

**Report to the Ogimaawin-Aboriginal Governance Council
January 15, 2015 through April 13, 2015
Highlights from the Office of Aboriginal Initiatives**

Vice-Provost (AI) Administration

Aboriginal Initiatives submitted and defended its 2015-2016 budget reports before the Executive Committee and met all budget reduction requirements.

We are still waiting on the go ahead from the Minister of MTCU before we make an announcement regarding the MTCU/TIF grant. We have room to hire one more coordinator and would request O-AGC to please submit any recommendations and resumes for review.

We are drafting a proposal with Georgian College for an on the land summer camp close to Orillia, we will keep everyone posted on development and where we will be applying for funds.

We are waiting on a response to our proposal for a part-time coordinator to launch full-time tele-presence exchanges and to create a student exchange process for summer 2015 for the Mexican/Canadian Partnership.

We continue to utilize Work Study positions in the VP (AI) Office to work with CLAN and are working on the development of a Canadian Roots Exchange office and program here at Lakehead University. We had meetings with youth on January 17th and 18th and have one Practicum Student from Confederation College taking charge of this project. This student will continue to be responsible for building a strong foundation and guidelines for the Lakehead Canadian Roots Exchange Program, assisting with the coordination of the Lakehead Pow Wow and anything else of interest to their learning and practicum experience.

We are still waiting on the go ahead of the Minister of MTCU before we make any kind of announcement regarding the MTCU/TIF granted for 2014-2016. I am getting concerned the Ministry is pulling back their agreement to fund for no good reason, we have received little to no communication and although we have filed reports, they have not forwarded money as per the agreement since the first instalment.

MAGNET, http://www.ryerson.ca/news/news/General_Public/20140924-new-consortium-links-jobs-to-job-seekers.html is developing additional elements to the existing database that will link NW education and employment as well as provide us with strong metrics through a gap analysis for all Aboriginal students and participants in our database. We continue to employ work-study students to help with data gathering and office work. The VP (AI) will also have a practicum student from Confederation College in her office until the end of April.

We are in process of pulling together our end of year MTCU PEFAL Report.

Vice-Provost (AI) Academic

Academic Lectures:

On February 4th the VP (AI) taught a class at Lakehead University on Community Engagement, Mobilization and Assessment for Nursing Students

On January 30th the VP (AI) taught a class at Confederation College on Community Engagement for the Nursing Class.

In addition, Aboriginal Initiatives will continue to take responsibility for hosting and monitoring the Indigenous Knowledge (IK) 2016 lunch and learns, as well as any Indigenous issues lunch and learns across the university.

Public Presentations and Workshops by the VP (AI):

On February 16th the VP (AI) presented a workshop to the University Women's Club of Thunder Bay at the 55 Club on the Walk a Mile Film Series.

On February 11th the VP (AI) presented two 3-hour workshops to the Windigo Tribal Council members on Parental Engagement and Developing Curriculum at the Victoria Inn.

On February 5th and 6th the VP (AI) presented two workshops at the University of Manitoba on Decolonizing and Indigenizing the Academy – both sessions were well received. One was delivered to faculty, students and the public, with the special advisor to the President of the University attending. The other session was designed for the Deans and Chairs of Departments and a very good dialogue was generated between the presenters and the University community. If you are interested in viewing a video on the public workshop, please contact me and I will send you a link to the film.

AI is working together to poll students on “wise practices” in programming and find out what we can be doing more or less of so we can continue to plan and deliver the best possible supports and activities to all Aboriginal students, university mentors and friends of AI.

The VP (AI) attended a recruitment fair with the Outreach and Recruitment Officer, Anna Chief, Lisa Harris, AMP Coordinator and a Confederation College Recruiter at Pelican Falls High School.

The VP (AI) did a short presentation for the O-AGC on Decolonizing the University.

The VP (AI) continues to teach classes across campus on Indigenous matters when requested and will continue to offer classes on Indigenous Content Requirement (ICR) (2016), respond to the media, and to students as required.

Wesley-Esquimaux, C. (2015) “Traditional Aboriginal Medicine vs. Western Medicines” Native Nurses Entry Program, School of Nursing for Diana Driskell (Moses), March 16th

Wesley-Esquimaux, C. (2015) “Indigenizing the Academy” Research and Innovation Week, Lakehead University, March 10th

ICR (2016) for Lakehead Orillia on March 25th and Community Speakers Series for Lakehead Orillia in Midland, Ontario with Joe Norton, Kahnawake and Duke Peltier, Wikwemikong, Ontario

The VP (AI) and AI staff helped to host a visit from Dr. Ken and Andrea McKluskey from the University of Winnipeg.

Vice Provost, Community Engagement

Was honoured to “Swear In” new Chamber of Commerce Chairman, Joe Moses on January 28th at the Nor’Wester Hotel, Joe is the very first Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce Chair in Canada.

Aboriginal Initiatives received \$9,000.00 from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (MAA) to take youth from Thunder Bay to the Canadian Roots Annual Gathering at Children of the Earth High School in Winnipeg. The VP (AI) will be attending and taking two youth from Dennis Franklin Cromarty HS, three youth from our Native Access Program, one youth from Confederation College, one staff member, and three youth from local First Nation communities.

