



# Achievement Program

## Family Report 2021/2022

### PROGRAM UPDATE

The Achievement Program at Lakehead University is working hard to remain connected to our students and families, and encourage pathways to postsecondary education. We currently have 230 active students, with the addition of 80 potential students joining us by Dec 2022 across five school boards (Lakehead Public Schools, Thunder Bay Catholic D.S.B., Superior Greenstone D.S.B, Superior North Catholic D.S.B & Keewatin Patricia D.S.B). These students earn financial support to attend Lakehead

University by passing their grade, and participating in activities at their school, community and Lakehead University. The last three years many of our families have faced a number of challenges. A few highlights from the year include being able to facilitate programming outdoors and indoors at schools, our Day on Campus, along with running a summer camp. This was a much bigger impact than virtual programming in the previous year. In addition, over the last two years, we have seen 16 students graduate high school, and 5 students are currently



attend Lakehead University. The Achievement Program will continue to connect with students and families through ongoing yearly programming.

See below for an outline of our yearly programming. We are looking forward to another great year ahead!

### LAKEISHIA MEEKIS: FOLLOWING HER HEART TO LAKEHEAD

By Hugh Mullally

Hailing from Sandy Lake First Nation, Lakeishia Meekis is among the first cohort of graduates in Lakehead University's Achievement Program. Lakeisha's aura of warmth, broad smile and bright eyes impress a feeling of caring and benevolence about her. It is these qualities and many more that will carry her into her first year at Lakehead, where she will enter the Indigenous Transition Program in the fall of 2021. Her future leans towards pursuing a degree in Gender and Women's Studies, or Nursing. Thanks to Lakeishia's completion of the Achievement Program, her first year's

tuition costs will be covered.

Lakeishia attended the Achievement program from the time she was nine until her graduation from high school and is thankful for the family support she received.

"I'm glad my mom kept pushing me to do it, to keep going. I feel proud of myself and happy to be where I am today," Lakeisha continues. "When I first went, I thought it was a one-time thing. I liked being at Lakehead to learn with a smaller group of people. I remember walking around campus with Mom, and her saying, 'Look where you will go when you're older.'"

Now Lakeishia is proud to be a role model for her peers and family both in Thunder Bay and back in Sandy Lake.



▲ Lakeishia Meekis

"It makes me happy that I could be a role model for other students and family," she gushes. "It makes me feel proud," adds Lakeishia, who has two sisters and a brother. Lakeishia's message to the younger students considering the Achievement Program is simple. "Just keep going, keep pushing yourself. The Achievement Program always gave me lots of learning opportunities."



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### YEARLY PROGRAMMING

With some restrictions still in place due to COVID19, the Achievement Program continues to adapt innovating programming to our 230 students. We continued our two lunch time student speaker series (fall & winter), our Day on Campus and our Summer Camp.

#### Student Speaker Series 2021/2022

Elementary - Grade 4 - 6

- Engineering Structures
- Indigenous Snow Snake
- Abstract Art

Middle School - Grade 7 & 8

- Birch Bark Canoes
- Blood Circulation & our Body
- Human Ball and Socket Joint

High School

- Financial Planning
- Preparing for Postsecondary & Mindfulness

#### Career & Undergraduate Exploration Day

This day was designed to help students decide which undergraduate degree or career pathway to pursue. This year's virtual session featured a speed networking sessions with the School of Social Work, Faculty of Natural Resource Management, Faculty of Business Administration, School of Kinesiology, Indigenous Education, Bora Laskin Faculty of Law, and Departments of Sociology, Philosophy, History and Psychology.



#### May & June 2022 Day on Campus

Students could be found all over campus with the support of our ActiveU team leading the way. The day started in Athletics and Recreation with varsity athletes and ActiveU staff leading students in various activities to get their bodies moving. Students also participated in grade specific educational and cultural programming with Lakehead faculty and staff, such as, School of Nursing, Faculty of Engineering, Nijiji Mentorship Program, Chemistry, Lakehead Ingenuity, Indigenous Cultural Support Services, Let's Talk Science, School of Kinesiology, Student Success and LUSU.

