather Media

No part of this publication may be reproduced either in part or in whole without the express written permission of the publisher.

Publications Mail Agreement No: 40027204 | OSSN #1492-7497
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: EFN Circ., P.O. Box 924 Saskatoon SK S7K 3M4

Subscriptions:
The annual Canadian individual subscription rate is \$29.99/year, \$31.49 with GST. Bulk subscriptions are also available. Subscribe online today at <https://eaglefeathernews.com/subscribe> OR use this QR code:



SCAN ME

Disclaimer:
Eagle Feather News hereby limits its liability resulting from any misprints, errors, and/or inaccuracies whatsoever in advertisements or editorial content to the refund of the specific advertisement payment and/or running of a corrected advertisement or editorial correction notice. Contributing authors agree to indemnify and protect the publishers from claims of action regarding plagiarism.

www.eaglefeathernews.com

EFMEDIA: Melody Lynch, melody@eaglefeathernews.com
EFMEDIA: Ben Borne, ben@eaglefeathernews.com
MANAGING EDITOR: Kerry Benjoe, kerry@eaglefeathernews.com
DIGITAL PUBLISHER: Errol Sutherland, errol@eaglefeathernews.com



MBC RADIO

LIVE 7-days/week



\$15,000 Super Bingo

Friday, February 18, 2022 - 5:30 p.m.
Two \$5,000 Blackout games
Two page 6-up booklet \$15.00



\$30,000 MEGA Bingo

Sunday, February 27, 2022 - 7 p.m.
Two \$10,000 Blackout Games
Two page 9-up booklet \$30.00

Booklet Locations, Rules and Schedule
online at MBCradio.com

Lottery License number MB20-0020

Sharing traditions and building skills

By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News

For Shana Pasapa, dance is more than just getting some exercise, it's a way to connect with other people and to the culture.

"I've enjoyed dancing since I was a little girl," she said.

When she was 15, she learned hoop dancing and is now passing that skill onto others.

Late last year, the Newo-Yotina Friendship Centre received funding from the City of Regina, which was used to start a hoop-dancing class. Pasapa had taught other classes at the friendship centre, so when she was asked to be the instructor she accepted.

The class launched in December and due to COVID-19 it's being taught via Zoom. Registered participants, who don't have their own hoops, are able to borrow some, so that they can learn at home.

Russell Paskimen, 12, is one of the participants in the class and he's always had an interest in dance.

"I've always been a dancer," said Paskimen. "I like the feeling of being there and being able to dance. Sometimes the kids will watch me and be amazed."

He decided to join the class after his mother Fernanda Horse, who is a champion hoop dancer herself, saw the advertisement and asked if he wanted to try it.

"My mom showed me this poster of hoop dancing and I thought it looked interesting so I wanted to join," said Paskimen.

"When I started taking the class, I found I really enjoy hoop dancing," said

Paskimen, who's been there from the start.

Although it was something Horse enjoys, she never wanted to force hoop dancing on her children and is proud of Paskimen for giving something new a try.

"Once he started, he was a natural and enjoyed it," said Horse. "I'm proud of him for doing it and giving it a try."

Zoom may not be the ideal way to instruct a dance class, but so far, Paskimen has had a decent time learning this way and Pasapa is proud of her students for sticking with it.

Surprisingly, the interest continues to grow and even more students have joined the class in January.

"I'm very happy with how hard my students have worked towards their routine in the last month," continued Pasapa. "We hope to help them with their regalia by the summer so it gives them something to look forward to."

Pasapa hopes the dance class will have a positive impact on her students.

"Dancing has always given me confidence and made me proud of my identity," she said. "It made me capable of telling stories. It's always been a form of healing for me and the teaching that comes with the hoop, so if they can take any of that home,

that would be amazing."

It's a message not lost on Paskimen who hopes to become a champion hoop dancer.

"I look up to my mom and test myself to see if I can go farther," said Paskimen, referring to his mom's dance history not only in Saskatchewan but all of Canada.

Regardless of what the future holds, Horse is proud of her son.



12-year-old Russell Paskimen demonstrates some of the skills he has learned in the hoop dancing class being offered by the Newo-Yotina Friendship Centre. (Photo submitted by Shana Pasapa)

Claim what's yours.

Join the more than 130,000 others who attended a Federal Indian Day School and have applied for compensation.

July 13, 2022 is the last day you are able to submit a claim. It's free and confidential.

For information or legal support visit:
indiandayschools.com or call 1-844-539-3815
Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310

Managing Type 1 Diabetes can be complicated

By Kerry Benjoe
of Eagle Feather News

Seeing your child sick is the worst feeling and a trip to the emergency room can be downright terrifying.

In September 2021, Kimberly Greyeyes-Pinay watched her once healthy, robust grandson Khylin Pinay-Ledoux not only lose weight, but become less energetic.

Originally, she thought he was just growing and being active.

"We were able to explain away everything," Greyeyes-Pinay said.

Then one particularly busy weekend that involved a lot of travel, Greyeyes-Pinay knew something was definitely wrong.

"This poor little guy, we had to keep stopping for him to go to the bathroom," she said. "He was literally vomiting foam. It was terrible."

She took him to a walk-in clinic, which led to a trip to the hospital.

"To say it was scary would be an understatement," she said. "If you knew my grandson, even when he was really sick, he was still cracking jokes."

In a matter of hours their lives were flipped upside down.

Greyeyes-Pinay and her husband Dana raised Pinay-Ledoux from a baby and they were devastated at the diagnosis. They both didn't know much about Type 1 diabetes, which is completely different from the more common Type-2 diabetes.

"It was a steep learning curve," she said.

While the medical staff stabilized their grandson, they were given a crash course on blood monitoring, nutrition and how to administer insulin.

It was not an easy task and when he was discharged they felt unprepared.

"This journey has been hard for me, I can't imagine what it's been like for him," said Greyeyes-Pinay. "Just the learning on how to live with it and to see him do it so well, if it were anyone of my other grandchildren that I've raised, I don't think they would have handled it as well."

Now 14, Pinay-Ledoux towers over his grandmother and has gone back to doing everything he did before.

"Nothing's really changed, it's just different doing needles in front of people," he said. "I just can't go eat what I want whenever I want because I have to take a needle."

Pinay-Ledoux said most of his friends know about his condition and they don't treat him any differently.

He checks his glucose levels before every meal and each meal is followed by insulin.

Like any other avid young hockey player, Pinay-Ledoux dreams of playing professional hockey one day.

His grandmother believes he can do anything he sets his heart on.

Greyeyes-Pinay said as the adult it's been worrisome and very isolating because not many people know about Type-1 diabetes.

"The first thing people say when they hear your child is diabetic is, 'What are they eating? Oh, you should have been watching what they eat,'" she said,

Initially, she thought maybe she did something wrong, but after educating herself about the disease and finding a small support network online she knows it is no one's fault.

"Sometimes the pancreas just stops working," said Greyeyes-Pinay.

After two years of living with the disease things are finally getting back to normal. Greyeyes-Pinay said there needs to be more awareness about Type 1 diabetes for parents who just need their questions answered.