On February 11th the VP (AI) participated in a “Roast” for Grand Chief Stan Beardy at the Nor’Wester Hotel. The roast was meant to be in good fun, but there was fall-out from some of the more off-colour humour, and apologies from a few people are being sought. It was a good experience to better understand the sensitivities and expectations of local communities, and a reminder that some humour is unacceptable in this day and age.

On January 24th the VP (AI) helped to host a screening of the Survivors Rowe film, which has now been accepted for screening at “Hot Docs” in Toronto. The film will be screened in Thunder Bay for the public on May 9th at the Bora Laskin Theatre followed by a feast and sweat, and for all men in Thunder Bay who have experienced sexual abuse on May 10th. Two films will be screened, “Survivors Rowe and Chosen”, and will be followed by a session with Richard Wagamese on PTSD and will again be followed by a feast and sweat with Morris Shapwaykeesic at Ka-Na-Chi-Hih on Dease Street. On May 11th, we will again screen both films for Faculty and Grad students and for the public with a Q & A to follow and refreshments at the Bora Laskin.

On January 22nd the VP (AI) attended the unveiling of the Elders Quilt, lovely experience and a great idea for bringing people together.

The VP (AI) is working closely with CESME and Engineering to create new community engagement programming for students and First Nation community development.

The VP (AI) hosted a meeting with Jim Madder, President of Confederation College and Brenda Small on ways to work more closely together, and she will be following up with innovative ways to bring our educational institutions closer together over the next few years.

The VP (AI) has been invited to community engagement sessions through the University Women’s Association of Thunder Bay and Rotary on the Walk and Mile Films and Reconciliation. She was also invited to speak in Toronto for International Women’s Day.

The VP (AI) has attended to First Nations, Organizations and Universities across Canada to further the discussion on the Inclusion of Indigenous Content in Curriculum, Governance and Education, and Reconciliation in Canada.

In February 2015, the VP (AI) attended the first Metis Health Summit in Toronto, a fantastic event featuring cutting-edge health research and programming across Ontario.

In February, we began discussions on a Lakehead, Mink Lake, Quetico Park and Ministry partnership to run Aboriginal Leadership Programming for 6 weeks every summer. As of April we are reviewing an MOU and moving ahead to ensure this summer camp will go forward.

The VP (AI) attended the Inspire Awards at the end of February with an important Lakehead donor and it was a fruitful and appreciated gesture on behalf of our Administration.

The VP (AI) attended the Canadian Roots Exchange AGA in Winnipeg with the Access Instructor and we took one “on probation” youth, two Thunder Bay high school students, two Access Program students, two DFC high school students, two Confederation College students, and three Lakehead Aboriginal university students. There were 300 youth from across Canada in attendance.

The VP (AI) along with the City of Thunder Bay, Matawa and the Chief of Fort William First Nation were invited to participate in a conversation with Steve Paiken on TVO’s Agenda on March 8th, 2015.

The VP (AI) also responds regularly to requests from NAN, the Shibogama Education Council and other Indigenous organizations to teach and host engagement workshops, and we have received an invitation to Pikangikum’s first Career Fair in May, the VP (AI) will attend with the Access Coordinator and costs will be paid by the community.

The VP (AI) visited the North Bay Ontario to Moderate a Community Research Conference for the North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre. The VP (AI) also took along two youth, one from the Thunder Bay Access Centre and one from the Orillia area.

The Documentary “Survivors Rowe” was completed in April and will be screened at HotDocs on April 26th and screened in Thunder Bay at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery on May 9th.

Coordinator of Graduate & External Relations Administration (CGER)

Keegan Bielawski, a winter work-study student, joined Aboriginal Initiatives as office support. Keegan was a great addition to our staff and has concluded his contract as of March 31.

A graduate student engagement series was hosted with Student Success and Graduate Studies entitled, “Thinking of applying to grad school? Writing your Curriculum Vitae and Writing a Statement of Intent.” Aboriginal Initiatives led two of the three sessions in the telepresence room.

The CGER assisted in planning and attended the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law student recruitment luncheon on March 6. Approximately 20 current students and community members attended.

The Council of Ontario Universities’ (COU) strategic Aboriginal communications campaign committee identified the importance of students being able to see themselves within institutions. The goal of the COU, communication campaign is to share a promising practices guide and to build an Aboriginal student portal.

Attended events during Research & Innovation Week, Breakfast with Dr. Scott Kress, discussion on Listening, Learning & Walking Together with Dr. Naanah Jumah’s participated in an interactive day at the Mall with the Aboriginal Mentorship Program.

External Relations

Nishnawbe Aski Nation hosted the 2015 NAN Games on campus with more than 100 students in attendance from local to remote First Nations. Students participated in activities with athletes and coaches from the Lakehead Department of Athletics.

Leadership Thunder Bay is an innovative leadership program comprised of a 10-month curriculum based on community issues for emerging leaders. Community Action Project participants in partnership with Biwaasae'aa after School Program engaged our office to develop a career fair highlighting successful Aboriginal leaders in Thunder Bay. The event will take place May 1, 2015. The target age group is grade 4-8.

CBC radio interview on Indigenous Knowledge (IK) 2016.

