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Dana Claxton, *Headdress - Jeneen*, 2018, LED firebox with transmounted chromogenic transparency. (Photo supplied by the artist and Forge Project, NY)



Taking the stage:
Courtney-Dawn Anaquad

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May 2022 is our
**Sports, Mining
Week Issue**
June 2022 Issue:
Indigenous History Month

By Adeoluwa Atayero
for Eagle Feather News

The Mackenzie Art Gallery is featuring one of the Indigenous community's most beloved art forms: beading. The exhibition, titled *Radical Stitch*, opened on April 30 and is currently the largest exhibition of Indigenous beading presented in North America. The exhibition features 48 artists from all over the continent whose work prove that the treasured Indigenous art form is still very much alive. Sherry Farrell Racette, one of the curators for the exhibition, says there is a plethora of diverse artists being featured there. "We've got artists who brought beadwork

into fine art galleries," she said. Racette curated the exhibition alongside Michelle LaVallee and Cathy Mattes. Many of the artists who are featured in the exhibition are well-known creators, such as Ruth Cuthand, Jamie Okuma, Teri Greeves, Katherine Boyer, Dana Claxton, and Barry Ace. The running theme of the exhibition is the value of beading as a means of letting the Indigenous culture live on. "We have a real range in the exhibition. We are covering art from 1978 to 2022. The two oldest pieces in the exhibition are two Inuit amautis with beaded parkas. It takes years to make those beaded amautis. They are pretty spectacular," Racette said.

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Sports give Josh Montana a place for his voice

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New Indigenous businesses soar in Saskatchewan

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The Mackenzie Art Gallery celebrates Indigenous beading

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She also said that beadwork has become one of the most exciting mediums for contemporary artists. According to Racette, this is because there are two groups of artists.

"There are artists who have always beaded and have then moved to contemporary fine art, and there are people who train as artists in Indigenous art schools and started including beadwork in their tool box," she said.

She believes that the recent feature of Indigenous beading at venues like The Whitney Museum of American Art and publications like *Vogue Magazine* have brought about a new appreciation for Indigenous beadmaking.

Racette also said that while being highlighted by venues and publications that have been closed off to beadmakers for years is important, the Covid-19 pandemic also inspired a lot of people to revisit and begin their beadmaking journey.

"The curation for the exhibition began before Covid and the exhibition was actually postponed because of it. However, we noticed that during lockdown all these virtual beading groups started. A lot of people turned to beadwork as a way of passing the time and coping with stress. There has been an explosion at the community level of people beading again."

The Gallery has a number of events lined up to celebrate this exhibition. Aside from the recently concluded opening, the Gallery will be hosting a day-long symposium on Saturday, June 25. The symposium will include artist-led, hands-on beading circles, workshops, panel discussions, and conversation.

For John G. Hampton, executive director and CEO at the MacKenzie, it is important to celebrate Indigenous beading as one of our generation's most exciting movements in contemporary art.

"Rooted in cultural and territorial specificity, beadwork is of particular importance to this moment in contemporary cultural dialogues, and we are so pleased to be working with the top artists and curators in the field to realize this exhibition from diverse Indigenous perspectives."

The exhibition will be on view in the Sim and Kenderdine Galleries at the MacKenzie Art Gallery from April 30 to August 28, 2022.



Nico Williams, *Indian's Frozen Computer*, delica beadwork, birch bark and porcupine quills, 2017. Courtesy of Indigenous Art Centre. (Photo by Mike Patten)



Bev Koski, *Banff #4*, 2014, beads, found object. Indigenous Arts Centre. (Photo supplied)



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Connecting to the youth with basketball

By Adeoluwa Atayero
for Eagle Feather News

Daniel Stonechild is using basketball to connect with the Indigenous youth in North Central, Regina.

He has been playing basketball for almost 20 years. This inspired him to organise the FN basketball camp last winter. The program is currently in its first year.

“The inspiration comes from always being interested in playing basketball. I’ve noticed how it always helped me. It was kinda therapeutic when I was younger and anytime I was able to play basketball it was medicine. It was healing.”

It is Stonechild’s belief that playing basketball can be a holistic experience for the youth. According to him, playing basketball helps the youth on a mental, emotional, physical and spiritual level.

“I really wanted to use basketball as a tool to teach youth hardwork and coming to an understanding of balancing things as they get older,” he said.

Stonechild has been coaching for over 10 years but officially started the FN Basketball camp at the māmawēyatitān centre in partnership with the City of Regina, Regina Public Schools, the North Area Central Community Association, and the Regina Public Library.

He is currently teaching Cree, native studies, visual art, and cultural arts at Scott Collegiate alongside being the head coach of a senior boys team in Regina Intercollegiate Basketball League, Scott Collegiate Wolves. According to him, these roles have prepared him for this experience. This is especially true about Scott Collegiate Wolves because the league consists majorly of Indigenous and inner-city players.

Stonechild is pleased to be able to teach cultural lessons through basketball. For him, this is yet another way to really connect with the youth and link them to their heritage.

“I’ve been incorporating Cree language more often and when I can. With this camp, I’ve gotten help from Elder Dexter Asapace and Irene Asapace from Kawacatoose First Nation. They do some life teachings so it became a medium for people to experience these inspiring talks about life.”

Stonechild has also been to use drills to instil some much needed character development.

“We go through different drills and when they work hard, they get tired. When this happens, I tell them, ‘Do you wanna give up? Push through that pain. Push through that injury. Push that soreness.’ You’re gonna get tired but that’s life. There are sometimes in life that you wanna give up or you wanna quit. Don’t do that.”

