
NATIVE SOCIAL WORK JOURNAL

*Special Edition
In Celebration of the 25th Anniversary
of the School of Indigenous Relations*

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**NISHNAABE KINOOMADWIN
NAADMAADWIN**

Debejiged, Gzhemnidoo, Gmishoomsina.

From the purple blanket of the Sky Nation to the first rays of dazzling light, when Grandfather Sun rises to shine his light on all his children and creation.

Let us embrace the Creator's love.

We are thankful for our mother Shkag Mikwe, Our father, Father Sky. Our grandparents; Nookomis-moon and Grandfather Sun.

We are thankful for the gifts of the Four Directions and for the combined successes they bring that we may continue to be of greater service to you and others.

We offer ourselves to you as instruments. We trust that you will guide us with the medicine of leading through example.

Teach us to nurture each other, and to encourage each other's growth, that will support the development of others abilities.

Help us to be humble and thankful, and to be proud of all accomplishments, through self-esteem and not of self-importance.

We humbly ask for continued blessings of life and breath so that, the Creator's love, our love, maybe felt in the lives of all we meet.

Thank you for hearing our prayer. Miigeng

Hilda Nadjiwan

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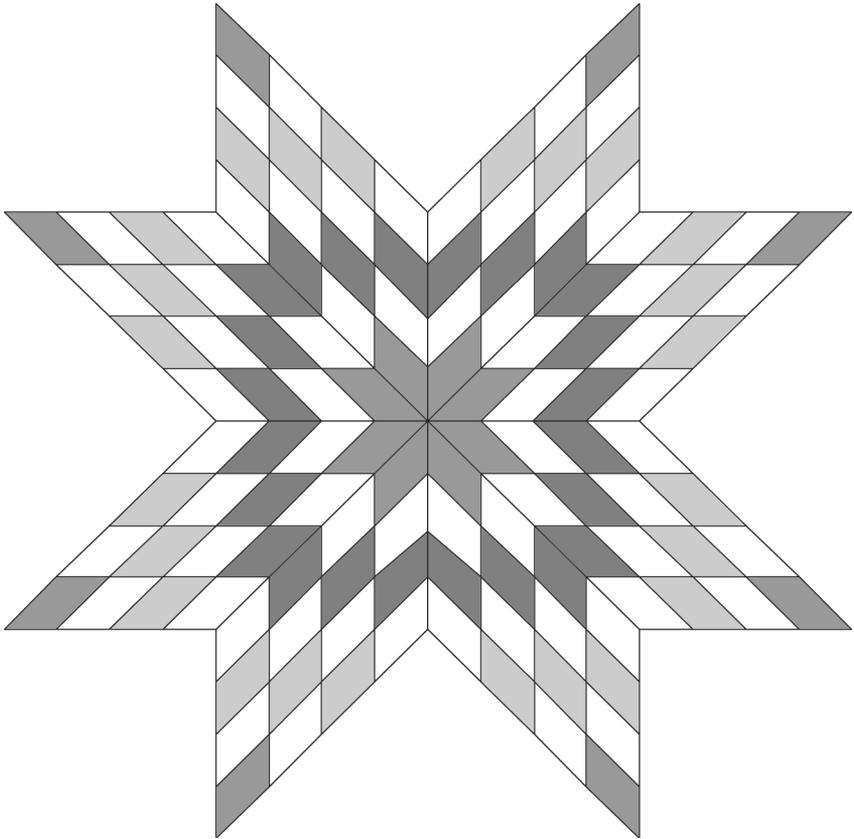
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INDIGENOUS SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

FORMERLY THE NATIVE HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMME

Established in 1988, the Native Human Services Programme utilized a regional consultation process involving twenty-seven (27) First Nations within the Robinson-Huron Treaty area. The consultation formed the basis of the curriculum and distance education component of the programme.

In June 2008, the Laurentian University Senate approved the Native Human Services Unit in becoming a School of Native Human Services, now known as the School of Indigenous Relations, separate from the School of Social Work. This was the realization of a request from the community in the original consultations of 1988. In April 2008, the School of Native Human Services with the support of Laurentian University, applied for stand-alone accreditation with the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE). Accreditation was granted in November 2008. The Native Human Services Programme is a fully accredited program with CASWE since 2008.

The philosophy, content, techniques and strategies that characterize the curriculum model represent a specialization for obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary as a social work practitioner with Aboriginal populations. The cultural content, practice methods and specific competencies reflect distinct realities of self-determination, cultural preservation and community empowerment.