Ministry of Education, Field Team Lead for the Thunder Bay Region met to discuss potential intersections, partnership and collaboration on present and future initiatives. Subsequent meetings have occurred and Aboriginal Initiatives will present to various stakeholders.

Attended Diversity Thunder Bay Breakfast with VP (AI), External and Alumni Relations and several students. The keynote speaker was Gabrielle Scrimshaw, an inspiring young professional with a passion to create social impact, and member of the Hatchet Lake First Nation.

Attended the City of Thunder Bay, Walk-A-Mile Film project announcement. The government provided \$150,000 in funding to the City of Thunder Bay to translate and distribute the film to Ontario schools and libraries across the province.

Attended the 11th Annual Youth Achievement Awards dinner with AI, ACSS colleagues and guests from the University of Winnipeg's Dr. Ken and Andrea McCluskey.

Invited by *Canada 300* to attend a national conversation. Through innovative use of arts and technology, several community members were engaged in an evolving dialogue – both in-person and virtual – envisioning the nation's next 150 years in preparation for the sesquicentennial of confederation. Nine plays in two languages, in twenty communities, with one hundred and fifty community builders sharing the experience and answering questions like, "what are your hopes and dreams for Canada?" and "What do you imagine Canada to look like in another 150 years?" Elliot Doxtater-Wynn will go to PEI in September to report Thunder Bay conversation.

The Ontario Native Women's Association, the new Thunder Bay Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) sponsoring agency, is doing preliminary work to guide the development of a UAS Community Plan in 2015-16, and using a holistic approach focusing on community partnership, research and knowledge sharing. Attended initial meeting with approximately 20 other agencies.

Community Committees

Attended and participated in First Nation, Metis, Inuit Research Project meeting hosted by Lakehead Public Schools. Lakehead Public Schools is exploring a research partnership with Ministry of Education Math Coach, Danielle Blair, and Math Education researcher, Dr. Ruth Beatty of Lakehead University. The research is focused on collaborating with the First Nations

community about mathematics. The researchers have been engaged in this work, Connecting Anishnaabe & Western Ways of Knowing Mathematics, with two First Nations communities & the Kenora Catholic & Refreedom County Boards for a couple of years. This year they extended the project to work with a school & community in Moose Factory.

Thunder Bay Anti-Racism Committee is currently working on an annual work plan. The Public Education sub-committee is working to bring Becky Kuffner, Race Relations and Cultural Diversity Coordinator for the City of Saskatoon. Becky has been employed with the City of Saskatoon Community Development Branch as the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Consultant since 2008. Becky holds a Master's Degree in Public Education from the University of Saskatchewan and prior to her work with the City of Saskatoon; she worked as a policy analyst with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Quebec. She also worked for the provincial government for 9 years as an employment consultant working on Aboriginal labour force development.

Attended Leadership Thunder Bay and Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program (ALYP) meeting. This Aboriginal youth leadership program is focused on leadership within the model developed by Leadership Thunder Bay and incorporating the Seven Grandfather teachings.

Met with Leadership Thunder Bay, Community Action Project team to discuss possible opportunities to collaborate on bringing afterschool program, Bi'Wasaa to Lakehead University to meet Aboriginal role models and interact on campus with various faculty, staff and students. Thunder Bay Anti-Racism Public Education & Advocacy Working group met on February 19 to plan the upcoming community session with Specialist Becky Sasakamoose Kuffner, Cultural Diversity & Race Relations Consultant from the City of Saskatoon. Becky will be presenting "Best practices and community engagement session on April 21, 2015.

By invitation from Anishinabek Employment and Training, attended the Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program (ALYP) committee meeting. ALYP is a youth leadership program connecting students to culture and leadership skills over the course of several weekends.

The National Aboriginal Day committee met to discuss ongoing planning. This year Fort William First Nation will host a Pow-Wow, June 20-21 and we at Lakehead University will host an educational day June 22, 2015.

Graduate Relations

Hosted *Graduate Student Gathering* with Dr. Laura Buker and Dr. Michelle-Marie Spadoni. The event was hosted at the Baggage Building Arts Centre with 10 students in attendance. The purpose of the gathering was to begin dialogue on how we can assist students in a meaningful experience on campus. Future session planned for late April, early May.

Youth Engagement & Team Achieve

Team Achieve parents and students requested a meeting regarding the establishment of an after school running club in partnership with the Biwaasae'aa After School Program. The after school program does not have capacity at this time to facilitate a program. Athletics was able to share with a family running plan for youth.

The Aboriginal Sports Wellness Council of Ontario, Lakehead Athletics and Aboriginal Initiatives will host a summer youth camp at Lakehead, July 13-17th for children in grades 4-8 for a second year. The camp will have a variety of athletic, educational and cultural programming geared to various age groups.

Team Achieve Day on Campus had 27 students with 5 family members participate in academic programming with Engineering, team-building sports with Athletics, and cultural programming with Aboriginal Initiatives.

Aboriginal Cultural & Support Services

Prospective Students

ACSS attended the *Matawa Education Conference* on March 10 -12 at the Valhalla Inn and 92 conference attendees stopped by the information booth to learn about ACSS student services and programs such as the Native Access Program.