Lessons like these are why Stonechild believes that it is important to make sports accessible for highschoolers in the inner city.

“The youth are surrounded with so many negative impacts from colonisation in their environment such as addiction, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, prostitution and gang life. I feel like this is the element that will keep them busy and occupied and teach them about life.”

He said that this would keep many youth from entering gang life and getting to a very dangerous place.

“Most of my family members were in gangs or were put away for drug abuse or alcohol abuse. But basketball really helped me not fall into that.”

When it comes to tactics for keeping the youth involved in the game, Coach Stonechild has a trick or two up his sleeve.

“I try to use humour as much as I can. It is part of who we are to be funny.”

He also mentioned that it is critical to try and understand the perspective of the students and where they are coming from. This is key when it comes to getting across to the youth.

“I think there is a lack of understanding and listening to their voices. I try to do that; to keep them engaged so they know it is authentic. Sometimes I’ll give them an uncle talk about life and give them advice. It’s important to be that voice that sometimes they might not want to hear but need to hear or be that voice that they have not heard.” Stonechild says it’s great to coach teams that play with heart and a strong competitive drive. He believes that it’s important to keep this drive up for the players even if the scoreboard may not reflect it.

“A lot of comments from other coaches have them saying the kids have hearts and play really well. It’s tough because the scoreboard may not always show this sometimes.”

Stonechild says the kids wanting to get better is what keeps him going. This and imparting Indigenous values makes the journey worthwhile for him.

“As players and people, identity is huge. I want these youth to be able to understand who they are at this age. This will help them combat things that they go through themselves for a world that’s full of struggle.”

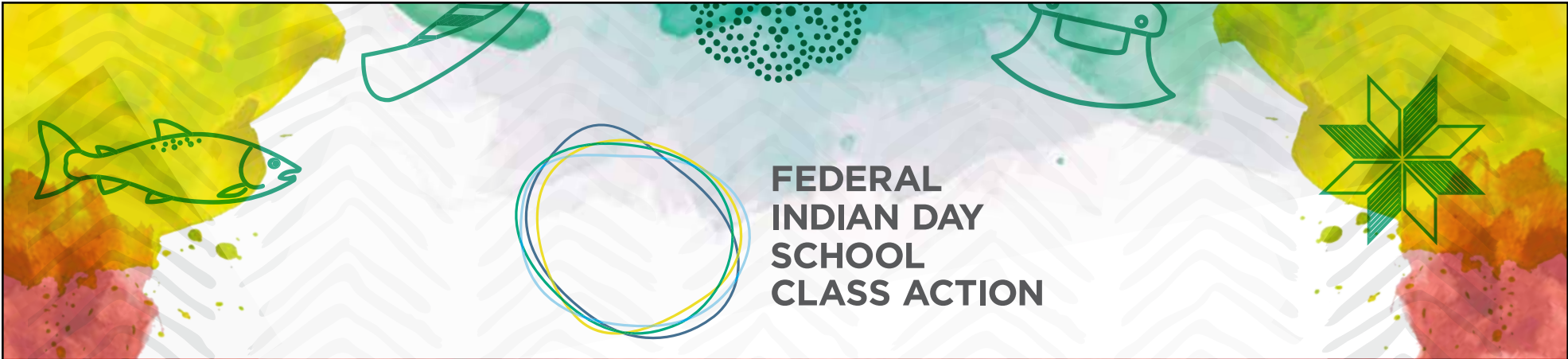
For Stonechild, it’s important for his players to know that being Indian is a beautiful thing.

An example of this is ninth grader, D’Kin Crowe. Crowe has been working with Stonechild since he was in the sixth grade. Crowe says working with Stonechild has helped him to develop not only in basketball, but also spiritually and mentally.

“I’ve had many other coaches but Coach Stonechild has helped me through everything. He reached out to me when I was feeling down family wise,” Crowe said. “He’s helped me get closer with my culture. He even helped me go to my first sweat. It’s just amazing to have a coach like that.”




Participants in the FN basketball camp. (Photo supplied)



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Tony Cote Summer Games comes back after two-year hiatus

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

After a two-year hiatus, this July will mark the return of the Tony Cote Summer Games – an event expected to draw upwards of four thousand people.

At an announcement of the games’ return, leaders across Saskatchewan reverberated a consistent message: the impact of sports on youth is immeasurable.

“Sports teaches the youth about playing on a team, about losing on a team, about winning on a team. Those are lifelong skills that you can carry. It’s invaluable,” said Darcy Bear, Chief of Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

This year’s games, hosted by James Smith Cree Nation, will take place in Saskatoon and area from July 24-30. The sports youth will be competing in are: archery, beach volleyball, athletics (track and field) soccer, canoe-kayak, softball, and for the first time, golf – which will be held at the Dakota Dunes Golf Links on Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

This is the first year James Smith Cree Nation is hosting the event. Chief Wally Burns said the community is honoured to host the event, but will continue to be mindful of to keep everyone safe as the pandemic is ongoing. Protecting the youth is what events like this are all about, he said.

“Our youth are the leaders of tomorrow. We have to protect them and make sure they don’t fall through the cracks,” said Burns.

The games, which were first held in 1974, are an important part of growth and development for Indigenous youth, said FSIN Vice-Chief David Pratt.

“(The past two years) were a difficult time for all of us,” said Pratt. “I think (the break) had an impact, especially on our young people.”