Khylin Pinay-Ledoux in yellow is and lacrosse and hockey player who didn't let his Type 1 diabetes diagnosis slow him down. (Photo submitted by Kimberly Greyeyes-Pinay)

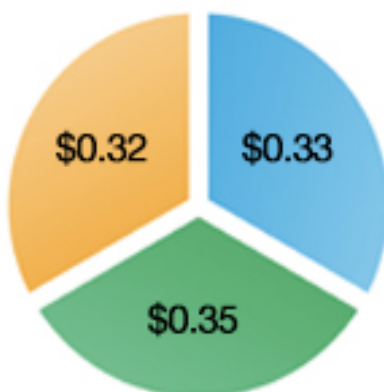
Renew your SUBSCRIPTIONS Today

Stay connected to the news that matters to you for a low annual fee.

Your subscription supports Indigenous journalism and future generations of reporters, helping the stories and voices of our community members be heard and amplified.

How \$1 is spent at EFN

- Print and post costs
- Administration, newspaper design, business expenses
- Freelance journalists and Eagle Feather News staff.



www.eaglefeathernews.com/SUBSCRIBE

One blanket, one family, one purpose

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

This month, families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit Individuals (MMIWG2S) are creating a special starblanket as a way to raise awareness and to remember their loved ones.

The starblanket, historically created by the Dakota, Lakota and Nakoda people, symbolizes strength and community. It's believed that when one wraps themselves in the quilt they're surrounding themselves with their ancestors.

The starblanket project is part of the Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan's (AFCS) Re-Igniting Sacred Fires, an initiative designed to raise awareness of the national inquiry into MMIWG2S and to support those affected by such tragedies.

"When a blanket-maker makes a starblanket, every stitch has an intention, has a prayer behind it," said Alicia Buckley, program director at AFCS. "So that's how we wanted this commemorative piece to be built,"

She said, a blanket is symbolic of what they can offer survivors and families.

"If they need that wrap-around support (and that feeling of warmth and safety in whatever they're doing," said Buckley.

The project will take place during four sessions in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, and North Battleford. Registered participants will create individual squares, which will be weaved together with the help of starblanket makers and Knowledge Keepers. Mental health support workers and Elders

will also be present to help make the experience one of hope and healing. "A lack of recent connection has really fueled this (project)," said Buckley. "We have noticed MMIWG2S has really taken a backseat to COVID and that can't be the case. Especially when we've seen the numbers of domestic and gender-based violence skyrocket. We need to ensure awareness is front and top of mind."

A ceremony to bring the blanket to life will be held once it's complete.

From there, the starblanket will be displayed at the AFCS office in Saskatoon and will be made available for vigils, ceremonies, round dances, and anything else that shines a light on MMIWG2S, said Buckley.

Iskwewuk E-wichiwitochik, a coalition that provides moral support to families of MMIWG2S by creating opportunities for them to tell their stories, is partnering with AFCS to bring together the survivors and families to create the blanket.

"Just the idea of us sitting together and creating this blanket together, it's a reminder for the families that they're not alone," said Darlene Okemaysim-Sicotte, co-chair of Iskwewuk E-wichiwitochik. "It's a way to share that this person is loved and missed. This is our way of continuing their legacy."

Okemaysim-Sicotte, who has been impacted by MMIWG2S, says it never really gets easier, but events like this let her and affected family members know there is shared love and compassion in the community. She hopes the starblanket will impact the community at large.

"Awareness isn't just the images you see on social media or in a news article," said Darlene Okemaysim-Sicotte.

"Art is a way to see our stories and connect with them in a visual way. A way that can impact... from the head to the heart."



This February, MMIWG2S families are gathering to create Starblankets to honour and pay tribute to their loved ones as part of the Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan's (AFCS) Re-Igniting Sacred Fires initiative. (Photo submitted by Alicia Buckley)

NOW HIRING NOW HIRING NOW HIRING NOW HIRING

NOW HIRING NOW HIRING NOW HIRING NOW HIRING

Join our Team!

Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) is looking for the right person to serve as **Commissioner for Review of MN-S Locals**. This requires a non-partisan individual to undertake an independent organizational review.



Applications are accepted until 11:59 PM February 18, 2022. For more information: www.metisnationsk.com/careers



NOW HIRING NOW HIRING NOW HIRING NOW HIRING

Shape the future of your credit union.

Vote!

Cast your vote.

Elect your district council delegates from February 9-22, 2022.



Every member counts.
Learn more at affinitycu.ca



A Saskatchewan woman's passion for the environment is taking her places

By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News

A Saskatchewan woman has made history as the first First Nations person to be selected as a participant in the 2041 ClimateForce Antarctic Expedition.

Danielle Kehler was selected to be part of a 100-person team journeying to Antarctica in March 2022. This international team is made up of citizens of every continent with the common goal of studying global warming.

Kehler was recruited to participate in the 12-day educational voyage after being interviewed by a newspaper reporter about Indigenous people and the impact of climate change, which the recruiters read.

This is an issue that has always been close to Kehler's heart.

"It should be important to everybody," said Kehler. "As Indigenous



A boat carries a group of researchers to shore as part of (Photo submitted by Danielle Kehler)

people, we have a holistic view of the world, everything is connected. We must care for the land. We hold four per cent of the world's population, but we protect 80 per cent of the world's biodiversity."

Kehler believes the ecological knowledge she got from her kokum growing up will be helpful not only on this expedition but in the long run as people figure out how to solve the climate crisis.

"Indigenous people all over the world hold vast amounts of traditional ecological knowledge that is critical to the preservation of Mother Earth," said Kehler. "It is essential that we have Indigenous representation in these spaces while contributing to the creation of sustainable solutions in regards to biodiversity, water, and the land."

Although she is excited about participating in the 2041 ClimateForce Antarctic Expedition, it is not lost on her that she will be the first Indigenous woman to do this.

"I want to show the need for Indigenous representation in these spaces because our traditional ways of living on the land are essential for the development of sustainable solutions around the world," said Kehler. "I want to dismantle colonial structures and break barriers for our people to enter these spaces and be seen, heard, and included."

During this endeavour from March 16 to 29, Kehler will be doing things such as studying and observing glaciers, icebergs, wildlife; participating in lessons and workshops led by renowned experts in their fields, but she's looking forward to the shore landings at key sites along the Antarctic Peninsula the most.

"It's going to be cold but I was born and raised in Saskatchewan," said Kehler.

Although Kehler is looking forward to the new connections she will make during this expedition, for her, this work is not about the here and now but for future generations.



Danielle Kehler has made history as the first First Nations person to be selected as a participant in the 2041 ClimateForce Antarctic Expedition. (Photo submitted by Danielle Kehler)

"The work I will be doing and putting in place is not for me but the next seven generations and beyond," said Kehler. "So that we can not only survive but thrive and have Mother Earth thrive with us."

Kehler has raised \$16,000 of the \$26,000 needed and is currently still looking for support. All money goes towards things such as travel costs including Expedition fee, airfare, clothing, equipment, and incentives.

