

Office of Aboriginal Initiatives Highlights: February 2012

Aboriginal Recruitment/Outreach Activities

Achievement Fund: "Tuition Credit Account"

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Lakehead District School Board and Lakehead University has been developed on the establishment of the Achievement Fund. A signing date and media event is currently being planned, as well as letters of intent to the Catholic District School Board, Keewatin Patricia District School Board and Greenstone District School Board to consider similar MOU's. Beginning in September 2012, the Lakehead District School Board will identify 3 participating schools and 35 students who will be enrolled in the Achievement Fund "Tuition Credit" program. Lakehead University will identify on campus activities for students to participate in as part of the Achievement Fund.

Aboriginal Recruitment Campaign:

The Office of Aboriginal Initiatives has engaged the services of Aboriginal LINK, The Premier Direct Communication Service to the Canadian Aboriginal Market, to launch (as a pilot project) a major Recruitment campaign for the Native Access Program, Native Nurses Entry Program, Honours Bachelor of Education (Aboriginal), Native Teachers Education Program and Native Language Instructors' Program. There will be two regional campaigns, one in Northern Ontario and one in Southern Ontario. The goals are to create an awareness of Aboriginal focused programs, increase pool of potential applicants, promote Lakehead as culturally supportive and welcoming environment and ultimately to recruit more students to these programs. Through Aboriginal LINK, we will reach a database of 2,400 Aboriginal contacts. The campaign includes Two 'Strategic' and four 'Tactical' annual Direct Communication Distributions, responseTRAC™ Response Reporting and Postings on www.AboriginalStudents.ca.

For more info about Aboriginal LINK see <http://www.aboriginallink.com/>.

Aboriginal Post Secondary Information Program Tour (APSIP):

Lakehead University participates in the APSIP Tour and is also member. On January 19th, Yolanda Wanakamik our Aboriginal Outreach/Recruitment Officer was elected to sit on the committee as the Co-Chair, representing approximately 40 institutions (University and Colleges) as part of the governing body who assists in planning, preparing and engaging communities across Ontario to engage Aboriginal youth in Ontario and Quebec.

Aboriginal Initiatives (AI) Magazine:

The AI magazine has been updated and circulated to Senior Administration, Deans, Chairs, Managers, Board of Governors, Ogimaawin-Aboriginal Governance Council, Aboriginal Faculty and staff. Approximately 180 copies have been distributed.

The number of Aboriginal faculty featured in the magazine has increased by two. We now have 14 Aboriginal faculty members situated in various departments. They are in Education, Social Work, Indigenous Learning, Psychology, Nursing, and Natural Resources Management. An additional

Aboriginal faculty member has since come forward requesting to be included in the next update in September.

Orillia Campus Aboriginal Initiatives:

- For a second year in a row the Aboriginal Elders Teachings series are being offered from January 26th - March 29th at the Orillia campus. This is a joint Aboriginal Initiatives and Orillia Student Affairs project. Elders from local Aboriginal communities will be leading the weekly traditional teachings. The first session “Women’s Traditional Roles with Elder Gertie Beaucage” was held on January 26th and was well attended with 32 people.
- Second session was on “Men’s Traditional Roles with Elder Vern Altman” and had 41 people attended.
- Meetings with various Education Managers from local First Nations, Ogemawahj Tribal Council Education Advisor and Rama Culture and Research Department. April is working very closely with these people to plan events and bring students on campus
- Campus tour and information session for Ontario Works students from Rama – January 18th

Cultural Awareness Training session plans are underway for Student Services at the Orillia campus on how staff can best support First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. This same session will be offered to the Thunder Bay campus once it is developed.

Currently the Aboriginal Liaison Advisor is working on and planning the following activities:

- Aboriginal cultural awareness training for Orillia Student Affairs team
- Content development for Aboriginal Initiatives webpage for Orillia campus
- Preparing and planning for APSIP Week #6 – Southern Georgian Bay with Dawn Bolduc at Georgian College
- Planning a joint Georgian College/Lakehead University event to showcase programs and services offered at both institutions

Aboriginal Cultural and Support Services (ACSS)

Métis Student Liaison: Since the establishment of this part-time student position there have been 14 Métis students who have connected with the Liaison and are connecting with AC-SS. Two of these students are now volunteering with AC-SS to assist outreach to Métis students.

- February 16th, 2012 Janine Landry will be having a luncheon with the students and Métis Elder Senator Bob McKay will also be there to meet the students and will be a visiting Elder for February and March.

Prospective Students

- January 6th- Admissions and Recruitment Aboriginal prospective student tour to ACSS.

Academic

- ACSS attended Winter Orientation hosted by Student Success Centre – met with 29 students.

- ACSS Coordinated weekly academic workshop sessions for our first year students with SSC, WC, AAC, NAP, SAS, NAGE, Aboriginal Peer Mentors.
- 85 Academic support sessions with students (funding, marks, research, transcripts, computer support, registration, course withdrawal, special examination process, etc.)