“So for us to be able to come together, at one of our signature events at FSIN, we are all looking forward to it,” he said.



FSIN Vice-Chief David Pratt speaks at press conference announcing the 2022 Tony Cote Summer Games. (Photo supplied)

Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief Mark Arcand said he has personally made many memories at the games, participating in both the summer and winter events. He knows first-hand that the experiences can stay with a young person for a lifetime.

“You’re creating partnerships, you’re creating relationships, with everyone. That’s something to stand behind,” he said.

“Our games have now become a place where leaders are made. People who participated in these games are now fathers, mothers, grandparents, leaders of companies, entrepreneurs, doctors, dentists. That’s what we have to keep striving for. Our people can make a difference in this province and country.”

FSIN Vice-Chief Aly Bear also has a close connection to the games. Her home First Nation, Whitecap Dakota, is hosting the athletes and some of the athletics events that she herself grew up participating in. Bear said she competed in her first games at the age of five, when she was technically too young to participate.

“That was one of my core memories. I remember it feeling like a really big moment. You feel acknowledged. You feel seen as a young person for playing sports, and being celebrated,” Bear told *Eagle Feather News*.

Bear said playing team sports through her life helped give her structure and discipline. She looks back fondly on the times when being on a sports team meant specific rules and curfews. She believes youth participating in the summer games might receive those same benefits.

“You learn to work on a team, to be a team player. That’s something you need to know in life going forward when you’re going to work in any environment. Being able to win, to lose. Those are things that come with participating in sports,” she said.



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Taking the stage: Courtney-Dawn Anaquod

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

When Courtney-Dawn Anaquod takes the stage, it may look like just one dancer. But on stage with her are many generations.

“I feel like my kookum’s spirit is coming through me when I dance. I feel that powerful connection to all my ancestors, like they’re all there



Courtney-Dawn Anaquod and her daughter, Georgia, taught a series of dance classes for all ages this spring at the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre. (Photo supplied)

beside me. It keeps me connected with them, and who I am,” said Anaquod.

If you’ve been to a pow wow, round dance, or jig in Saskatchewan in the past two decades, chances are you’ve seen Anaquod dance. Even for those unfamiliar with the finer details of dance, Anaquod’s mastery of her craft is unmistakable. It’s long been clear to her, and to audiences, that this is what she was born to do.

“Growing up, fiddle music is all I listened to. I went to bed listening to fiddle music, I would wake up and listen to it. It’s instilled in my brain,” she said. “In elementary school, my friends would want to go and hang out at night, but I would rather go to dry-dances and dance to jig music.” Anaquod, from Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation, has both First Nations and Métis heritage that fuels her love and drive to connect with her roots. A renowned jigging champion who started competing in 1999 and has far too many championships and accolades to list, is also a youth mentor, dance instructor, and founder of the Qu’Appelle Valley Dancers. And, Anaquod comes from a notable line of artists: she is the granddaughter of Fiddle Champion Morris Anaquod and Jigging Champion Theresa Anaquod, and daughter of musician Donny Anaquod.

“Dance keeps me grounded and connected to my cultures, traditions, and heritages. To be able to teach it, to pass those traditions down from generation to generation, is a complete passion of mine. And it’s important I pass them down to my daughter.”

Her daughter Georgia, 13, has certainly inherited those same passions, and talent. She started competitive dancing at just four years of age.

“My mom really inspires me all the time with her dance. She’s always there, encouraging me to do my best,” said Georgia.

When she was five, Georgia was diagnosed with epilepsy, but the obstacle has never slowed her down, said her mother. Even now, Georgia commonly experiences stage-fright before performing, but once she begins dancing, those barriers melt away.

“The best part about it is going up there, even though I’m scared. It’s always fun to just go up and dance.”

Georgia said that, like her mother, dance is something she’s both meant to do and share with others.

Together, Anaquod and her daughter Georgia taught a series of dance classes at the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre in April. The classes, three hours in length, took all ages from inexperienced dancers to those able to jig comfortably.

“I want to create a safe environment where there is no right or wrong way when you’re learning to dance. Your uniqueness comes through when you allow your body to feel that connection to the music. My daughter doesn’t dance like me, and I don’t dance like her,” said Anaquod.

“When you let your body feel the music, it’s like your soul is singing it.”

It’s that mental and spiritual health component that Anaquod is trying to infuse in all her lessons. She recently graduated from Saskatchewan Polytechnic with a two-year diploma in Mental Health and Wellness. Going through her own tragedies recently and having dance there to help her heal, Anaquod said there’s important mental health benefits everyone can learn from dance.

“I had to keep dancing (after experiencing tragedy) because dancing heals people. It can uplift the spirits in yourself and other people,” said Anaquod.

“Dancing is the centre of who I am. It keeps me together emotionally, physically, mentally, spiritually, all of those aspects. When we are stressed or going through something difficult, we will put on fiddle music and just dance.”

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An unexpected prize: Jennifer Lenny wins Indigenous Achievement Award

By Suliman Adam
Eagle Feather News

In March 2022, Jennifer Lenny was ecstatic to receive the Indigenous Student Achievement Award for Community Engagement at the University of Saskatchewan.

"I was not expecting to be acknowledged and receive that award," Lenny said. "I am grateful for that recognition."

The prize honours University of Saskatchewan Indigenous students for their academic excellence, leadership, research, community engagement, and resilience.

But most importantly, as a mature first-year student enrolled in the SUNTEP (Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education) program, Lenny was excited that they could inspire their eight-year-old daughter to "follow her dreams."