Anyone wishing to support or find out more about the expedition can contact Kehler directly at daniikehler@gmail.com.

Athabasca By-Election Day is Tuesday, February 15

Vote on February 15:

9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Or vote in advance:

February 9 to 13, Noon to 8 p.m.

To find out how we're making voting places safer for you, visit elections.sk.ca or call 1-833-419-0141.

Remember to bring ID and wear a mask.

If you are a registered voter, see your Voter Information Card for where and when to vote.



Voting safely is our priority.



From March 16-29, Kehler will study and observe glaciers, icebergs, wildlife, participate in lessons and workshops led by renowned experts in their fields, and shore landings at key sites along the Antarctic Peninsula. (Photo submitted by Danielle Kehler)

A new partnership will benefit students

By NC Raine
of Eagle Feather News

Trade students in Saskatchewan will be receiving a jolt of support through the creation of a new scholarship fund.

The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) has partnered with Paper Excellence – a manufacturer of pulp, and printing, writing, and packaging papers – to establish a \$50,000 fund for Indigenous students enrolled in a trades or industrial program at SIIT.

“What we’re hoping we can do is support Indigenous people to grow and meet their potential in whatever they might want to do,” said Graham Kissack, vice-president of environment, health, and safety at Paper Excellence.

“At the end of the day, what we’re trying to do is build capacity and create skills in the sector of the economy that we operate in,” he said.

The scholarship will provide two \$5,000 awards annually for the next five years. The scholarship fund is supported by the Saskatchewan



Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship (SIOS) program, which matched Paper Excellence’s \$25,000 donation to reach \$50,000.

“We believe our future success is tied to the success of Indigenous people in Canada.” said Kissack. “They represent a large percentage of our population and tend to be located in more remote locations where we have our operations. So (they) represent our future in terms of potential employees and partners.”

The scholarship is the first of its kind between Paper Excellence and SIIT.

Tavia Laliberte, vice-president of academics at SIIT, said there is consistently a need to support students in post-secondary programs, and the funding has direct benefit to the industry and to SIIT.

“The money itself is always necessary for students, but I think there’s always something about when industry steps up and says SIIT does a good job and acknowledges the value we contribute to their business,” said Laliberte. “The hope is that they recruit some of our graduates when they are ready for employment. It’s more than just money, it’s another way that the industry could be connected with the program.”

Despite SIIT having an abundance of supports for students - \$316,000 in scholarships awarded according to their 2019-20 annual report - the majority of students support themselves, said Laliberte.

“When I came to SIIT, I was surprised with the amount of students who were self-funded or funded through student loans.” she said. “It’s higher than you think.”

Laliberte said private-sector support is a huge advantage and helps support students to get them through the program successfully.

Taryn Roske,
Cigar Lake employee,
Lac La Ronge
Indian Band member

**We are one of
Canada’s largest
employers of
Indigenous
People**

In the last five
years, nearly \$350
million in wages
were earned by
Residents of
Saskatchewan’s
North working with
Cameco.


Cameco
Energizing a clean-air world

**Opportunities to
energize your career:**
cameconorth.com/careers

Vaccines and the lessons of history

Opposition to vaccines has a long history. People who could have lived died from misinformation and quack cures.

In 1885, a preventable smallpox epidemic happened in Montreal, Quebec. Over six thousand, mostly children, died from the disease. Rumours spread that the vaccine sickened rather than healed and various home remedies worked instead. They did not. The anti-vaccination hysteria even resulted in rioting. The bitter irony is the smallpox vaccine was very effective and smallpox was eventually totally eliminated worldwide as a result. Smallpox now only exists in secure labs kept by the United States and Russia thanks to vaccines.

Smallpox devastated the plains Indians resulting in the death of over half the population. It also spread throughout northern Canada. The impact was devastating. A simple crude but effective inoculation was offered to First Nations trading inland to the western Hudson Bay coast. Hudson Bay traders made a crude vaccine by inserting small pox scabs into small cuts. People sickened but did not die. The vaccine built up their immunity as a result. Although it was saving lives, many people refused treatment resulting in their death and the death of others.

Recently, some Mistassini Cree have become very vocal in their opposition to Covid-19 vaccines. Among the most outspoken is former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations,

Mathew Coon Come who is also Mistassini Cree.

There is a historical mistrust of government health agencies. An example is the case of tuberculosis. Many sick First Nations people were sent off to distant sanatoriums. Many died and their bodies were never returned. In some instances, families were not informed of their relatives' death. Some came to believe sanitariums were not a place to heal, but a place to die. Some even



Breaking Trail

John Cuthand

refused to go believing they were being sent away to die. Although seemingly irrational, their reluctance made sense.

A Treaty promise was made to provide assistance to First Nations during times of pestilence. The promise has been kept in the prevention and treatment of Covid-19. Sadly, in keeping with history, many First Nations people are refusing to be vaccinated, endangering themselves and

others.

A significant number of truckers are refusing to accept Covid-19 mandates. In protest they began a Canada-wide "Freedom Caravan" to Ottawa. They are not supported by their union. Over 90 per cent of union members have agreed to follow vaccine mandates. Along the way, the caravan attracted opportunists who had little if anything to do with the original protest. The "Freedom Caravan" morphed into a bizarre circus increasingly distant from its original intent. Nazi flags born by racists flew on Parliament Hill. The sacred tomb of the unknown soldier was defiled. People urinated on the monument and gleefully danced on the grave. Charges are pending. People beating First Nation drums mocked First Nation culture and spirituality. The worst example was when a would-be Elder by the name of "Chief Rain Maker" presented leading conspiracist Pat King with a ceremonial pipe. King has a history of spreading thoroughly debunked conspiracy theories eagerly accepted as truth by many. He is outspoken and forceful in attracting a following, which sadly includes many gullible First Nations people.

When the lessons of history are not followed, tragedy follows tragedy. There are First Nation's mass graves from the influenza pandemic of 1918, now overgrown and largely forgotten. Vaccines work and anyone who refuses places themselves, their families, and others at risk.

BECOME A NURSE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Earn your Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree at the University of Saskatchewan.

Deadline to Apply: March 31st

USASK NURSING

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Nursing

NURSING.USASK.CA



Birch Narrows isn’t letting distance stop them from helping their youth

By NC Raine
of Eagle Feather News

For the past few months, a group of youth at Birch Narrows Dene Nation are using technology to link up with a counsellor and work on their mental health.

The seven teenagers are opening up to registered social worker Ruth Ann Thomas, who does adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) recovery work, primarily with northern communities and Indigenous youth.

“We try to build skills,” said Thomas. “People who are in crisis on a continual or regular basis, people who have addictions, or feel like they have no control over their life in general, and don’t have good coping strategies – the first thing we do is build skills towards calm. Once we build those skills, then we can talk about adverse childhood experiences.”

ACEs encompass various forms of physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction experienced in childhood. Often the root cause of these experiences typically runs deep, she explained.