The primary method within the curriculum model utilizes an applied approach that focuses critical knowledge in exploring strengths derived from holistic healing approaches. Other curriculum areas include: community based participatory research, Native child welfare practice, socio-cultural ecology theory in family and community systems and case management. A necessary component to the curriculum is the historic political legislative and policy relations, which have defined and continue to have impact upon current socio-economic and political rights of Aboriginal populations.

Important and unique as a teaching and learning method is the incorporation of interaction activities with cultural relevance. Holistic healing practices expose students to the role worldviews, values, beliefs, and practices play in cultural based strategies. Additional benefits to students are the insights provided by participating in a process that

examines culturally related perceptions of psychological growth and wellness. Finally, such experiential based cultural practices create opportunities for students to explore their own self-cultural awareness. Particularly relevant to this process is that such cultural based practices act as positive reinforcement in the development of cultural identity and serve to promote Aboriginal healing strategies as a source of interpretative balance, interpersonal renewal and community aspiration.

Native Social Work Journal

Launched in 1997, the Native Social Work Journal is a scholarly and community-based publication committed to the preservation, revitalization and promotion of the expanding field of Native and Indigenous social work knowledge, theories and practices. Both academic and community-based researchers and practitioners have contributed articles representative of their communities, their research and frameworks for the best practice with Native, Aboriginal, First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups as well as other International Indigenous groups. This journal aims to increase the volume and dissemination of mainly Native authorship and to increase the accessibility of Native and Indigenous social work scholarship. This journal provides tools for practitioners, academics, social workers, communities and others engaged in Native and Indigenous social work activities. The Native social work journals are available via print-based and online. <https://zone.biblio.laurentian.ca/dspace/handle/10219/378>

Field Education

The main objectives of Field Education are to impart to its graduates the ability to apply professional social work methods and approaches in a manner that is culturally appropriate to Aboriginal people.

Field Education involves the establishment of field placement opportunities in Native communities. A practicum setting provides the student an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills learned in an actual practice setting. It is a planned and supervised learning experience for a 3rd year or a 4th year student, which fulfils the practicum requirements.

A Native Human Services Field Education Manual has been published to guide the students, the field instructor and the faculty consultants in the field practicum process. The manual is based on traditional Native teachings.

Distance Education

The distance component of the Native Human Services Programme is offered on a part-time basis through ENVISION: Laurentian University's Distance Education Program. All NSWK courses are alternated each year and require professional year acceptance into the programme.

For specific information on the Native Human Services Programme contact the Native Human Services Honours Bachelor of Social Work Programme at:

Phone: (705) 675-1151 ext. 5082

Fax: (705) 675-4817

Or visit our website at www.laurentian.ca

FOREWORD

The struggle continues. In the twenty-five years since the inception of the Indigenous Social Work program (formerly Native Human Services Programme) here at Laurentian University, we continue to hear new revelations about the deplorable range of abuses inflicted on Indigenous peoples -- people being used unwittingly as subjects of medical experiments for instance. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission criss-crossed Canada, story upon story unfolded revealing the depth of the collective trauma First Nations peoples have had to endure, a trauma exacerbated by having had control for their families' and communities' well-being wrested from their hands by a government that thought it knew what was best for them. As it states in its interim report, "the Commission heard from proud people [who]...had survived mental abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse, and spiritual abuse" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012, p. 6). The seemingly innumerable accounts can be cause for discouragement – or for renewed resolve to persevere in seeking solutions and in striving to heal profoundly damaged communities.

The Indigenous Social Work program can take pride in having led the way in ensuring there are appropriately-trained professionals to facilitate healing of Aboriginal individuals, families and communities well before the Commission brought awareness to the nation and beyond of the scale of the trauma engendered by colonization and subjugation. The needs documented by the Native Social Work Project that lay the groundwork for this program (and in which I was privileged to participate as a team member) provided but a glimpse of the tasks – and possibilities – of this program. That a program of this type remains vital is underscored by the Commission's findings. These include the sad fact that "the people who have been damaged by the residential schools—the former students and their families—have been left to heal themselves" (p. 6). The people who came before it, the Commission reports, "want support for the work they have begun in healing...[and] support to allow them to improve parenting skills. In particular,...[they] want support in regaining and teaching traditional parenting practices and values" (p. 6-7). Through its courses and its journal, the ISW program provides assurance that the Commission's call "for the development and provision of workshops aimed at reintroducing wise practices for healthy families, and to compensate for the loss of parenting knowledge experienced by generations of children raised in institutional settings" (p. 7-8) and for the establishment of "health and well-

ness centres specializing in trauma and grief counselling and treatment *appropriate to the cultures* (emphasis added) and experiences of multi-generational residential school survivors” (p. 8) can be met.