ACSS attended the GTL: Go to Lakehead event held on February 20th for grade 11 students.

Academic

ACSS continues to coordinate and recruit various students in different programs and levels as peer tutors. Peer tutors have been assigned to the Native Access Program study hall, the Native Nurses Entry Program, and to various individual students who have come forward requesting the additional academic support. This is an ongoing initiative with greater demands made on resources during exam dates.

The Aboriginal Transitions Advisor has continued to host LU's Toastmasters Club, Storytellers and is offering a four-session course on Speechcraft. This initiative focusses on becoming a confident, competent public speaker. To date, there are 16 people registered for these sessions, which start on March 13th.

Personal Support (Orientation, Academic, Financial, Social, Transitions, Mental Health)

ACSS has continued to promote and assist students with Indspire bursary applications. The deadline for applications this year had been extended twice.

On February 27th, ACSS staff participated in the Native Access Program – Undergrad Exploration Day and gave a presentation to students on the value and importance of maintaining connections with ACSS as they continue on their academic journey.

The support group with Taslim Alani, PhD student has now been re-adapted into a set of sessions with the Independent Mother's Sharing Circle in an effort to still remain in a supportive, comfortable environment while addressing healthy relationship habits and positive self-care for all students who initially joined the support group. The Independent Mother's Sharing Circle was held on March 11th.

On March 19th and April 2nd, the Aboriginal Transitions Advisor attended and co-facilitated the Speechcraft program held on campus through Toastmasters International, meeting once a week for four weeks. The program wrapped with 10 participants receiving a certificate of completion on the final meeting and on March 31st, conducted the last Toastmasters meeting of the year on

campus. The Aboriginal Transitions Advisor will be switching to the role of VP Education for the next academic year in the Storytellers Club, as a president cannot serve two consecutive years.

On March 25th, the Transitions Advisor coordinated and facilitated an event in the Agora titled “Community Controllers” with VP Student Advocacy Matt Quick to address the use of oppressive language found on campus and in the community. In partnership with the Gender Issues Centre and Pride Central, several video game stations were set-up and students who engaged the games were then brought into a dialogue about language use, afterwards being given the chance to make the pledge to be more mindful about language use that is harmful and/or oppressive.

On March 25th, ACSS hosted a movie matinee to mark World Water Week. The film “Water Everywhere...but not a drop to drink” was shown in the Aboriginal Student Lounge. Refreshments were available and 19 students attended.

On April 2nd, the Aboriginal Transitions Advisor coordinated and facilitated a visit from the St. John’s Ambulance Therapy Dog Program in Bartley Residence, in partnership with David Hare, Director of Residence and Conference Services. Approximately 97 visitors came to visit the dogs.

On April 13th, ACSS will acknowledge the time and effort made by peer tutors, throughout the academic year, as part of its student retention initiatives. A total of 10 peer tutors have been working part-time for ACSS with various students across different programs but particularly with NAP and NNEP students.

Cultural Support

Elder-in-Residence Gerry Martin was available for student visits on February 4th, 11th, 25th and March 4th, 11th. During these days, a total of 24 students dropped by for personal counselling or traditional teachings. Elder Ella Gagnon has continued to host beading circles with students and in February and March she had 12 students spend time with her and work on various beading projects.

Our monthly *Mijjim Noongom* was held on February 26th with 35 students in attendance.

On February 25th, Elder Gene Nowegejick held a *sweat lodge ceremony* and a total of 15 participants attended the ceremony and received traditional teachings on the sweat lodge, traditional protocol, Aboriginal philosophy, etc. Students and their professor from a Therapeutic Recreation class in the Outdoor Recreation Program were in attendance.

ACSS has continued with the coordination of a series of women’s hand drum teachings. Elder Beatrice Twance-Hynes gave traditional teachings to 15 students on February 27th and held an awakening ceremony for all of the hand drums that were made. This series of teachings culminated with students singing and drumming on March 2nd in the Agora for the unveiling of the Faceless Dolls Project coordinated by the Aboriginal Awareness Centre as the kick-off for Aboriginal Awareness Week.

ACSS is assisting the Lakehead University Native Student Association (LUNSA) to coordinate their upcoming *annual powwow* scheduled for March 20 – 22, 2015 at the L.U. Fieldhouse.

On March 13th the Aboriginal Transitions Advisor hosted a *Culture Sharing Day* in conjunction with Lakehead International in the Aboriginal Student Lounge. This event created a juncture for

International and Aboriginal students to share knowledge of their culture with one another and build positive relationships.

Elder-in-Residence Gerry Martin was available for student visits on April 1st and 8th. During these days, a total of 7 students dropped by for personal counselling or traditional teachings. On March 19th and April 10th, Elder Beatrice Twance-Hynes was available for student visits. Elder Ella Gagnon has continued to host beading circles with students and came in on March 17th, 24th, and 31st and spent time with 10 students working on various beading projects.

Our monthly *Mijjim Noongom* was held on March 18th and our yearly spring feast will be held on April 10th.

On March 25th, Elder Gene Nowegejick held a *sweat lodge ceremony* and a total of 11 participants attended the ceremony. Our final sweat lodge ceremony of the year will be held on April 10th.