“One of the main reasons we started this group, the adult population (Indigenous communities or communities that live in poverty) often experience emotional and behavioural issues that stem from abuse and trauma they themselves experienced as children,” said Caitlin Cottrell, director of health and social programs at Birch Narrows.

“Addressing adverse childhood experiences at an early age is really imperative,” said Cottrell.

According to Cottrell, ACEs can lay the groundwork for common challenges

like substance abuse, low levels of education, high incarceration and recidivism rates.

Both Cottrell and Thomas want to help provide coping and communication skills to allow youth to deal with challenges in a healthy way.

In November, Thomas made the six-hour trip from Saskatoon to meet the youth group in person.

Establishing trust with the youth from the start is essential, she said. While there she shared her recovery story with them.

“I use the word ‘normalize.’” said Thomas. “(To) help them understand they aren’t the only ones to have experienced this. And that they’re not the ones who are at fault.”

After building that connection with the group, Thomas has been conducting weekly group sessions via Zoom. Most of the kids know each other and are familiar with each other’s personal lives, which makes it a safe space where they can be open and vulnerable, she said.

“They are just so brave,” said Thomas. “You can sometimes watch the puzzle pieces click into place ... For them, it has to feel good. It has to reduce the shame and blame, that ‘I’m not the only kid who feels like this’.”

Even though they’re only a few months into the sessions, impacts are starting to manifest on the youth.

“They’re opening up more,” she said. “I’m seeing them find solidarity with each other.”

As it continues, hope is that the youth will no longer see themselves as victims, but survivors.



A photo of some trees directly outside the Birch Narrows Community Centre where a group of youth are participating in long therapy sessions. (Photo supplied)



Indian Residential Schools
Day Scholars

Day Scholars, it's time to submit your claim

If you attended an Indian Residential School during the day only and did not sleep there overnight you may be eligible for compensation.

In cases where the Day Scholar died on or after May 30, 2005, an Estate Claim may be submitted on their behalf.

Dawn is rising on a new day justicefordayscholars.com

Speak with the legal team: 1.888.222.6845 • Questions about the claim form: 1.877.877.5786
Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1.855.242.3310 • Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line: 1.866.925.4419

A Place to Call Home

By NC Raine
of Eagle Feather News

A newly opened 26-unit building in Saskatoon is exactly what was needed, say its residents.

"I've been looking for this place for 20 years," said Marlene Conron.

The Métis Elder is one of the first residents of the newly opened Round Prairie Elders' Lodge. Since stepping into her suite in early December, Conlon said she immediately knew she found her place.

"It's home," she said. "I'm from Round Prairie, my family lived out there. It was their own settlement, it was theirs. So this place has been a long time in the making."



Marlene Conron, Métis Elder, from the Round Prairie Métis settlement in Saskatchewan. (Photo supplied)

Round Prairie was once one of the largest Métis settlements in the province and was located 40 kilometers south of Saskatoon.

The lodge is a 25,000-square-foot building on Avenue P South. It was constructed in eight months at a cost of about \$7 million through a collaborative effort between the federal, provincial, municipal, and Métis governments.

The home was created to provide Métis Elders with culturally appropriate housing that is safe, affordable, and accessible.

"We have never done anything like this, that is Métis specific," said Shirley Isbister, president of the Central Urban Métis Federation, Inc. (CUMFI). "This home will probably be the first and only (one) like it. We wanted it Métis specific because we wanted to ensure our Elders, when they moved in, had family connections."

The physical health of the Elders will be handled by CUMFI, providing



Round Prairie Elders' Lodge in Saskatoon, which opened in December 2021. (Photo supplied)



Furnished one bedroom suite in the Round Prairie Elders' Lodge. (Photo supplied)

proper nutrition, exercise classes, and access to medical personnel.

Despite restrictions due to Covid-19, the Elders' are already ecstatic about their lodge.

"They are absolutely loving it," said Isbister. "Everyone seems so content. There are family connections here. We have an uncle and nephew here, as well as a brother and sister, living in different suites. Those family connections and bonds are forming. It's going to be even better (after Covid-19)."

Once safety concerns are alleviated, Isbister said, they will regularly engage the Elders in cultural and health-minded activities, everything from cooking traditional foods and speaking Michif, to storytelling with children from the nearby elementary school, to classes with healthcare professionals on diabetes awareness.

The lodge has a prayer room, exercise room, as well as stand-up garden plots for each of the residents, so they can garden in the summer without having to kneel down.



Building view of the Round Prairie Elders' Lodge in Saskatoon. (Photo supplied)

Isbister said the pandemic has been particularly difficult on the mental health of the Elders, many of whom have been isolated from family and loved ones for long periods of time. Creating a space where the residents are able to truly connect was the top priority in creating the lodge, said Isbister.

Conron, who previously lived with her daughter, is already receiving that positive impact.

"It's a very tight knit community," she said. "I know almost everyone in here."

Right now we can't visit because of Covid. But someday we'll be able to get together in the gathering room, share meals together, play cards. We're all looking forward to that.

Pandemic takes its toll on everyone even the healthcare workers

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

It's no secret the pandemic has impacted people's mental health and created new barriers for those already suffering from mental illness and addictions. The challenges exist everywhere and impact everyone in some way. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that Covid-19 has disrupted or halted critical mental health services in 93 per cent of countries worldwide. And in Canada, 50 per cent of Canadians reported worsening



Janet Martell is one of only two crisis counselling support workers working out of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council who service First Nations in northern Saskatchewan. (Photo submitted by Janet Martell)

mental health since the pandemic began. Janet Martell and Doris Woods are community counselling support workers for the Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC) and are responsible for several Saskatchewan First Nations. They're tasked with responding to and guiding some of the province's most remote communities through emergency situations. "A lot of what we deal with relates to Covid," said Martell. "People are learning how to deal with (the pandemic), but they're full of fatigue. Because of the restrictions, the lack of resources, people are more inclined to get into their addiction." Martell manages five First Nations around Meadow Lake, while Woods covers four northern Dene communities. "Most of these First Nations just don't have the capacity to deal with a crisis," said Martell. "They will phone MLTC and (Woods) or I will act on it." Once called, they coordinate an immediate response to any crisis situation with the first responders in the area and assist in any manner possible, from arranging doctor referrals to delivering emergency supplies. In order to provide hope and reach as many people as possible in remote communities, the pair have been sharing supportive messages over the local



Doris Woods is one of only two crisis counselling support workers working out of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council who service First Nations in northern Saskatchewan. (Photo submitted by Janet Martell)

radio station. Each month is a different message based on what they feel is needed in the community. Topics have included domestic violence, suicide prevention, grieving lost ones, financial stress, and small things people can do to find peace. But, sometimes that's not enough. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Martell's received many calls from people who are experiencing anxiety and depression. According to Statistics Canada, a third of mental health workers report fair to poor mental health since the pandemic began. Woods said, community members and healthcare workers are experiencing mental and physical exhaustion caused by an endless battle with Covid. "First Nations have really been traumatized over the years," said Woods. "There's a lot in there that can trigger people's anxiety. And even the frontline workers, they need support too. They are often related in some way to the events of what happened in the community, so [they] need outside support." They care for the mental health of the community's healthcare workers in two ways. They make certain they meet with counselors in person or virtually on a regular basis. Woods and Martell also have regular meetings with them to debrief. "The healthcare workers need that reassurance that they're doing okay," said Martell. "So we try to do whatever we can do to give them that positive reinforcement." The work is exhausting, but there's reason for optimism, because she's seen how everyone in each community supports one another through the trying times.



