

ORILLIA CAMPUS REPORT – JANUARY, 2014

ABORIGINAL PROGRAMMING

The Aboriginal Speakers Series has concluded with Dr. Darrel Manitowabi, Laurentian University presenting his thesis, findings and realizations while working in conjunction with the Rama First Nation. Like most of the sessions his lecture touched upon native history and culture, a little native storytelling, more particularly cultural heroes, past feeling towards the Mohawk and stories related to the thunderbird, water serpents and other animals.

This series was filled with history & cultural themes throughout and met with warm reception and commentsit was popular for some professors who were able to use the series for class grading schemes and one professor even added a guest speaker's book to her reading list.

Vice-Provost, Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux made an appearance as part of a meet & greet initiative.

Current plans for an actual Mid-Winter Storytelling/Short Films Night are now underway and being planned for the New Year. As well, guest lecturers have been lined up to present topics such as Aboriginal Policy for the Political Science course on Canadian Government, an Idle No More Teach In, a presentation on the meaning and purpose of wampum belts, powwows & etiquette for the beginner and of course more Elders Workshops.

Work Shops with the Elder-in-Residence have taken place w/more scheduled into the New Year. Some students have requested different Elders be brought in as scheduling conflicts has meant cancellation of some dates and the need to reschedule.

Students have been informed of the open Rama Social Nights that have started in November and will continue each first Friday of the month into the New Year. Also programming associated with the local Aboriginal organizations is constantly forwarded to students as a source of off campus events.

The Enaatig Healing Lodge has been contacted and their resident Elder/Advisor has offered to do sweats for any of our students who are willing to come out and help set up pre-sweat. Since they advertise when they are going to hold their sweats, students have been given their web site and phone number to stay in contact.

I.e. some of our students and staff partook in the recent Round Dance held out at the Enaatig Healing Lodge.

The Web Site for the Friends of the Indigenous Club is being utilized to stay in contact with one another, for campus news & events, scholarships, and culture and links to Aboriginal Web Sites. Further learning Basic Ojibwe utilizing YouTube has also been added as a source of curiosity & learning. One student is using the club for a Community Service Learning grade in Political Science.

Students have planned to attend the Annual Trent University Elders Gathering being held February 1, 2014 in Peterborough. Students have shown interest in attending the Georgian College Powwow in the spring, hence the powwow etiquette session being planned as part of the Aboriginal Speakers Series. Note there is a potential for our students to serve as volunteers for this powwow.

Dr. Chantelle Richmond, from Western University has been contacted about receiving the free DVD, **Gifts From The Elders** which can be shown as part of a Native Film Night/Friends of the Indigenous Club event.

The budget has been revisited/reviewed regarding expenditures to date and plans for the upcoming winter session, including Part II of the Aboriginal Speakers Series, Storytelling, Aboriginal Short Films, student meet and greets ... crafts, workshops & potential guest speakers. Furthermore, Aboriginal Liaison is hoping additional student attendance and promotion will take place with the introduction of door prizes and pizza before each session begins.

RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH

The three local High Schools were contacted and visited to obtain actual numbers of Aboriginal students enrolled at each of their respective institutions. Return visits are planned with the Guidance Counsellors & Native Studies Programs with each school. Power point presentations for the classrooms have been designed regarding Lakehead Programs & associated Aboriginal content.

As this is potentially a big undertaking, Aboriginal Liaison will request the help from one of the full time recruiters with the presentations. Twin Lakes Secondary has requested the assistance of the Aboriginal Liaison with setting up for their Aboriginal Days slated for March 31 – April 4th 2014.

Current numbers indicate there is approximately 150 Aboriginal students within Orillia's 3 High Schools alone ...hence a need to focus on this future pool of recruits.

As for recruitment to the First Nations, it was decided that a catchment area be instituted within a 1 – 1.5 radius of the Orillia campus, meaning the 6 First Nations associated with the local Tribal Council would be a priority along with the Wahta

Mohawk First Nation who is non-affiliated. Hence the attempt to secure Aboriginal student numbers locally but with contact and information sharing to all Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe, Scugog & Rice Lake First Nations.

Contact with Aboriginal organizations & First Nations will be re-established throughout the new year and information updates will be forthcoming.

As for current Lakehead students, they have been sporadic with their visits to the Aboriginal Liaison office which hopefully is a good sign that they are doing well and keeping their marks up. Two students are moving on ... 1 for course completion and the other for withdrawal from courses.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Meetings are planned with the local High School Native Studies classes to do a power point presentations about Lakehead University ... utilizing the Lakehead University website for admissions, programs, requirements, LU Aboriginal numbers, the importance of Self-Declaring as an Aboriginal, LUSU info, the Office of Student Affairs, Aboriginal bursaries & scholarships.

CONFERENCES

Aboriginal Liaison Advisor attended two conferences; Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs and Queen's Universities' Aboriginal Training in the Workplace, each of which served as a resource platform for networking and establishing contacts in planning the campus lecture scene.

TRAINING

Workplace training & certification has been completed in Health & Safety, Mental Health First Aid, Accessibility of Ontario Disabilities Act, Ontario Human Rights Code & CareerJoy.