### CAMRYN WILLIAMS: ACHIEVING IS BELIEVING

By Hugh Mullally



▲ Camryn Williams

"As a parent, it's my job to inspire my children to explore their interests and develop the skills they need to succeed in life," says Susan Williams, whose daughter Camryn will be among the second cohort to complete the

"Exploring the labs and getting to use the equipment and simulated patients was really cool and interactive," says Camryn. "I was able to see and feel what going to nursing school would be like. I can't wait to start next fall."

Achievement Program at Lakehead University. "When she gets to learn and explore alongside her peers, and with her mentors, it makes a big difference." Count Camryn Williams among them, who turned 18 this year and is on track to graduate at the top of her class at Hammarskjold High School in Thunder Bay. But getting to the top wasn't easy. Looking back, Camryn overcame some early challenges in her scholastic career that threatened to stifle her future

aspirations. For Camryn, the Program helped her get back on track academically, as she saw her C's turn into A's the following year, but it didn't come without some early challenges. "Those were the hardest times, when I first started," recalls Camryn. "Looking back, the Achievement Program made the transition to High School a lot easier. Meeting new people and learning new subjects wasn't as hard as I thought it would be."



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### Summer Camp 2022

Students in Thunder Bay and the region experienced in-person summer camps this year due to the wonderful support of our donors. Two, one-week camps were offered in collaboration with the Athletics ActiveU program. Campers were provided with lunch, snacks and access to transportation to and from camp. Campers enjoyed a week of education and recreational activities along with cultural hands-on programming. ActiveU facilitated our recreational and sports-based programming, which included soccer-baseball, badminton, dodgeball, basketball, and many more skill-based activities. These skills included team building, problem solving and social skills.



Our Lakehead faculty and staff provided hands-on programming which included Lakehead Ingenuity, Lakehead Engineering, Indigenous Transition Year and Indigenous Initiatives. Through these activities they gained important skills that will help with their future academics. They were also able to gain knowledge of their natural environment around them through Ontario Nature and Natural Resources Management. Students had the opportunity to participate in a 30 minute swimming lessons with Learn To Swim each day. The student's and staff had a fantastic week exploring our campus and building connections with friends at Lakehead University.

### High School Conference

The Achievement Program hosted a two day conference for our high school students. We had 7 students join us for this two day conference that focused on leadership development activities, career and pathway planning, goal setting and financial planning. In addition, students spent one of the days training and earning their Emergency First Aid.

Students were provided with breakfast and lunch each day along with access to transportation. As the number of high school students grow in our program, we will continue to grow and develop vital skills to help students in high school and beyond.

### Current Lakehead University Achievement Program Students

We currently have five students who have graduated the Achievement Program and are attending Lakehead University. Three students are in their second year (nursing, business and Indigenous Transition Year Program) and two students in their first year (business and Indigenous Transition Year Program). We also have three students at Confederation College.

I am also proud to announce that three of our current Lakehead Achievement Program students are on staff and continuing to mentor our younger students in the program.



### Staying Connected

A great way to stay connected on what we are doing is through our social media pages.

 @lakeheadachievementprogram

 Lakehead Achievement Program

In addition, to follow your child's progress and how much they are earning, you can visit

[www.achievement.lakeheadu.ca](http://www.achievement.lakeheadu.ca)

### Statistics

- 230 active participants in program
- 16 students graduated
- 274 lifetime student enrollment
- 25 students inactive from 2011 - present (9% do not continue for various reasons including relocation)
- 16 students have graduated High School
- 75% identify as Indigenous

### Reminders

#### Moving Schools - Contact Amanda!

- If your child moves schools, as long as it is with a board we have a partnership with, your child still remains in the program.

#### 5 Years to Access Financial Support

- We understand that each student has a unique pathway, so student have 5 years to access the financial support they have earned for an undergraduate program at Lakehead University.



# Thank you!

 to our partner school boards for their support

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