Canadian Tire teams up with Hoist the Hoops

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

There’s Rucker Park in New York, the Venice Beach courts in Los Angeles and in August the City of Bridges will have its very own iconic basketball location where sports and culture intersect.

The dream to bring a premier outdoor basketball court to River Landing in Saskatoon, is a passion project that will soon be a reality.



Michael Linklater, champion 3-on-3 basketball player and co-founder of Hoist the Hoops, is helping bring a premier basketball court to Saskatoon this summer. (Photo submitted by Michael Linklater)

The project is rooted in the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action 90, ‘To ensure national sports policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples.’ Throughout the process, Linklater and his team have consulted with Elders, Residential School survivors and community members. They will continue

The Hoist the Hoops team, led by Michael Linklater, Marcus Storey, and Michael Donauer, have reached an agreement with Canadian Tire’s Jumpstart charity to construct the outdoor facility.

“I think there will be a big social impact of bringing people of all different walks of life together,” said Linklater from Thunderchild First Nation. “With team sports, you already have to learn to work together, but this will give the city a new meeting ground that will bring the entire community together.”

The plan includes a full-size International Basketball Federation (FIBA) court, two regulation 3-on-3 courts, lights, and a shade shelter.

“I believe it’s important to have a premier basketball court in the inner city, so that the kids who reside in the community have access to an amazing facility,” said Linklater.

He believes it will provide an opportunity for those children to not only dream big, but give them the confidence to pursue whatever they want to in life.

to do so as they develop the facility name and other key elements.

Marco Di Buono, associate vice-President of programs and operations for Jumpstart said Linklater’s vision for the project went above and beyond.

“When he introduced the notion that this could be a very important step for Reconciliation in this community, that, to us, immediately added a whole other perspective that was incredibly important,” he said. “So for that and so many other reasons, this is a project that just resonates so strongly for us.”

Di Buono said they are committed to making it a premier basketball site, with a surfacing technology that replicates the give and feeling of a traditional indoor basketball court, a colour scheme that considers participants with low vision, accessibility for those in wheelchairs and mobility devices, and, for those non-basketball enthusiasts, the court can safely be flooded in the winter.

The timeline for the construction of the court is weather dependent, said Di Buono, but construction plans are currently set for the start late spring or early summer with an anticipated completion date by late summer or early fall.

The project is somewhat of a dream come true for Linklater, who knows firsthand the impact a ball and a hoop can have on a young person’s life.

“I always relate it back to my story,” he said. “It was a new basketball court that was built outside my school that inspired me to play. I’ve been so fortunate over my career to be able to travel the world because of basketball, and more so, because of that court that was built. So we want to give these kids the opportunity to have a safe place to gather and play.”



Rendering for the court, located at the River Landing in Saskatoon. (Photo submitted by Jennifer Grabb, Canadian Tire Corporation)

MMIWG2S+ Family Starblanket Collaboration

Families and Survivors of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls & 2SLGBTQ+ are invited to join us as we honour and pay tribute to our loved ones.



Each family will create a piece to join together to make one whole blanket that will be used as a legacy piece in ceremonies, walks, & gatherings.

SESSIONS

Feb 17 - Saskatoon Indian and Metis Friendship Centre
Feb 18 - Battleford Indian & Metis Friendship Centre
Feb 22 - Prince Albert Indian & Metis Friendship Centre
Feb 24 - Newo Yotina Friendship Centre

Child Care and Mental Health Supports Available

Call 306-955-0762 or Scan and Register



sk arts

Deadlines

Our programs support the work of Saskatchewan artists, organizations, schools and communities wanting to engage in arts activities:

MICRO-GRANT
March 1, April 1, May 1

ARTISTS IN COMMUNITIES*
- Projects
- Residencies
March 1

ARTISTS IN COMMUNITIES*
ARTISTS IN SCHOOLS
- Development
March 10

INDEPENDENT ARTISTS
March 15

PERMANENT COLLECTION SUBMISSIONS
April 1

ARTISTS IN SCHOOLS*
- Projects
- Residencies
April 1

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ART AND ARTISTS
April 15

PRINCE EDWARD ARTS SCHOLARSHIP
May 1

(306) 787-4056 (Regina)
(306) 964-1155 (Saskatoon)
(800) 667-7526 (Toll-free)
grants@sk-arts.ca
sk-arts.ca

**Supported by funding from Sask Lotteries through the partnership between SK Arts and SaskCulture Inc.*

FOR APPLICATIONS, VISIT: SK-ARTS.CA

Kim McKay-McNabb is not your average therapist

By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News

We live in a world where people are encouraged to talk about their feelings, but are also ostracized for seeking help – this is something Dr. Kim McKay-McNabb hopes to change.

Her drive to help others began in childhood when she spent time in the hospital.

“When there was another kid in the hospital, I would try to make them feel better,” said McKay-McNabb. “I was this intuitive caring nurturing person.”

This continued while in foster care. It was during this time she read books such as *Halfbreed* by Maria Campbell and *April Raintree* by Beatrice Mosionier.

“As I read these books, I started to feel like I wasn’t alone and that possibly there were other brown girls like me that were thrown into a system they had no control over,” said McKay-McNabb.

This drive to simply stay human and treat people with kindness would lead McKay-McNabb to complete a Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

She has since worked with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) on its suicide plan and with other communities around the province on whatever they needed in terms of mental health services.

Today, she is the executive director of the White Raven Healing Centre, an outpatient treatment centre, where she helps people with mental health, wellness, and substance misuse.

“My passion is helping others who struggle with mental health substance use challenges,” said McKay-McNabb, which is something she’s been doing for the past 25 years.

Two years ago, she began working at White Raven.

“One of the things that drew me here (is) they also have the cultural aspects integrated into the centre,” said McKay-McNabb. “I feel culture is a part of the healing that our people need to do.”

She’s noticed adding culture to treatment services has positively impacted

the progress of patients.

“What our people say is if they could have some kind of foundation of culture that it would help enhance their quality of life,” said McKay-McNabb. “So that was the draw when I came to White Raven because there is a clear connection of mental health, culture, and substance use.”

As a clinician, McKay-McNabb also believes in adding the cultural component because the stereotype of going into a room and pouring your heart out to a stranger is not going to work for everyone.

“Things are not one size fits all,” she said. “I always argue (that) First Nations people have many healing methods, so why do we always think the western way is the best practice because it’s not always. We have options to access natural teachings that have been used for years, and our medicine people are who we look at to guide that, and when we get that guidance, it can be helpful.”

She also believes having a similar background as her patients helps in the healing process.