"Mom, don't look back and keep going forward," their daughter said. These words were important to hear when it came to balancing their priorities. "Being a role model for her and for her to reflect that back to me affirms that I'm on the right path."

Soon after, Lenny received the Indspire Building Brighter Futures scholarship, a grant for post-secondary education.

"I need to do it now before I feel that it's too late," Lenny said about enrolling in the SUNTEP program as a mature student. "I felt it was time to go back to school."

Lenny was extremely accomplished, and their engagement with the Indigenous communities preceded their attendance at the university. Lenny taught Indigenous studies as a casual instructor at Saskatchewan Polytechnic University from 2012 to 2015 and, until June 2021, worked at the Indigenous Student Centre as an Indigenous coordinator.

As a mother and student, Lenny advocated for LGBTQ rights through Prince Albert PRIDE, helped people battling addiction, and often did so while working three jobs. Today, they work with the Prince Albert Métis Addiction Council, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and Social Detox.

Shelley Belhumeur, a retired Indigenous coordinator who worked at Saskatchewan Polytechnic University from 1986 to 2019 for 22 years worked closely with Lenny and remembers those days fondly.

"They were always busy, joining committees and being a part of any events we had," Belhumeur said about Lenny. "Always willing to volunteer, put in the time, help students, be busy in the centre and with other committees."

Belhumeur said Lenny is active in the community and they are, not only knowledgeable about the culture but able to integrate it into the community.

"This accolade was well deserved," Belhumeur said about Lenny receiving the award. "I think they are going to be a wonderful teacher."

Lenny, a two-spirit Métis person from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, has now turned their attention to curriculum reform, hoping to bring two-spirit awareness to the forefront of the academic program.

Lenny hopes to "incorporate Indigenous knowledge in educating culturally." And doing that by "Indigenization of the curriculum."

Besides teaching and advocating for the two-spirit community, Lenny loves to work with kids. They regularly organize a children's drum group that was founded in May 2020.

Their daughter is an important partner in this endeavour, providing much-needed support. "I feel grounded," they said when teaching the children because "I'm doing things that help my spirit."

It reminds them of their own childhood when their grandmother would officiate moon dancing ceremonies.

"I think of myself as a helper and helper of people, it doesn't feel like work because it's fulfilling," Lenny said about their community engagement and drum circle. "When I'm drumming, I get a sense of connection and healing."



Jennifer Lenny organized a children's drum group that was founded in May 2020 (Photo credit: All My Relations Photography)

Jenny Fleury
Hometown: Regina, SK
Program: Culinary Arts diploma

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Sports gives Josh Montana a place for his voice

By NC Raine
of Eagle Feather News

Growing up in athletics, Josh Montana learned a difficult lesson early in life: as an Indigenous person, he would have to be twice as good to get half the opportunity.

“A lot of times I had friends I was trying out with, and I would have to do something amazing, something that turned heads, just to get noticed,” explains Montana.

“I see that a lot with Indigenous youth in these elite sports organizations. It’s starting to change now, but when I was a kid I didn’t see any diversity on these all-star teams. I was always the only native kid. I had to be twice as good for the same opportunity.”

Not discouraged by having the deck stacked against him, Montana from George Gordon First Nation, has made the most of the opportunities he’s been



Josh Montana, Centerfielder, is the only Indigenous member of the Canadian National Fastball team. (Photo supplied)

given. A ranking of the greatest fastball players in the province – Indigenous or non – would have Montana near the top.

Montana is the centrefielder for the Canadian National Fastball team, which will compete at the Pan American Games in Guatemala this July. Then in October, Montana and the national team will travel to Argentina for the World Softball Classic. He is the only Indigenous player on the roster.

“I’ve had to get used to being alone, the only brown face on my teams,” he said.

“But I wouldn’t be the man I am today, and have the accomplishments I have, if it wasn’t for the adversity I’ve faced.”

Some of those trying times came when Montana left his hometown of Regina to attend Cañada College in San Francisco

on an athletic scholarship.

“It was a really tough transition, being Indigenous and growing up in Regina, then moving to San Francisco. It was a big culture shock,” he said.

“Being Indigenous, I’m really family based. Being away from them for months or years at a time – being away from your support system in such a big place was really hard.”

Montana said the Americans he was around in California knew very little of Indigenous Canadians, and would refer to them as “Native Americans.” But, Montana used the opportunity to talk to his teammates about Indigenous culture, customs, what makes them unique.

It’s something he continues to do in the locker room, in his business role, and in the community.

“Sports has given me a stage and panel for my voice to be heard as an Indigenous person. It’s helped my personal and business life as well. It’s a stage to educate people, and I feel the need to give back to my community, because they’ve supported me so much.”

Returning from San Francisco with an associate commerce degree, Montana now balances his athletic pursuits with his career. Montana is the Vice-President of Stewardship and Relations at Wichehtowak Limnos Consulting Services, an environmental consulting firm owned by George Gordon Developments, where he ensures Indigenous stewardship obligations are met in the oil, gas, potash, and renewable energy sector.


And at just 23, Montana is already thinking about the generations younger than him. He recently was one of the speakers at the FSIN Resilient Conference, and was one of six youth from around the country chosen to speak at the Cando National Conference this May.

“I want youth to know they belong in these positions,” said Montana.

“Whether it’s positions in business, leadership, legislations, I really believe we have a voice that need to be heard and we should be filling these spaces.”