As the Indigenous Social Work program marks its 25th year, it can take great satisfaction in the knowledge that it is playing an instrumental role in the recovery and reinvigoration of First Nations. That the works of its faculty and allied scholars and the research shared in this journal are making a difference is evident in the more than two hundred graduates the program has produced since 1988. The number of views of each edition as recorded by LU Zone serves as another indicator; that number has often exceeded 5,000. These contributions mean communities that “for too long, ... were left to shoulder...on their own” (TRC, p. 6) the burden of healing themselves now have support. The faith and dedication of the members of the Indigenous Social Work program give assurance that support will only get stronger as each year brings another graduating class ready to lean in.

Mary Ann Naokwegijig-Corbier, PhD

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Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2012). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Interim Report. Retrieved from <http://www.attendancemarketing.com>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Boozhoo; Aanii; Wachiya; Sago; Tansi;
Kia Ora; Kwe Kwe; Bonjour; Greetings**

We wish to acknowledge those who had the vision to bring an Indigenous Social Work Program, formerly the Native Human Services Programme, to Laurentian University, all those years ago. In fact, it has been twenty-five years since the inception of this program. We are celebrating twenty-five years of success with this Special Edition of the Native Social Work Journal Number 9.

The journal is a collaborative effort put forth by four co-editors. We held many meetings, phone calls, and e-mail messages to bring this edition to fruition. It was a labour of love. We are all believers in the School of Indigenous Relations and many of us have been here for many years. The important link to our students and ourselves is Freda Recollet, who has been the secretary for the school from the beginning.

The 9th edition of the journal is celebrating the Indigenous Social Work Program (formerly the Native Human Services Programme) thus, we decided to include those who are here now and those who were here twenty-five years ago to write articles about the program. Since the school revolves around students, we asked a few alumni to contribute testimonials about their experiences while here.

A special acknowledgment and *G'Chi-Miigwech* (many thanks) goes to the Elder from Aboriginal Student Affairs (ASA): Hilda Nadjiwon for her beautiful and inspirational prayer to open this Special Edition of the journal.

We are celebrating all graduates of the School of Indigenous Relations (formerly the School of Native Human Services). We have had graduates from all races included in the Medicine Wheel. Our program is inclusive of all, and we are always welcoming of whomever chooses our program.

**Dr. Sheila Cote-Meek, Susan Maniwabi,
Dr. Anne-Marie Mawhiney, Cheryle Partridge**

INTRODUCTION

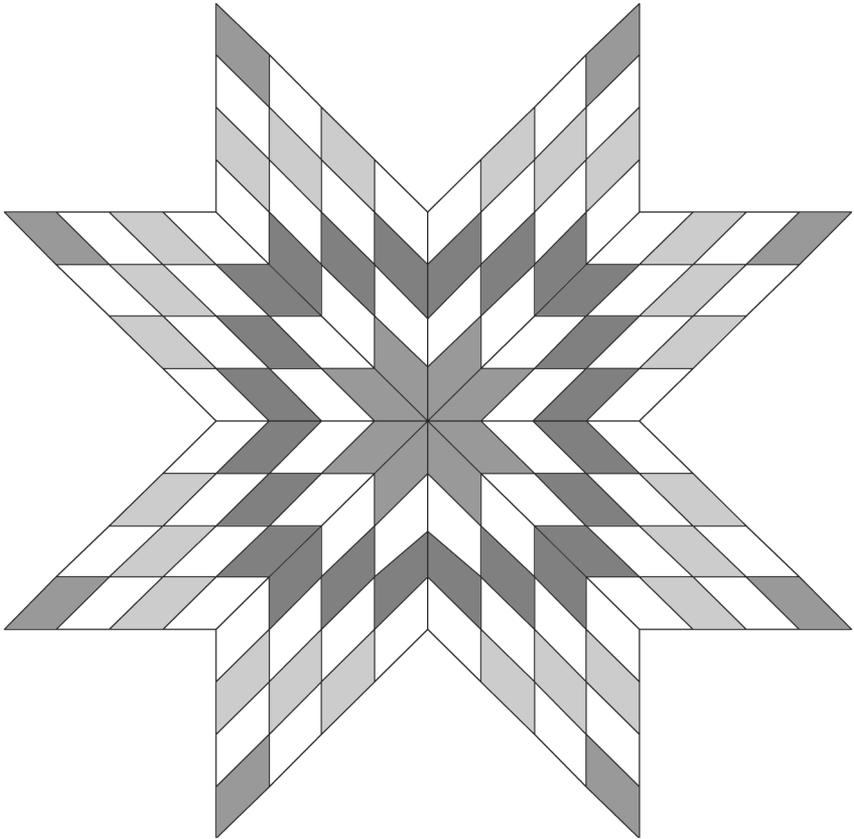
We must always remember that students are our reason for being here, without the students there would be no faculty or staff. The Native Social Work Journals were created so the students in our program would have culture-specific articles to cite when writing their papers. It has clearly worked as we are now publishing our ninth journal. We have many journal articles for our students' use. It has benefitted not only our students but also students and scholars around the world, whom have been accessing the journals online. We proudly celebrate twenty-five years with this Special Edition Journal. The journal articles are interspersed with very enlightening, gratifying, and moving alumni testimonials.