“Our people want to see a brown therapist,” said McKay-McNabb. “They don’t want to have to explain all this historical trauma that we as (Indigenous) people know, or explain it to people who don’t have culturally responsive or culturally respective practices.”



Dr. Kim McKay-McNabb hopes to not only use her expertise as a clinical psychologist, but also traditional practices to help those who come see her at White Raven Healing Lodge. (Photo submitted by Kim McKay-McNabb)



We're back!

Mark your calendar. Our mobile mammography bus is back on the road in 2022.

Visit saskcancer.ca to see the full schedule of stops for the year.

A mammogram only takes a few minutes, and can save your life.



Remembering Louis Roy

By Angela Hill
for Eagle Feather News

When Louis Roy, Métis Elder and veteran, was buried on January 15, two Canadian Forces jets flew overhead.

"It was a real sight," said Glenda Burnouf, Roy's granddaughter. "We had just laid him down in his final resting spot and the jets flew over. It was really touching."

Roy, a veteran of the Second World War, was 101 years and one of the oldest remaining veterans in Canada.

He enlisted when he was 21 and served in France, in Dover, and on the frontlines in Italy. He returned home at the age of 25, but like other Indigenous soldiers wasn't given recognition or support when he returned back to Canada.

Back in Beauval, Roy turned to trapping and fishing for many years before training to become a carpenter, a trade he practised until he retired in 1985.



Louis Roy celebrates his 110th birthday with cake at his home in Beauval. The Métis Elder and veteran passed away on Jan. 11, 2022. (Photo submitted by Roy's granddaughter Glenda Burnouf).

"One of his biggest loves was for the outdoors," said Burnouf. "He was always out paddling, or canoeing, or boating around the rivers and lakes of Beauval, hunting, trapping, fishing, or building little cabins out in the wilderness."

Looking back, Burnouf believes there may have been more to it.

"I feel that is how he found his solace and healing, in the outdoors," she said. "He did on-the-land healing before it even was a thing."

At 85 years old, he built the home he lived in until the fall of 2020. The previous August, his family gathered with him there to celebrate his 100th birthday.

"He just sat there and took it all in, of course he was still trying to make us all laugh, tell little jokes, and his funny antics," Burnouf said.

In 2019, Métis veterans were given an apology from Canada — Louis Roy was the first honoured. Burnouf says she is pleased to see the recognition coming for Métis veterans and the attention her grandfather received at the funeral, even though she knows he would say it wasn't needed.

"He was such a humble man," she said. "He never really wanted any attention."

Burnouf said her grandfather made a lasting impact on many people.

"The legacy my grandfather left me, I would say, is his wealth of wisdom and experiences," she said. "He just knew so much. He was a true Knowledge Keeper, and having a figure like him in our lives inspired and motivated a lot of us."

Since his passing, Burnouf has been hearing from many people, including those she doesn't know, "just sharing stories about him and how he's touched so many different people in different ways."



Louis Roy in uniform during his service. He enlisted when he was 21 and returned home when he was 25. The Métis Elder and veteran passed away on Jan. 11, 2022. (Photo submitted by Roy's granddaughter Glenda Burnouf).



Louis Roy with former Lieutenant Governor Lynda Haverstock in an undated photo. The Métis Elder and veteran passed away on Jan. 11, 2022. (Photo submitted by Roy's granddaughter Glenda Burnouf).

INVITATION TO ATTEND

Rural Education for a Sustainable Future

March 27-28, 2022
Hybrid Conference
(virtual and in-person)

*Hybrid model will be considered in pandemic realities

SELU
Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Education
EDUCATION.USASK.CA

Register at www.selu.usask.ca/ruraled

For more information contact:

Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit (SELU)
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
Tel: (306)966-7634 Email: selu.info@usask.ca

Building great skills while building positive relationships

*By Angela Hill
for Eagle Feather News*

In a classroom on Cowessess First Nation, 12 students are learning the skills that could launch them into new careers in mining.

“I like that it is giving a great opportunity to be getting better jobs and better stability for families in the future,” said Robert Kay.

He’s part of the inaugural Digital Transformation in Potash Mining training program facilitated by Morris Interactive, which started Jan. 10 and will run until early March.

The curriculum was built after Morris Interactive had heard from clients in the mining sector who wanted to hire more Indigenous workers, but there was a training gap.

“Traditionally when people think of entry-level jobs in potash, they’re thinking of working right in the mine with a pick and shovel, but what we’re talking about is working with technology,” said Mathew Cey, CEO of Morris Interactive.

Along with mining, safety, and potash-sector basics, students are undergoing automation skills training using high-end gaming computers, but it’s not just classroom work.

“It’s very innovative. They have a lot of creative ways of getting the information across to you,” said Kay.

One exercise involved using Lego and radios to hone communication skills.

“You need to be crystal clear in case you are taking directions over



The group of students who are part of the inaugural Digital Transformation in Potash Mining training program facilitated by Morris Interactive, which started Jan. 10 and will run until early March. (Photo Submitted)

a phone or walkie-talkie,” said Tara Keshane, another student with a background as a heavy equipment operator. “I have very high hopes, and confidence in this course, that it is leading me in the right direction.”

Morris Interactive reached out to Cowessess early in their planning process. The community’s location near the Mosaic potash mine in Esterhazy made a good fit and Morris Interactive wanted to build on relationships with the community and with Chief Cadmus Delorme.

“We always wanted to do a project together and this ended up being the one,” Cey said.

The partnership was extended to include surrounding nations and Mosaic.

“Economic self-sustainability doesn’t just mean we are going to find money for the nation, it also means investing in citizens so that they can go out there and flourish,” Delorme said, adding he was proud the community is hosting the training.

He gave opening comments to the students on the first day of class.

“They see their future is laid out for them,” he said. “If they can fulfill this course, it will make their home fires stronger, and stronger home fires in our communities lead to stronger nations, so it’s really uplifting to see.”

The 12 students were selected from 60 applications, which Barry Sparvier, Cowessess’ director of employment, training and support, called “quite a task.”

“It’s going to be a total success, I have no doubts on that,” he said. “It’s a good group of students all inspired to do what they came here to do, and they want to have a career in mining.”

Morris Interactive’s Cey said others are looking at this as a model to become engaged with Indigenous communities to provide meaningful employment and economic development opportunities.

“We’re proud to be involved; to us it’s a form of reconciliation in action,” he said.

Chief Cadmus Delorme urges other First Nations to seek partnerships with companies.

“There are organizations like Morris Interactive out there readily available to partner strategically with First Nations and I just want to give it up to those companies for trying,” he said.



Chief Cadmus Delorme.
(Photo supplied)

It can take a couple of times of trying to make the partnership work and find the right program, and Delorme said it took several different approaches before Cowessess First Nation landed on this program with Morris Interactive.

“We didn’t give up on our potential and I just want that to be known... the first one might not work, don’t give up, try again and try again.”



**FIRST NATIONS CAPITAL
& INFRASTRUCTURE AGENCY
OF SASKATCHEWAN**

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Chief Executive Officer
and other career opportunities.