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Archbishop of Canturbury Justin Welby takes a step towards Truth & Reconciliation

*By Marjorie Roden
for Eagle Feather News*

When word came through to the Anglican congregation of St. Alban's Cathedral that a special guest from England was coming to deliver the sermon on May 1, many people didn't quite believe it to be true. The visit was part of the 50th session of the Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land, meaning there were many clergy as well as people from the general public in attendance. However, the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby took to the pulpit that morning, and an important step in truth and reconciliation took place. This was the morning after he had publicly apologized for the abuses suffered by students in Anglican-operated Residential Schools across Canada.

After all, His Grace Welby is the Archbishop of Canterbury.

His speech openly discussed the reality of not only Residential Schools but the damages they have caused Canadian Indigenous society. The crowd at the church was, like Canadian society itself, a mixture of those with First Nation and European ancestry. Many of the Indigenous people could be easily picked out through their wearing of ribbon shirts or ribbon skirts.

Donna Bonnberry, a member of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) was impressed by Welby's sermon, stating "the sermon, I think, was a good message for us. I like his humour and it (was) respectful.

"He touched on the experiences so far, and I'm sure it's all a cultural shock for him in Canada."

Nancy Bruyere, an Anglican minister in Northern Saskatchewan, was in full agreement.

"It gives us hope. We have a long road ahead of us for healing and reconciliation. I'm praying that our people will accept that apology that was made yesterday."

Bonnberry earnestly added, "What he's been doing to prepare to come here and learn more first-hand about our history and experiences here in Canada ... I was happy that he reflected on that today."

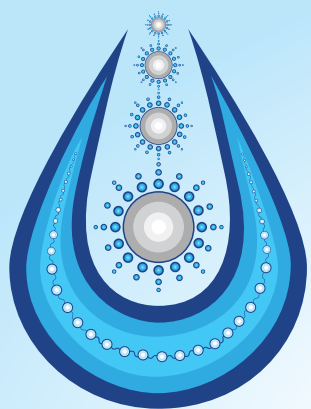
"Our people are very forgiving and so full of love," Reverend Bruyere said, adding, "I just pray that we'll move forward together with the non-Indigenous people, and that true healing will happen, for our people and especially our children ... because a lot of them still don't know who they are as Indigenous people."

"Even my own grandchildren ask me, 'What happened to us?' They have all these questions, and we need to give them an answer. What does all this mean for us?"

However, Reverend Bruyere has also seen advancements in Aboriginal society during her years working in the Anglican ministry.

"I've seen, in the 25 years I've been a minister, how God has been working in our midst in the Anglican church and the ministry, ACIP, and how they encouraged us to keep moving forward with our culture. That's how ACIP has helped me to accept my culture, and our language, and our traditions."

Only time will tell how a more unified Canada can help to heal some of these generations-old wounds, which are still hurting people in our nation, no matter their ethnicity.



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Two new faces take on FSIN Youth Representatives role

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Sometimes numbers are the best way to appreciate a new event. There are over 175,000 Indigenous people in Saskatchewan, according to Statistics Canada. One of the fastest growing demographics in the province are Indigenous youth aged 15-24, who make up almost a quarter of all youth in Saskatchewan.

This past April, at the Rezilient 8th Generation Conference, two new Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Youth Representatives were elected to stand and speak on behalf of the youth from all of the 74 First Nations in province.

And those two new leaders are just 19 years of age. For the next two years, Hailey Rose from Mosquito, Grizzly Bear's Head, Lean Man First Nations, and Brock McLeod-Waditaka from Wahpeton Dakota Nation will proudly provide a voice on behalf of their peers.

"I feel overwhelmed with emotions and I'm truly honoured and excited for what this has to bring," Rose told *Eagle Feather News* shortly after being elected.

"I'm happy and excited for this opportunity," added McLeod-Waditaka. "I'll do my best for the youth, because they are the future."



Brock McLeod-Waditaka from Wahpeton Dakota Nation. (Photo supplied)

Although still teenagers, both young leaders had been thinking about this opportunity for a long time. In 2015, Rose met former Youth Representative Rollin Baldhead, who was on the FSIN youth council at the time, and attended the Carrier of Hope youth conference. Those experiences unlocked something in her.

"That was my first experience feeling like I had a voice and was heard. It made me realize youth need to sit in bigger positions because we can make decisions too. We should have a say in what goes forward," she said.

McLeod-Waditaka said ever since he was very young, he has been around leaders, motivational speakers; people who motivated him to become a leader himself. It's that young generation, those in need of help, who continue to motivate him.

"There are youth out there that don't have a home to go to. Or a home with no mom or dad to hug and say 'I love you' to," said McLeod-Waditaka. "I think we need more leaders for the children, for them to look up to."

As FSIN Youth Representatives, Rose and McLeod-Waditaka will be spending time attending conferences, travelling the province, meeting and talking with youth. Issues youth today face, according to Rose, include depression, social anxiety, and emotional trauma as a result of the pandemic and the tragic news of finding unmarked graves at Residential School sites. McLeod-Waditaka said, in his perspective, the priority for youth today should be education.

"I think, from a very young age, we need to show youth how important education is, and how it will help them succeed in the world," said McLeod-Waditaka.

"I want to use the next two years showing youth how to turn their pain into strength," added Rose. "How to fully balance their medicine




Hailey Rose from Mosquito, Grizzly Bear's Head, Lean Man First Nations, and Brock McLeod-Waditaka from Wahpeton Dakota Nation. (Photo supplied)

wheel to be the best version of themselves and help identify who they are as Indigenous people."