ACSS has continued with the coordination of women's hand drum teachings, sharing circles, and drum practices. Elder Beatrice Twance-Hynes attended two sessions with students on March 26th and March 31st.

ACSS hosted an *Elders Round Table*; an initiative by Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, Vice Provost, Aboriginal Initiatives. An Elders Storytelling session was held on Friday, March 20th in the Faculty Lounge from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Students were asked to bring their siblings, cousins, family members aged 8-16 to the university to spend some time with Elders, listening to their stories or legends, while making a craft. A total of 24 students and children were in attendance and everyone enjoyed their time together.

ACSS, in addition to helping carry out final preparations, participated at the Lakehead University Native Student Association (LUNSA) Powwow with an information table. The powwow was held on March 20 – 22, 2015 at the L.U. Fieldhouse and a total of 165 individuals stopped by the table for information on programs and services.

Other

On March 9th, ACSS hosted two tours with the staff from the Chancellor Paterson Library. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet the staff and to have them learn about our student services.

The ACSS Coordinator and the Native Access Program Coordinator attended the *Matawa First Nations 2015 Education Conference* on March 10th to 12th at the Valhalla Inn as conference presenters. Our presentation consisted of the following: Presentation on Aboriginal cultural and support services for students at Lakehead University, including a website tour. Brief presentation on the Ontario Native Education Counsellors Association (ONECA) and the benefits of becoming a member and information on upcoming conference as well as a presentation on the Native Access Program. We also presented a workshop entitled, *Medicine Wheel Journey*. In this workshop, participants were provided a moment in the 'now' to take stock of where they've been and the lessons learned, and adjust their work for where they want to go, personally and professionally. The focus was on creating their own medicine wheel, their guide for staying on track to discovering and fulfilling their life's purpose and goals. Attendees were taken on a journey to self-awareness and explored what's in their backpacks. Matawa's education conference is held annually and is hosted by Matawa Education. This year's conference theme, *Sharing Our Strengths* focussed on providing information and support to

principals, educators, and staff of Matawa's nine First Nation communities. A closing keynote address was given by Joseph Boyden. An information table was set up to promote Aboriginal Cultural & Support Services, Aboriginal programs and Lakehead University overall. As mentioned, we made connections with a total of 92 participants who stopped by our table to ask questions and receive information.

The ACSS Coordinator continues to meet with Native Access Program students during their monthly NAP student check-ins. The monthly student check-ins are designed to build connections within the Lakehead University community; to promote familiarization with the program, university regulations and student support services; and to provide direction and guidance to students while working to ensure student success and retention. Regular meetings are held with the NAP Coordinator to discuss student progress and any concerns that might be raised during the student check-ins.

The ACSS Coordinator continues to attend regular meetings of Student Affairs, the O-AGC Advisors Committee and the O-AGC as permitted. ACSS continues to host First Nation post-secondary student counsellor visits as needed.

ACSS is in the process of coordinating and organizing an *Elders Round Table*; an initiative by Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, Vice Provost, Aboriginal Initiatives. An Elders Storytelling session is being held on Friday, March 20th in the Faculty Lounge from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Students have been asked to bring their siblings, cousins, family members aged 8-16 to the university for a brief tour and to spend some time with Elders, listening to their stories or legends, while making a craft.

The Aboriginal Transitions Advisor attended the *Walking in Two Worlds Conference* in Toronto, hosted by Centennial College. Conference topics included: providing a place for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educators, students and community organizations to engage with issues around teaching and learning that impacts Aboriginal student success; promoting dialogue and exchange of knowledge, experience, and practice around teaching and learning in post-secondary education; a forum to building sustainable networks that will support the success of Aboriginal students in post-secondary education.

The Aboriginal Transitions Advisor attended *International Mother Language Day* on February 23rd. This event was hosted by LUSU and the Multicultural Centre. On February 25th a partnership with the Gender Issues Centre and Pride Central resulted in the coordination and facilitation of *VDay* in the Agora in support of the Vagina Monologues and raising awareness of violence against women. The event included a variety of programs and services both on and off campus that women can access. The Aboriginal Transitions Advisor also facilitated the NAP class on March 6th. Classroom discussions focused on student considerations for the summer and steps to preparing for their next academic year. A talking circle also focused on what students wished they had known coming into NAP and what knowledge they've gained that they will apply next year.

On March 10th, the Aboriginal Transitions Advisor attended the *youthREX Research Presentation* in the Agora. YouthREX was formed as part of Ontario's Youth Action Plan to create research and evaluation practices that are accessible and relevant for Ontario youth. The event allowed participants to learn more about resources provided throughout Northwestern Ontario.

The ACSS Coordinator also participated in the first of many NAP Applicant interviews to be held throughout the next several months on March 17th and on March 27th, ACSS assisted NAP students with the on-line registration process for Undergrad studies.

ACSS attended a First Nations Suicide Prevention Training Workshop on March 24th hosted by Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Specialized Solvent Abuse Treatment Centre. The theme of the workshop was, Your Life is Sacred. The training provided attendees with some of the tools needed to prevent suicide and suicidal behaviour among First Nation and Inuit youth and further allowed attendees to build on the tools provided of offer culturally appropriate, community based presentations on suicide prevention.

