

Office of Aboriginal Initiatives Highlights: October 2012

Acting Vice-Provost (Aboriginal Initiatives), Yolanda Wanakamik

- Attended the Council of Ontario Universities Aboriginal Reference Group Meeting at University of Toronto.
- During the NOSM Research Rendezvous met with representatives from Flinders University in Australia.
- Collaborated with the Chair of Northern Studies and the Department of Aboriginal Education in organizing and welcoming a Saami and Mayan Language and Teacher Delegation to campus.
- Attended Orillia Preview Day and met various faculty and staff during the visit.
- Attended Senior Management Team Meeting.
- Participated and assisted the Kendaasiwin Building Steering Committee in setting up the first meeting and organized meetings of the various user groups.
- Participated in meetings on Community Engagement with Mr. Gerry Munt.
- Finalized the Aboriginal Initiatives brochure promotional material.

Aboriginal Recruitment/Outreach Activities, Joyce Waswa

Recruitment/APSIP

- Participated in Week 3 (Sault Ste Marie, Desbarats, Elliot Lake, Espanola and Manitoulin Island).

Outreach/Community Engagement

- Ordered new promotional material for outreach and recruitment activities.
- Collaboration and planning meetings in regard to the Achievement Program; finalized student and family orientation.
- Planned with Program Coordinators to attend Manito Ahbee in Winnipeg, MB.
- Met with a student in the Indigenous Learning class to discuss her project.
- Attended Admissions & Recruitment weekly meeting; Re: Aboriginal Preview Day.

Aboriginal Liaison Advisor (Orillia), April Jones

Recruitment/APSIP

- Participated in Weeks 4, 5 and 6 (Toronto/GTA, Eastern Ontario, Southern Georgian Bay)
- Week 4 (Toronto/GTA) Oct. 10 & 11 – low turnout at U of T education fair. Approx. 25 students attended
- Week 5 (Eastern Ontario) Oct. 15-19 – Great school visits this week. High student numbers at a majority of visits. Also went to some new schools/locations this year
- Week 6 (S. Georgian Bay) Oct. 22-26 – I coordinated and planned this week with help from Georgian College. Tried some new things for the events and had much success! Guidance counsellors are excited/happy with the experience that the APSIP crew can provide. Good turnout of students as well.

Aboriginal Cultural Teaching Series - the turnout is less than last year; number of community members is down, but number of students has increased!

- H. Neil Monague: Teaching and Healing through song and Hand Drumming = 13 people
- Gertie Beaucage: Women's Traditional Roles in the Clan System = 16 people
- Steve Beaupre: Residential Schools, Medicine Wheel and Life Cycle Wheel teachings = 13 people

Miscellaneous

- Elders in Residence Program - Gertie has seen two students. Hoping that with addition outreach and marketing to students, more will start to take advantage of the service.
- Participated in Preview Day, representing Aboriginal Initiatives/Support Services. Talked to quite a few prospective Aboriginal students.
- Participated in Orillia Town Hall with Gerry Munt – offering ideas for future plans and needs of Aboriginal students.

Aboriginal Cultural Support Services (AC-SS), Bryanna Scott

Métis Student Liaison Facilitator (Heather Cameron):

- Held a meet and greet on September 11th and approximately 6 students Métis students attended. We know that there are currently about 180 Métis students attending Lakehead.

Aboriginal Student Counsellor/Social Worker (Stephanie Ritch):

- A “Two-Spirited” History Workshop was held in the student lounge with assistance of Jake from Pride Central and Colin from AIDS Thunder Bay (13 students attended).
- Bryanna and Stephanie presented during Teaching and Learning week on Remote Aboriginal Students.
- 14 students attended sessions in the student lounge to assist them with applying for scholarships and bursaries.
- Stephanie held 47 individual counselling sessions with students.
- The interactive display for October was on Aboriginal women of Lakehead University and this showcased both faculty and staff.

General activities:

- ACSS has completed the Aboriginal Peer Mentor Handbook and hope to initiate this program in January.
- A sweat was conducted by Tina Armstrong for the students on October 3 and approximately 25 people attended. There is another sweat planned for November 26.
- On October 9th, the work on a quilting project began. Students, under the supervision of Ella Gagnon (community elder) began quilting a blanket of the Lakehead University mascot (Wolfie). Currently, 27 students are beading patches for the quilt and we are hoping others join in. It is expected that the quilt will be complete by the beginning of December.
- ACSS held a fall feast on October 10 and approximately 75 students attended and 3 Elders were available for conversations (guidance and support).
- During career week October 22, Shell, Hatch and Lynx used the student lounge to interview and speak with Aboriginal students regarding various careers.
- On October 31, a small Halloween gathering occurred in the student lounge and 4 groups of 4 students carved pumpkins. The winning team each received \$25 gift cards for Metro.

Aboriginal Research Facilitator, Annette Schroeter

- Engaged with the Office of Research Services team to contribute to and build Lakehead University’s Strategic and Operational plans.
- Organized meetings with Shibogama First Nations Council and faculty members from Business Administration and Education. They are currently exploring education and research needs for

their communities to prepare them to participate meaningfully in the upcoming economic growth expected in northern Ontario.

- Planning continues for Aboriginal Research Day during Research and Innovation Week 2013. Presentations will be given by John Hodson, Sarah Sinclair, PhD student and Chris Mushquash, and tentatively Denise Golden, PhD student and Peggy Smith. Working with the Aboriginal Education faculty to plan programming around language and material culture displays/presentations/workshops in the agora and possibly for the Intercity Mall.
- Promotion continues for the Aboriginal Partnership Research Award 2013. Nomination deadline is December 14, 2012.

Native Access Program, Suzanne Tardif

- Took students on a field trip to ethno botany tour at Fort William Historical Park.
- Reviewed student mid-term marks with each instructor of the program.
- Explored tutoring options for students.
- Had guest speakers in classroom (Anthropology, Arctic research, Writing Center)
- purchased promotional products
- Two students have officially withdrawn from the program.
- A third student is totally absent but has not withdrawn, despite receiving advice from the coordinator to withdraw.
- Commenced attending Kendaasiwin Building Steering Committee Meetings.

Nanabijou Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement Coordinator, Jessa Bear

- Spent time learning her new role and the mass email system.
- Meetings with the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Aboriginal and Cultural Support Services Coordinator, the Métis Student Liaison Facilitator, the Coordinator of the Native Access Program and various Graduate Coordinators have created a strong foundation for the student support network and future initiatives.
- Created presentations promoting graduate studies and presented in both the Honours Bachelor of Education Aboriginal program and the Native Access Program. By discussing graduate program options with the students early in their educational journeys she hopes to open a dialogue with the students about the attainment of their educational goals.
- A meet and greet event was held along with weekly office hours facilitated discussions has created a welcoming environment for students to ask questions and advice on graduate programs and supports. Ongoing statistics shows that between 3 and 5 students each week attended office hours.
- Databases were created based on the mass email system for the Aboriginal graduate students as well as the Aboriginal third and fourth year students.

Respectfully submitted by:

Yolanda Wanakamik, Acting Vice-Provost (Aboriginal Initiatives)