The FNCIAS is a non-profit organization that has been established to negotiate taking over care and control of on-reserve housing and infrastructure programs and services from the Government of Canada.

For more information and to apply for various positions opening up in the future, visit fncias.ca

Delivering mental health supports, virtually

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

An innovative approach to addressing the mental health needs of young people is being explored in the northern community of La Loche.

Virtual reality (VR) is typically associated with video games, but Saskatchewan Polytechnic is harnessing the technology as a way of providing the type of support that is often limited in a small community and more popular with youth.

“There’s a lot of literature saying how telehealth is often not attended to by the patients,” said Lindsey Boechler, Sask Polytech researcher for the Centre of Health Research, Improvement, and Scholarship. “There was a general dislike for telephone appointments because (the youth) don’t know what the person on the other end is doing and there’s a lack of connection.

Researchers found a way to remedy the issue.

“With VR, you put the headset on and you’re fully immersed in an environment,” said Boechler. “You can connect with others knowing they are also fully immersed. It’s a new, innovative approach, and we know some of our past approaches aren’t working, so it’s time to consider new options.”

The project, Sekwe’ha, was launched in fall 2020 in collaboration with Dene High School in La Loche, where Boechler has been working with the community and Elders to find new pathways to supports.

Previously employed as a paramedic in northern Saskatchewan, Boechler said she would often respond to remote communities with limited resources and have to transport individuals in crisis to urban centres that had the appropriate clinicians, sometimes hours away.

“It’s probably not feasible to have these clinicians at every single community, but now we can alleviate some of those barriers and connect people to care in those communities,” she said.

Details on the content of the VR experience is yet to be established, but Boechler’s work is scheduled in February with the La Loche community.

Trevor Kolbuc, Principal at Dene High School, said he believes it will resonate with the students because the project is student-driven.



Lindsey Boechler, Saskatchewan Polytechnic researcher for the Centre of Health Research, Improvement, and Scholarship, is collaborating with Dene High School to bring virtual reality mental health supports this spring. (Photo submitted by Brianna Bergeron/Sask Polytechnic)

“That’s where the buy-in comes from,” he said.

“Students will connect with something better when it comes from them, rather than forced upon them.”

Kolbuc said to make the VR sets as accessible as possible, they will likely provide the students with cardboard glasses to be used with a VR-program on a mobile phone.

Dene High School has two counselors, one part-time mental health therapist, and a once-a-month education psychologist, but not all students feel comfortable talking with someone face to face.

The important thing is students have ease of access and a desire to use it, he said.

“I don’t think it needs to be different, it can be supplementary,” said Kolbuc. “If the students need (support) at home, or on a weekend, they can engage without having anyone around.”

“It might be the jump forward some students need to start engaging in services,” he said. “Maybe that’s a first step, and they realize it helps them, so they start engaging with services.”The important thing is that the students have



Dene High School in La Loche aims to provide VR sets for mental health and wellness to their students this spring. (Photo submitted by Brianna Bergeron/Sask Polytechnic)

ease of access and a desire to use it, he said.

“I don’t think it needs to be different, it can be supplementary,” said Kolbuc. “If the students need (support) at home, or on a weekend, they can engage without having anyone around.”

“It might be the jump forward some students need to start engaging in services,” he said. “Maybe that’s a first step, and they realize it helps them, so they start engaging with services.”

START YOUR NATION
BUILDING JOURNEY

“Edwards School of Business has many resources for young Indigenous students like myself that make it an easy transition. I have received the opportunity to join many groups like the Indigenous Business Students Society where I gained many friendships and connections that have helped me succeed.”

BRIANNA BARCLAY, Battlefords
Pursuing a Bachelor of Commerce

edwards.usask.ca/indigenous

TOGETHER   

 **EDWARDS**
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Losing a limb doesn't mean you've lost at life

By Kerry Benjoe
of Eagle Feather News

On July 13th, 2013, Faye Sioux John sat in her hospital room before her amputation surgery.

"I knew it was sick," she said. "So, I told my leg, 'Thank you for carrying me and I am sorry I didn't look after you the way I should have.'"



Faye Sioux John, a life-long diabetic, does not let her diagnosis or her prosthetic leg stop her from doing what she loves. (Photo from Facebook)

"I told myself, 'You're appearance doesn't matter, but how determined are you? You have grandchildren,'" said Sioux John. "If I didn't have grandchildren, I think, I would have gave up."

Lyle Daniels, the chair of the National Indigenous Diabetes Association, said diabetes causes so many complications.

"When you are diabetic your body has to work harder to pump thick blood through tiny veins and vessels," he said. "This is why many diabetics suffer limb loss because of the nerve damage in their feet. They can't feel when they are injured."

This is called diabetic peripheral neuropathy.

Daniels who is also diabetic says one has to be vigilant in all areas of their health. This includes diabetes educating, developing good relationships with doctors and specialists as well as living a healthy life.

He said there are good resources online at www.nada.ca.

Sioux John said she took maybe 20 minutes to feel sorry for herself, but that was it.

She left the hospital in a wheelchair and went to recover in Saskatoon.

In late August, while using her crutches instead of her chair, Sioux

John knew her life would never be the same, but readied herself for the new challenges coming her way.

"No matter what life throws at you, there are more good times than bad times," said Sioux John looking back.

The 63-year-old was diagnosed with diabetes when she was 27. Although she was aware of the danger of the disease, the loss of her mother threw her into a deep depression.

In December of 2012, she noticed a small pebble in her shoe, which caused a blister. Ordinarily she would have paid more attention to it, but she didn't this time and eventually the blister got infected.

By late June, gangrene set in. After a week in the hospital, she faced reality.



Faye Sioux John wrapped in a blanket after winning a dance special in 2015. Her leg was amputated in 2013, but with the help of a prosthetic she leads a full life. (Photo from Facebook)

John took a tumble and was too heavy for her daughter to lift.

In that moment, she decided to make changes. At her next physio-therapy session she asked about a prosthetic. Six weeks later she had her leg and was soon walking with a cane.

It wasn't long before the life-long powwow dancer wished to participate.

In 2015, two years after losing her leg, she returned to the powwow circle.

The determined grandmother did more than just return, she walked away a champion.

"I was really humbled," she said after winning.

She was so caught up in the moment that she used a dance step that she hadn't tried since she was young.

"I was spinning with my cane in the air and keeping in step to the beat," said Sioux John.

It was a moment she would never have experienced if she didn't have her prosthetic leg.

Saskatoon	ᓴᓴᓴᓴᓴᓴ
-----------	--------

CANOE

CĪMĀN

KANOO

CHIMAN

ČAPAC

CANOT

Amanda Strong, *How to Steal a Canoe*, 2016, stop-motion animated video, 4:10 minutes. Collection of Rемаi Modern. Purchased, 2018.

This exhibition is supported by BMO Private Wealth and Grit & Scott McCreath and Family.