ACSS attended a Brown Bag Lunch entitled “ADHD: Disorder or Gift?” on April 8th. The presentation highlighted many of the problems and challenges faced by families with children who are diagnosed with ADHD.

ACSS attended the Northwestern Ontario Aboriginal Youth Achievement & Recognition Awards 2015 dinner and gala on April 8th. This yearly event celebrates the talents and accomplishments of Aboriginal youth and community members.

On March 27th, the Aboriginal Transitions Advisor attended a dialogue on the rights of sex workers at the Gender Issues Centre and on April 7th, attended a discussion group on male ally ship and sexual violence in the Gender Issues Centre. On April 9th, the Aboriginal Transitions Advisor attended the “Introduction to Recovery Approach to Mental Health” hosted by Canadian Mental Health Association and will also attend the “Feminisms” Conference hosted by the Gender Issues Centre on campus on April 10th.

Aboriginal Student Recruitment

Aboriginal Post Secondary Information Program

APSIP Subcommittees

The AOR is participating on two subcommittees:

- Communications
- APSIP Program Coordinator Position subcommittee

Canadian SEM on Indigenous Student Success 2015

AOR to attend present at the SEM Summit 2015

AOR has been directed by VP AI to present on Best Practices for Aboriginal undergraduate recruitment

Topics being presented are as follows:

Learning from Each Other Part A: Indigenous Student Success Best Practices
Learning from Each Other Part B: Building SEM Plans with Indigenous Perspectives
Building Relationships for Seven Generations: Recruitment & Community Engagement
Creating Culturally-Respectful Administrative Policies: Admissions, Data, & Research
Smoke Signals: Indigenous-focused Marketing & Communications
Indigenizing/Decolonizing the Academy – What are we doing & what does it mean?

Pelican Falls Career Fair and prospective graduate session

AOR, Cynthia Wesley Esquimaux and Lisa Harris of AMP attended the 2015 Pelican Falls Career Fair. The Lakehead University table was one of almost 40 booths. Attending were 3 schools from the surrounding area with over 200 students grades 8 to 12.

In the afternoon we met with 12 potential 2015 graduates to present on PS education pathways. AMP did a hands on activity and spoke about PS as well as Science related programs and career opportunities.

Walking in Two Worlds Conference

Aboriginal Student Success

Sessions attended:

- 1) Re-directing the Lens: Examining best practices in Aboriginal learning among Ontario's Northern colleges
- 2) "Walking Together" Supporting Aboriginal Students through shared knowledge/reconciliation and building a shared community
- 3) Creating Vision in Two Worlds

NAP Undergraduate Exploration Day 2015

AOR attended and supported the day.

Toastmasters Speak Craft Course

AOR working with Aboriginal Transitions Advisor to coordinate a four-week Speechcraft Certificate program to begin Friday, March 13. These sessions will be run by a Senior TM and will allow participants to work on their public speaking skills. Upon their completion certificates will be awarded.

16 participants consisting of faculty/staff and students

Toastmasters Youth Leadership

Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School

The Toastmasters Youth Leadership program was delivered in partnership between Lakehead and Toastmasters to 20 students consisting of the Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneur Program as well as English classes.

DFC Principal was pleased with the program and asked if it could be delivered annually to future graduates.

Prospective students

AOR continues to meet and communicate with prospective students. There has been a steady stream of students requiring assistance with course changes, tutoring and advising request. There has also been a steady demand for assistance with applications and new students requiring assistance with navigating the application process.

Grade 10-12 Aboriginal Preview Day 2015

AOR is in now working on the early planning stages of this year's Aboriginal Preview day on campus.

Committees

2015 LUNSA Pow Wow Committee

Aramark food order for non-traditional food
Traditional food delivery and pick up
Give away

AOR will be working this year with Helen Pelletier of ACC and Yolanda Twance ACSS Coordinator for the honorarium payout as per request of LUSA

2015 AYARA

Committee member
AOR was able to secure Allan Dickson Photographer for the event as an in-kind sponsor
Committee meeting in the week of March 16 to 21 to screen nominees and select recipients

2015 National Aboriginal Day

Giveaway Coordination

First Nation Post Secondary Education meeting

AOR continues to attend meetings and support this year's committee.
Will discuss further with VP AI the capacity for support for 2015 event

AI Aboriginal View Book

Final edits have been submitted to Generator for the AI new Aboriginal View book for the 2015/2016.

Academic requirements, Faculties and program information will be added upon completion of mainstream view book

Other

Matawa Education Conference 2015

AOR attended the conference with information booth for 3 days.
Conference was geared to educators and student supports.

NAN Games

AI sponsored the NAN Games participant lunch on February 19th 2015. AOR spoke to 60 of the participants about post secondary opportunities and Lakehead specific programs

CLAN Database

AOR was also present for a meeting with Kevin Vuong of Magnet, a network technology platform that connects job seekers and employers based on skills and needs. This network's goal is to address unemployment and underemployment, specifically as it relates to youth and individuals facing barriers to employment.

There was discussion about how we could adapt the present platform being used by Magnet to CLAN and how this could serve a dual purpose.

The network has many applications that could be used by AOR and other AI employees to assist with student data.