Despite having very similar priorities and convictions, Rose and McLeod-Waditaka are relative strangers to one another. But already they are seeing strengths in their counterparts as leaders.

"Hailey is really open-hearted. She really loves what she's doing. So I look forward to working with her," said McLeod-Waditaka.

"I can already see that Brock walks with very strong cultural values," said Rose. "That part of us was lost, but I know he will bring that back to life. With his cultural values, he's going to do great things."



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FHQTC brings small libraries to their local communities

By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News

It has been said many times in many ways that books can be a portal to another world for those who take the time to read.

Now the communities that are part of File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council (FHQTC) are able to go on their own adventures thanks to a \$55,000 from GoodMinds.

The idea first came about during a regular Monday meeting where the team was discussing what to do for Literacy Week.

"I thought it would be neat if we could put a little library in every community for everyone to access," said Alana Starr FHQTC's literacy and home-based learning consultant.

While these discussions were taking place, Pearl Yuzicappi the education governance coordinator noticed GoodMinds was launching a literacy series interviewing different authors and posting the interview online.

"I thought wouldn't it be great to partner up with GoodMinds and have those interviews on our website to inspire some future authors and have them put a face to a name," said Yuzicappi.

After some discussion, Yuzicappi called Achilles Gentle, president of GoodMinds, to ask for permission to post the interviews they were doing on their website and told him about their idea for small libraries in each community.

Gentle thought this was a great idea and said he wanted to supply the books through their Support Indigenous Libraries Today Fund.

"We were surprised by the support we got from GoodMinds. I don't think it would have been such a huge success without his support," said Yuzicappi.

When it came time to divvy up the books, GoodMinds was courteous enough to have labeled each of the boxes by community so this made distribution easier.

"We weren't expecting the amount of books that showed up," said

Starr. "We were grateful because they were filled with such quality literature, Indigenous authors, and (books for all) age levels."

"These boxes came filled with everything for every type of reader in mind. The love and appreciation that came from communities after we went out and installed them ... it has been well received," continued Starr.

Having small libraries in each community now gives more people access to literature they may have not had before.

"We know the more books in a home the more likely it is that children are going to love and enjoy reading. We had people in our communities who love to read but don't have access," said Starr. "This helps break down those barriers to accessing literature."

This is why it made more sense to bring the material to the people

instead of making them use something like Amazon or have to venture into Regina and go to Chapters.

"Many of our communities are remote and they will not have access to this material so it made sense to bring the material to them to support our communities," said Yuzicappi.

Starr is happy with the way everything fell into place.

"From seeing the project from start to finish, it warms my heart. It's extremely rewarding to have done something like this. I'm proud of our team," said Starr.

After watching how everything came together, Starr hopes that they can maybe build another small li-

brary in each community in the future.

"I would love to see the communities make replicas of what is there and place more in and around their communities. That would be fantastic," said Starr.

Yuzicappi hopes other communities take a page from their book when it comes to literature.

"I hope the idea grows with other communities," said Yuzicappi. "It's not a huge cost to have this type of structure put in place. We hope we inspire individuals to utilize libraries when it's safe and to improve their literacy skills."



After getting the idea to install mini libraries in each community, FHQTC received a donation of \$55,000 worth of books from GoodMinds. (Photo courtesy of FHQ Education website)



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Image: Dana Claxton, *Headdress-Jeneen*, 2018, LED firebox with transmounted chromogenic transparency. Courtesy of the artist and the Forge Project, NY.

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Treaty 4 Esports builds connections on and offline

By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News

When it comes to video games, there's a stereotype of people who play them being monosyllabic loners but Tristan Keshane owner of Treaty 4 Esports hopes to change that by sharing his enjoyment of gaming with others.

Keshane's interest in video games started when he was a child, playing games such as Call of Duty and Halo with his brothers.

"It was something me and my brothers did and we would always be in competition against each other," said Keshane. "One of my earliest childhood memories is us playing on the N64."

Although Keshane did play sports like hockey, it was that same competitive drive that kept him coming back and trying to beat his brothers at whatever game they were playing.

"It kept me out of trouble. And then once I found out there were competitive games that's where I spent my time," said Keshane.

In 2016 Keshane was living in Regina playing hockey for the Capitols when he entered the Cineplex Gaming Championships and ended up placing top three.

"After that was done, I was sitting in my apartment thinking I need to do something not just for myself. I thought why not host these tournaments close to home," said Keshane.

This twist of fate would give Keshane the idea for what became Treaty 4 Esports.

Fast forward two years and the company has held its first tournament on Cowessess First Nation.

"It went really well," said Keshane. "The kids just got to be kids."

Since then, he has put on 15 tournaments and game nights.

Keshane has been focusing on youth gaming nights as he has been



Tristan Keshane hopes to share his enjoyment of gaming with others through Treaty 4 Esports. (Photo supplied)

getting asked to host more of those lately.

"Reserves have been contacting us and asking us to put on something for their youth," said Keshane.

"It gives kids something to do because you don't know if they have money to come play or the support system to travel," continued Keshane. "They can come to the tournament and spend all day there."

Regardless of whether it's a full-on tournament or just a game night, Keshane is happy to put anything on for those who ask.

"I enjoy putting them on and seeing who the best player is," said Keshane.

Now that it is getting safer for people to gather again, Keshane hopes to start putting something on at least once a month, whether it's a game night or a full tournament.

He also hopes to use the skills he has learned running tournaments and game nights to make them a cross-provincial activity.