On view until May 8, 2022	remaimodern.org
---------------------------	--

rRemai mModern

Frank & Ellen
Remai Foundation

City of
Saskatoon

Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

sk
arts

SASK LOTTERIES

Eye on the prize

By Kerry Benjoe
of Eagle Feather News

People often say, hindsight is 20/20, but in Ernest Standingready's case it couldn't be more true.

When he was first diagnosed with diabetes, he didn't take it seriously.

"I was diagnosed about 15 years ago or maybe a little bit longer," he said.

At the time Standingready was a manager and doing shift work.

Because of his job his sleep patterns were not normal, his eating habits weren't the healthiest and he wasn't very active.

Standingready's wife was concerned and suggested he see a doctor, but he didn't because he was busy. A co-worker, who was diabetic, noticed how much water Standingready would drink and asked to check his glucose level.

"At the time I think I was like 28," he said. "She said, 'You got to go to the hospital.' "

Standingready had no clue what the numbers meant and said at the time he felt fine.

Once he saw the doctor, he was diagnosed as diabetic.

"I started on the regular pill medication and stuff like that," said Standingready.

Because he didn't understand diabetes, he didn't make any lifestyle changes.

After the pills, he put on insulin to help manage his disease – at mealtime and bedtime.

Unfortunately, he didn't know how insulin worked.

"I was getting so tired of having high blood sugar that I would just shoot more insulin to try to get it down," said Standingready. "I was doing



Ernest Standingready at his desk. Two years ago he decided to take his diabetes diagnosis seriously and it may have saved his sight.
(Photo submitted by Ernest Standingready)

that for quite a number of years."

Everything changed after Covid.

Standingready changed jobs and went to work for a First Nation and that's when he finally discussed his situation with a diabetic nurse and received valuable information.

With that knowledge, he's proactive with his diabetes. Standingready found out he was insulin-resistant, but with the medical help he was able to find the combination of medication that worked for him.

However, his years of mismanagement caught up to him and about a year ago he woke up one day with blurry vision in one eye.

Standingready went to an eye specialist who explained what happened.

"Your eye always needs to have blood," he said. "When it starts to lack blood because of the amount of damage that's already been there (because of high glucose levels) your eye will start to produce new blood vessels, but these new blood vessels are a lot smaller. Because they are smaller, they are weaker and they actually start to leak."

He then had to go through invasive procedures that involved injections into his eye and laser treatments.

"I have no one to blame but myself," he said.

Standingready has had some setbacks and knows he may lose his sight, but he's going to fight to keep it.

After everything he's been through, he chooses to share his journey on social media in the hopes others will learn from his mistakes. Standingready often receives inboxes from people, mostly men, who want that education but are too afraid to ask a medical professional.

"We have to let go of that mentality that we have to be tough," he said. "It's OK to ask for help."

Standingready says the best thing he did was speak with the trained professionals who work specifically with First Nations people.

He encourages others to get diabetic education as soon as they are diagnosed because diabetes is manageable.



A FIRST NATIONS HEALTH MANAGERS ASSOCIATION TOWN HALL

YOUR RESOURCE FOR THE LATEST COVID 19 NEWS AND TRUSTED INFORMATION THAT COVERS A WIDE RANGE OF HEALTH TOPICS IMPACTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ACROSS TURTLE ISLAND

A WEEKLY TOWNHALL BY US FOR US

SEND US YOUR HEALTH QUESTIONS
FNHMA@IHTODAY.CA

FNHMA AGSPN

Indigenous Health Today

LIVESTREAM TUES : 2PM CT
WWW.IHTODAY.CA

BROADCAST SAT : 5PM
APTN

A diabetes advocate says a national strategy is needed

By Kerry Benjoe
of Eagle Feather News

For the past 14 years, Lyle Daniels from the George Gordon First Nation has been working on not just managing his diabetes but raising awareness about the disease.

In 2008, he was carrying almost 100 extra pounds and as a result his knees were damaged, his kidneys were failing, and he was losing his eyesight.

That day he weighed the pros and cons of his lifestyle and knew if he didn't make drastic changes he would likely go blind, have to go on dialysis, or die.

He chose to live and gave up drinking and changed his lifestyle.

"It was hard," said Daniels. "I'm not going to lie. It's not easy."

However, today through diet and exercise, he has reversed the effects of the disease.

"The body is amazing," said Daniels. "If you just give time and you take care of it, it has the power to heal itself."

He now listens to his body and it's paying off.

Instead of keeping his knowledge about the disease to himself, he chooses to be open and transparent about his journey on social media.

But he hasn't stopped there.

He has taken his advocacy work national and was re-elected as the chair of the National Indigenous Diabetes Association (NIDA), formerly known as the National Aboriginal Board of Canada.

Daniels said, as chair of the voluntary board, his priority is to create a national strategy to combat diabetes among Indigenous people in Canada.

He said Indigenous people need to take a proactive approach in diabetes because the rates of infection are dire as more children are diagnosed diabetic.

Daniels believes that in order to create a significant change, everyone has to be on board --- the governments, the First Nations and the people, because it is a complex issue with deep roots in colonialism.

Indigenous people need to re-examine their role, which is tied to food security and food sovereignty.

"What's available may not be the best for you," said Daniels.

However, many Indigenous people living on First Nations or in the inner cities simply do not have the means or access to healthier food.

Daniels says Indigenous people need to be the ones at the table working on and creating a national strategy rather than the usual top-down paternalistic approach the government tends to use.

Until that strategy is created, he encourages everyone to go to the NIDA website www.nada.ca to find useful information and educational material on diabetes.



Lyle Daniels, George Gordon First Nation, is the chair of the National Indigenous Diabetes Association (NIDA). (Photo supplied)

The Indigenous Apprenticeship Initiative is accepting proposals until **MAY 26, 2022.**



The Indigenous Apprenticeship Initiative (IAI) program creates awareness for apprenticeship training and promotes the trades as a top career. The IAI is now accepting proposals for innovative projects, including apprenticeship courses, mentoring projects, career exploration and more.

For more information:
306-933-5388
saskapprenticeship.ca/indigenous-apprenticeship



MÉTIS CITIZENS LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

Clean Energy and Small Nuclear Reactors Engagement Sessions

FEBRUARY 10 OR 26 /2022
9:00AM - 3:30PM ONLINE

Visit metisnationsk.com/events for more information and to register.

Join us online and be a part of the discussions on small nuclear reactors, the regulation process and how you want to be engaged in the future.

Presenters include SaskPower, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization. Participants will be entered to win great prizes!



Contact an Agriculture Specialist

Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program Helps Fund On-Farm Water Projects

The maximum rebate for livestock producers has been temporarily increased and the deadline for project completion has been extended. Livestock producers who submit a preliminary application for their project by March 31, 2022, now have until Sept. 30, 2022 to complete their project and submit for a rebate.



The Ministry of Agriculture has 10 regional offices around the province. To connect with a specialist near you, call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre.

Toll-free number: 1-866-457-2377

Email address: aginfo@gov.sk.ca



Feb. 22, 2022 is Canada's Agriculture Day. Follow us on social media to help celebrate this resilient industry.



saskatchewan.ca/agriculture