Native Access Program/University Prep Program UPP

External Relations

Jerri-Lynn wrote an article for the Anti-Racism committee for the One City, Many Voices column.

Jerri-Lynn attended the NAN Career with Ms. Yolanda Twance, ACSS Coordinator held at the Victoria Inn. She spoke to many students about NAP/UPP and the resources and supports available to empower them through their first year of university.

Jerri-Lynn attended the *Walking in Two Worlds* conference hosted by Centennial College in Toronto, with Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, Victoria Bolduc and Anna Chief. She learned more on how to support Aboriginal Student success, for example: How to engage in ways that impact student success, to share and exchange knowledge with other educators who are teaching and empowering student in post-secondary education.

Jerri-Lynn attended and presented at the Matawa Education Conference alongside Ms. Yolanda Twance, ACSS Coordinator, on the Medicine Wheel Journey (a journey towards self-awareness), and NAP/UPP and assisted Yolanda as she presented on ACSS and ONECA.

Jerri-Lynn attended the Canadian Roots Exchange National Youth Forum "Bridging the Gap." She was proud to be a part of such an amazing youth leadership forum. She was inspired by all the amazing things youth across Canada are doing and it was a truly great experience!

Jerri-Lynn finished her second class for her master's on April 1st, and during this time announce the On Course Workshop to help spread the word. She will be starting her third class in May.

Jerri-Lynn attended the Suicide Prevention Training hosted by Ka-Na-Chi-Hih on March 24th at the Airline Hotel and Conference Centre.

Internal Relations

Jerri-Lynn is part of the O-AGC Ad Hoc committee, looking at Indigenous programs with in Lakehead University. She is currently working with Yolanda T., ACSS Coordinator to look into the history of our programs.

Jerri-Lynn met with Dr. Karen Poole, Director School of Nursing, to discuss the possibility of combining some the NAP/UPP/NNEP courses together. The courses discussed were: University Transition, English, and possibly Math. Many possibilities of how to move NAP/UPP/NNEP could move forward together were discussed. A follow up meeting is planned between Dr. Karen Poole, Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, VP (AI) and Jerri-Lynn to come up with a clearer plan for the 2016-2016 academic years.

Jerri-Lynn has also been working with the Web Development team to create an online registration form and information page for the *On Course Workshop I*, which the Office of Aboriginal Initiatives will be hosting in May 2015. This will be much easier to navigate than having many paper applications and money to keep track of. Ms. Anna Chief, AOR was able to connect Jerri-Lynn with Web Development in order for this to be done. Jerri-Lynn is hopeful the online registration will go live early next week.

Jerri-Lynn attended the O-AGC Working Group Ad-Hoc committee, and worked with Ms. Yolanda Twance on gathering information on the history of the Aboriginal Initiatives at Lakehead University.

Jerri-Lynn met with Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, VP (AI) and Dr. Karen Poole, Director of the School of Nursing to discuss combining the University Transitions, Math and English courses for the upcoming academic year.

Jerri-Lynn met with Dr. Rob Robson, Ms. Susan Girardin, Mr. John Kimball and Ms. Rebecca Menhart, NAP/UPP instructors for the second last instructor's meeting of the year. Again, attendance was brought up as an issue and late assignments being handed in. Jerri-Lynn is working hard to meet with students to discuss what is preventing them from being here and handing work in.

Attended the AI Staff meeting held on March 2nd.

Jerri-Lynn was a part of a Library Tour arranged between Trudy Russo, Collections Development/Reference Librarian, and Ms. Yolanda Twance, ACSS Coordinator to present on NAP/UPP.

Attended the Annual LUNSA Pow Wow on March 22nd and worked at the ACSS table to promote programming and services.

Jerri-Lynn attended the Elder's Storytelling roundtable with her children. It was a great, engaging event, and they had a great time!

Jerri-Lynn attended the talk held in The Study on April 2 called *Disappearing Indians: Dehumanization & Indigenous Deaths in Custody*. It was a very informative and eye opening lecture.

Jerri-Lynn attended the talks held by Dr. Ken and Andrea McCluskey called *ADHD: Disorder or Gift* and *Lost Prizes: Recognizing and Nurturing the Talent of At-Risk Students*. She also attended lunch with them and the staff of Aboriginal Initiatives.

Students

The General Science 0261 class went out on their second field trip of the year to attend the astronomy program. This program coincided well with what the NAP/UPP students are currently studying in the course. It was a great way to also build community within the program, as well as be involved in experiential learning.

Jerri-Lynn gave extended deadlines for first term English work, so students have the opportunity to get their marks changed. Some students are very stressed about this but she is doing her best to make sure that all students have the opportunity to do the work to pass. Jerri-Lynn has talked to Ms. Rebecca Menhart, the new English instructor on how to move forward and mark these assignments. Jerri-Lynn would also like to move forward with advocating for those

students who received a D or F mark on their transcripts from English 1011 FA, but who have decided not to continue on in NAP/UPP this year. She believes that the seven who left NAP/UPP so far should have the same opportunity to begin again also.