"I want to start a First Nation to First Nation gaming league," said Keshane. "I work on my reserve's school as an EA and I started an esports team for some of the youth, so I also want to set up something school to school where (kids) can play against each other and earn prizes."



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Photo courtesy T. Keshane Treaty 4 Esports Facebook. (Photo supplied)

Youth gather at the FSIN 8th Generation Conference to discuss current and future

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

The attendees may have been young, but some of the most significant world issues were subjects of the FSIN Rezilient 8th Generation Conference.

“Climate change is really hitting our youth. It’s a big issue now, and for future generations coming up,” said FSIN Third Vice-Chief Aly Bear.

“We focused the entire first day on water and climate change. We need to continue to highlight the protection of water because it’s going to be such a big issue for our youth and future generations.”

Taking place April 19-21 at Whitecap Dakota First Nation, day one of the conference featured a three-part water symposium with Indigenous and non-In-

tion of Hailey Rose and Brock McLeod-Waditaka as youth representatives. Outgoing FSIN youth representatives reflect on their experience in the role

The election signified that Darian Lonechild and Rollin Baldhead had come to the end of their tenure. The two leaders, elected for a two-year term in 2018, ended up serving four years as a result of the pandemic. The experience, they both say, was transformative.

“We made so many lifelong friendships along the way,” said Lonechild, who’s from White Bear First Nation.

“Sitting in ceremony with young people was particularly memorable. That spiritual aspect is so integral to who we are as Indigenous people. So, looking back, I think of those simple moments — looking beside you and seeing a young woman, learning the same things in ceremony, together,” she said.

“I came in not really knowing what it was about,” said Baldhead. “So I came in with constant curiosity and wanting to learn. I learned the importance of lobbying, for advocating for our youth, and the importance of listening.”

For the two incoming leaders, Lonechild and Baldhead offered a bit of wisdom.

“This role is what you make it. It’s up to you to seek out the priority and advocate for the youth in Saskatchewan. It’s up to you what you do with this role,” said Lonechild.

“Enter it with curiosity,” added Baldhead. “And don’t waver from your identity. Because when you draw from your own experiences, you’re speaking from truth.”



Outgoing FSIN youth representatives Rollin Baldhead and Darian Lonechild, who served from 2018 to 2022. (Photo supplied)

digenous experts, scientists, community leaders, and Knowledge Keepers. The experts took the 350 youth, aged 15-24, through pivotal issues like the role of water past and present, current and future challenges to water, and women and water.

Pasqua First Nation Chief Todd Piegan challenged the youth on several issues Indigenous people face, including thinking about living with boil water advisories, the impacts of climate change, and how a multi-billion dollar irrigation project at Lake Diefenbaker might affect water security in the future.

On day two, the conference featured a virtual keynote speech from renowned Canadian scientist, Dr. David Suzuki.

“Climate change is something that is fast approaching in our world. We can’t ignore it,” said Bear. “I know many Nations up north and it’s really hitting their communities hard. We need to create awareness. We are natural stewards of the land, and it’s something we need to continue to instill in our youth.”

Climate and water were just two of the issues tackled at the Rezilient Conference, which until now hadn’t been held since 2018. Day two and three focused on different themes – professional development, and a FSIN Youth Legislative Assembly – respectively.

Day two included a diverse set of panels on Indigenous women’s empowerment, environmentalism, art and advocacy, anti-racism, sports, masculinity, and gangs, additions and mental health.

“For a long time, we didn’t have Indigenous representation in those spaces. But we have so many role models now: lawyers, doctors, scientists, athletes. Our youth need to be able to see themselves in those spaces,” said Bear.


The third day, youth were taken through a full, formal election process as part of the FSIN Youth Legislative Assembly, which entailed nominations, speeches from the candidates, and a formal election culminating in the selec-

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New Indigenous businesses soar in Saskatchewan

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

A major boost has come to five promising Indigenous entrepreneurs who are ready to take a leap in their careers. The SOAR Rkhiw paskîyâkêwin Indigenous Entrepreneurship Competition, presented by the Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority (SREDA) has awarded a total of \$45,000 in prize money to five Indigenous Entrepreneurs.

\$15,000 to Christine Marie, Awasis Boutique; \$10,000 to Timothy Hudy, Theo Clean Janitorial Services; \$10,000 to Alicia Hrbachek, Ally's Cake Creations; \$5,000 to Delaney King and Cole Tait, Preventative Measures Ltd.; and \$5,000 to Joshua Turner, JT's Beach Cafe and Tiki Bar.

First-place winner Christine Marie, a Métis woman from Saskatoon, who said she had to talk herself into applying for the grant.

"I always shied away from this kind of thing. I thought I wasn't built for it. But after I saw a post about it, I thought I should take a step, break out of the box. I'll apply and whatever happens happens."

Her business, Awasis Boutique, is the first Indigenous-inspired ba-



SREDA CEO Alex Fallon poses with the five SOAR Rkhiw paskîyâkêwin winners. (Photo supplied)

bies and kids line in Western Canada, according to Marie. Formerly a school teacher, she started Awasis in 2018 as a way to make money from home when she was nursing her newborn son and attending to her toddler. After selling bibs and blankets with Indigenous designs, she realized there was a significant demand but little supply for these types of products.

Fast forward a few years and Awasis is still going strong, and has since expanded to child and adult apparel, which is frequently sold out.

When she finally decided to apply for the SOAR grant, she tackled the job with gusto.