Personal Support (includes academic and financial)

- 74 student appointments usually drop in appointments made.
- Kim is developing rapport with the Aboriginal students at Bora Laskin building and meets with 3-4 students a week during her half day visit in Kinoomaagegaamig Native Student Lounge Faculty of Education.

Transition Supports (includes cultural, personal growth, development and community)

- 6 student appointments for first year students needing help with their transition.
- ACSS organized a Winter Semester First year Meet and Greet – 20 participants.
- Kim worked with various departments on social activities such as movie, crafts, discussion groups, class presentation, and bursary workshops.

Cultural Programming

- Jan to February, Elder in Residence Gerry Martin has been seeing 13-14 students a week during the two full days he visits Lakehead University students, which is a success.
- January 14 and 25th, prepared for two Sweats' with a total of 43 participants in total.
- Janine Landry our Métis Student Liaison Facilitator developed a Lakehead University Métis Facebook page and now has 16 Métis students.

Other

- February 15th and 29th organizing two feasts/drumming in Student Centre and Bora Laskin building.

Nanibijou Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (NAGE)

- NAGE supported 2 events for Graduate Awareness put on by Dr. Philip Hicks. Twelve First Nation students attended this event while learning the importance of high level education in the Master's and PhD programs. Notably 2 Aboriginal students in the Master's program acted as ambassadors while encouraging 4th year students to plan for graduate programs.
- NAGE hosted a "Baby Mukluk Making Event" at the Aboriginal Student Lounge over a period of three days. Approximately 20 students (1 PhD student, 4 Master students, and 15 undergraduate students) were involved. Approximately, 4 Aboriginal students were first years and had never been to the Aboriginal student Lounge before. This event also attracted a few non-aboriginal students who were interested in learning about First Nation Culture.

Native Access Program (NAP)

- 20 NAP students (12 active, 3 withdrawals, 3 taking IL 1100 only, 2 no contact since Oct. 2011)
- Chronicle Journal on-line ad campaign ended Jan. 30/2012
- Guest speaker: previous NAP student

- Students participation in following: Research Shortcuts (Brent Kelso & Kim Bortolin), Note taking & Reading at University Level (Writing Assistance Centre), in class APA/plagiarism, Essay writing (Dr. Leisa Desmoulins), Strong Interest Inventory with results to be interpreted at the end of the month
- Promotion & recruitment (attending Pic Mobert & Couchiching Career Fairs this month)

Indigenous Knowledge and Public Education

Indigenous Knowledge Film/Speakers Series:

In partnership with the Department of Aboriginal Education on January 24th as the third and final *Indigenous Knowledge Film & Speaker Series* the film “Inuit Knowledge & Climate Change” was featured. The Film was produced by filmmakers Zacharias Kunuk and Dr. Ian Mauro who have partnered up with Inuit communities, such as Igloodik and Iqaluit to document their knowledge and experience regarding climate change. Approximately 75 students filled the Bora Laskin Theatre where the film was shown and concluding that students enjoyed guest speakers, Associate Professor, Dr. Paul Berger and Third year Indigenous Learning student Romani Makkik.

Aboriginal Research

Lakehead University Research and Innovation Week:

For the Lakehead University Research Innovation week, February 10-16th, an Aboriginal Research Day has been planned for February 13th to feature and showcase Aboriginal research. The day includes a celebration in the Agora and presentations on the following topics:

1. Dr. Harvey Lemelin: Wabush of the Omushkegog, “Cree-Polar Bear Interacting in Northern Ontario”.
2. Dr. Sandra Wolf and Dr. Chris Mushquash: What is “Indigenous” about the Indigenous Research Experience?
3. Zsolt Toth, RD, MPH, CDE: Cultural Food Beliefs and Attitudes and their Affects on Acceptance of the “Diabetes Diet”.
4. Dr. Sandra Wolf and students: The Fourth Fire: building Narratives on the Fur Trade Era.

See attached poster for more information about Aboriginal Research Day.

Matawa First Nations and Lakehead University members met to discuss research initiatives, needs and issues on January 31. Discussions will continue in early spring to further develop research plans and education programming. Matawa First Nations will be establishing advisory committees to oversee research, ethics and education programming in areas of health and environmental planning.

The Aboriginal Research Partnership Award for 2012 was awarded to Dr. M.A. (Peggy) Smith, Ms. Denise Golden, PhD student, their colleague from the Ontario Forest Research Institute, Dr. Steve Colombo and their Aboriginal partners, Grand Chief Stan Beardy, Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Ms. Carol Audet, Policy Advisor for the Office of the Grand Chief at NAN.

Respectfully submitted by:

Beverly Sabourin, Vice-Provost (Aboriginal Initiatives)