Students have completed their second major paper for Indigenous Learning (IL) 1100. It was a learning experience for all of them. Jerri-Lynn invited Ms. Anthea Kyle, Student Success Advisor to the University Transitions class to do two workshops on the writing of the IL paper, as well as a peer review exercise. They were great workshops that empowered students to do well on their papers. Jerri-Lynn also met with some NAP/UPP students to assist with editing papers and help with formatting.

Jerri-Lynn is working hard in the University Transitions course to make sure NAP/UPP students have the necessary skills and abilities to take with them to be a successful student as they move on from NAP/UPP. In some instances, the *On Course* textbook is working wonders in creating responsible and eager learners. One thing Jerri-Lynn has been able to identify for the NAP/UPP students success is some students are having a difficult time dealing with personal issues. Through her research, she has found evidence that students drop out emotionally before they drop out physically. She is doing her best job in trying to connect students with the right resources when necessary to empower them to be successful.

Currently, NAP/UPP has received five completed applications for the 2015-2016 academic years. Jerri-Lynn has had many inquires about the program, with many of them asking for assistance with the application process. Looks like it may be another big cohort for NAP/UPP for next academic year!

The second annual Undergraduate Exploration Day was held on Friday February 27th. We had a great show of support from faculty who were happy to share about their programs to the NAP/UPP students. Fifteen academic departments attended, which were selected by the NAP/UPP students. Ms. Yolanda Wanakamik, Graduate & External Relations brought greeting from The Office of Aboriginal Initiatives and Ms. Yolanda Twance, ACSS Coordinator and Ms. Victoria Bolduc, Aboriginal Transitions Advisor presented on how they will be able to empower students to be successful as they begin their first year of undergrad. It was a great day brought together by the whole staff of The Office of Aboriginal Initiatives!

Jerri-Lynn has been attending the Indigenous Learning Group Presentations when she can to encourage and show support to the NAP/UPP students. She is very proud of what they produced and was happy to be there to see their hard work.

NAP/UPP held the first round of interviews for the 2015-2016 academic years. Yolanda Twance, ACSS Coordinator and Derek Lawrence, Office of Admission along with Jerri-Lynn were present to interview the potential students. One student was given an offer of admission and the other was given a conditional offer upon completion of her OSSD. There are currently 11 applicants. The next round of interviews will be held end of April or beginning of May.

Jerri-Lynn attended the last two Indigenous Learning presentation of the year to support the work the NAP/UPP students did in the class.

Jerri-Lynn held a make up date on March 19 for a make up quiz for those students who missed to give them a chance to improve their final marks.

Jerri-Lynn and the NAP/UPP instructors held their final meeting of the academic year. Some students still have work to get in and each instructor has been working with students to be

successful. Without final marks yet, it looks like 20 students will pass NAP and most will be going on to an undergraduate program here at Lakehead.

We held our annual potluck and registration event on March 27th with the support of Yolanda Twance and Victoria Bolduc, ACSS and Jerri-Lynn to help students register for their undergraduate program and apply for student bursaries.

The General Science 0261 class did research posters, which were presented in the Agora on March 26. It was a great event for NAP/UPP students to showcase their hard work and answer questions about their research topics.

NAP/UPP students are now studying and getting ready for their final exams. Final marks will be submitted to the registrar's office on April 29.

Administration

The second instructor's meeting of the academic year was held on Jan. 29. The issue of attendance was brought up. Many students have been missing classes, as well as coming into class late. To try to empower and re-motivate students all instructors and coordinator thought that it would be a good idea to meet with all the NAP/UPP students as a group. Jerri-Lynn sent an email to students stating that this was a mandatory class and that all students were to attend (22 out of 27 were present). We believed in this idea, as we wanted to show the students that we are united, that we all care about their success, and that we are here to support them as they journey through university. We reminded them of all the other wonderful supports that are available to them too. We bought some snacks and coffee, and one student baked muffins. This was also a really great opportunity to continue building community within the program.

Jerri-Lynn prepared progress reports to be sent to those funders who requested updated student marks and attendance.

Jerri-Lynn worked on progress reports to be sent to the funders.

Jerri-Lynn is preparing for the NAP Year End Gathering, a time to celebrate NAP/UPP student's accomplishments and to wish them well as they move on towards their undergraduate degree.

Jerri-Lynn continues to work on the On Course Workshop I registration as well as keeping in contact with the workshop facilitator's to make sure everything will run smoothly. So far registration is open for CLAN members only, and will then extend further after March 20th.

Jerri-Lynn is having the first round of NAP/UPP interviews on March 17th. So far, there are seven applicants for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Registration for On Course is coming along and it has been opened up to the larger community, with 23 people currently registered to attend. Jerri-Lynn has been chatting with Yolanda Wanakamik, Graduate and External Relations, to start presenting On Course to others outside the Lakehead.

Jerri-Lynn met with Sheila Pelletier-Demerah to start the planning of the NAP Year End Gathering, which will be held on Monday April 13 to recognize the NAP/UPP students' hard work.

Jerri-Lynn met with the VP (AI), the Deputy Provost and two deans regarding the upgrading and proposed changes to the Native Access Program, so far everything has been deemed doable and we are moving forward with plans to expand the program in several categories.

Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, Ph.D.
Vice-Provost (Aboriginal Initiatives)
April 13, 2015