"They said we could use Powerpoint or a note sheet. But I said, no, if I'm going to do this, I'm going to have it all in my head. So I practiced. I set a timer for five minutes and practised in front of the mirror, practised while packing orders, practised while driving."

Needless to say, the practice paid off. With her first-place winnings, Marie said she is finally going to start marketing her business, and is planning a professional photo and video shoot with models.

And, a little money is set aside for a request from her young ones.

"After I won, my son was like, 'can we buy a bunch of chicken nuggets at McDonalds?' I was like, 'you know what, I think we can get one meal out of that.' That's just keeping it real," laughs Marie.

Marie plans on continuing to push Awasis Boutique upwards. She recently inked a deal to have a special, yet-to-be-announced product featured in the the "Jilly Box" – a subscription box from HGTV and The Bachelorette television personality, Jillian Harris.

In a tie for the second-place prize of \$10,000, Timothy Hudy of Theo Clean Janitorial Services plans to use the money for practical cleaning equipment his company needs to operate their business.

Theo Clean, started in 2019, is a commercial janitorial company that cleans over 200,000 square feet of office and industrial space in Saskatoon and area. Hudy, from Yellow Quill First Nation, employs 11 individuals and counting.

"It's been great for networking. We actually picked up a new contract from the event. So this is really helping us grow," said Hudy.

Hudy said that Theo Clean aims to be the largest Indigenous cleaning company in Saskatoon. And, in an effort to give back to the community, Hudy said they plan to sponsor the SOAR Awards next year.

"It was great to see how many Indigenous entrepreneurs are out there. This event really allowed us to connect," said Hudy. "Sponsoring the event will be our way of giving back, and helping out other upcoming Indigenous entrepreneurs."

With a third-place, \$5,000 prize, Delaney King and Cole Tait of Preventative Measures Ltd plan on using the money to help develop a smartphone app.

The Métis business partners run an organization that engages companies at various levels on how to better educate their employees in safety talks, through courses, workshops, and in-depth coaching.

The smartphone app they plan to create will cost an estimated \$50,000 to \$65,000, and will help to solve the connectivity issue some of their clients have who live in more remote locations.

"Just being part of it and seeing that they do believe in you. Even though you may not have won first place, they still believe that you had a tangible idea that you should move forward with, (which) is super encouraging," said Tait.



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The program is expected to take place from May to October 2022. Visit www.cn.ca/vegetation to see the list of cities as well as the updated schedule.

For more information, contact the CN Public Inquiry Line at contact@cn.ca or 1-888-888-5909.

We who speak from the high hill of old age

By EFN Staff
of Eagle Feather News

I have become a pensioned off senior citizen and it’s not so bad. My great fear is to be stuck in a care home placed in a corner and watered weekly. My aging body is now dilapidated with aching back, creaky legs, and a face like a dried up apple. Maintaining my good looks has turned into a salvage job. I am no longer the man I used to think I was.

How fine we looked in our youth, how brightly we shone but alas it’s come to this. The years flew by and depreciation took its toll. Still, it’s better to be a has-been than a never-was. I, like so many, have become a pathetic diabetic. It’s a dirty self-inflicted disease but I will stop there rather than wallow in self-pity. On the other hand, self-pity is a human right fully utilized by most people.

Seniors upon meeting seniors usually start off their conversation by comparing aches and pains. It’s almost a ritual. The benefits or draw backs of Metamucil, Dr. Ho’s circulation boosters, prune juice, iron pills and all are a source for lengthy discussion. Most of us keep our meds in blister packs, and have developed an extensive knowledge of pharmaceuticals. Most every senior has memory lapses. More than a few times, I have gone shopping only to forget what I came for. My self-respect demands I buy something if only to feel justified for being there. We all fear a time when we may be reduced to wearing Depends. We of First Nation persuasion are greatly relieved to know dentistry has come a long way from the torture of sadistic Indian Affairs dentists.

We of ancient vintage speak of an alien world called the distant past even though the distant past may only be three decades or so. We lived through a time of social upheaval when the music sounded great aside from Barry Manilow, Liberace and Tiny Tim. I deeply regret being stuck in Punnichy, Saskatchewan during the Summer of Love or missing Woodstock. *Sigh.* We can well remember the Cuban missile crisis, man on the moon, hippies, disco, and when telephones had tails.

Margarine was policed by the dairy industry at one time. It only came in white blocks and food coloring had to be mashed in if anyone wanted it to look like butter. Before Squirrel made it, peanut butter only came in metal pails with a thick layer of peanut oil on top. Like margarine, it had to be thoroughly mixed before consumption. People laugh at the old ringer washers. Fingers could be squished flat or so we 10-year-olds believed. Some of us acquired impetigo, ring worm and head lice but we don’t speak of those afflictions. Too embarrassing.

The good old days were not always the good old days but we like to talk endlessly about how things have gone downhill since. All in all, life is good and it sure beats the alternative.



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REGION	LOCATION	DATE	TIME
Western Region 1A	Lloydminster	May 3	5-9 PM
	North Battleford	May 4	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
Western Region 2	Prince Albert	May 5	5-9 PM
Western Region 1	Meadow Lake	May 10	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
Northern Region 1	La Ronge	May 12	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
Northern Region 3	Île-à-la-Crosse	May 25	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
	Pinehouse	May 26	5-9 PM
Western Region 2A	Saskatoon	May 28	11-4 PM
ONLINE SESSIONS - REGISTER AT: https://metisvoice.eventbrite.ca			
	Open Consultation	May 17	5-9 PM
	Youth Consultation	May 18	5-9 PM
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