- The first article by Dr. Anne-Mawhiney, Dr. Thom Alcoze and Robert Hart relate how the School of Indigenous Relations (formerly the School of Native Human Services) came about. The idea for the school began with discussions, then came the vision, more discussions with Aboriginal community members, Aboriginal politicians, and Elders. The authors describe in fascinating detail how the whole birthing of an Aboriginal culture-specific social work program came about: from conception to birth.
- The second article by Professor Emeritus Herbert Nabigon is about how this well-respected Elder taught his classes. Herb used the Teachings of the Elders, the Seven Grandfather Teachings, and the Teachings of the Five Colours of the Medicine Wheel. These are also known as Aboriginal pedagogy. Herb describes how he wove the teachings into the books used for course work. The teachings he used in the classroom are now being used by alumni. I am one of those who uses Herb's teachings in my classes, I always tell the students where I heard them first. Herb Nabigon is retired now, but his words and teachings live on.
- The third article by Cheryle Partridge is a narrative about her journey from being an undergraduate student in the School of Indigenous Relations (formerly the School of Native Human Services) to being a professor in the School of Indigenous Relations. Cheryle relates how her journey transpired and hopes it will serve to inspire prospective students to make this program their program of choice.

- The fourth article by Sharon Corbiere-Johnston, Lissa Lavallee, and Susan Manitowabi is about the Indigenous Social Work Program's relationship with the urban Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal urban community. Susan describes the evolution of the program from one of three streams of social work (Anglophone, Francophone, Aboriginal) to one stand-alone program and school. She also discusses how important research partnerships are to the ongoing growth of the school. Sharon discusses how critical field education is to the school and how students are required to serve one placement in an Aboriginal agency/organization and one placement in a non-Aboriginal agency/organization. Sharon has forged strong relationships with those agencies. Lissa describes the partnerships with Seven Generations Education Institute and Kenjgewin-Teg Education Institute where we offer community-based Indigenous Social Work on site.
- The fifth article by Dr. Taima Moeke-Pickering describes the process of evaluating the students in the School of Indigenous Relations. Her longitudinal surveys of evaluation have brought valuable data forward to the School of Indigenous Relations. She explains how the school seriously considered the data and has made changes to improve the curriculum and the content of courses.
- The sixth and final article by Dr. Sheila Cote-Meek describes how we, as a school, are looking back at the past to inform the present and how these experiences will shape our future. Our vision for the future will not be fettered by the blinders of the past because we have shaken off those blinders and the way forward is clear.

The authors of the articles contained within this small but powerful volume have written from their hearts so the readers can appreciate the herculean efforts expended in the challenges which were placed in their way during the past twenty-five years. Each challenge was met with humility and respect and doors were opened. Although there are still many doors along the hallways of academia we are making our presence known in a good way.

**Miigwech,
Cheryle Partridge**



Like Ripples in Water: 1980-1986

Anne-Marie Mawhiney
Thomas Alcoze
Robert Hart

“It is like throwing a rock into water, sending ripples that move further away from the centre, ever further – to where, we do not know. But throwing the rock starts a change. Change starts when someone throws a rock in the water, and the ripples of this long into the future change will be felt in a good way by many Anishinaabe people and communities, and beyond.” Thom Alcoze, 1988 when discussing the Native Social Work Project, funded by Health and Welfare Canada.

Community Engagement: Anne-Marie

The whole idea seemed impossible to many. There were a number of people who said it would never happen and others who tried to stop the project in its early years. But Elders, Art and Eva Solomon, told us that this project’s time was at hand and all we needed to do was bring the right people together; they said the time was right to establish a culturally-sensitive social work program designed by the people for the people (by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people).

In 1980 I started to teach at Laurentian University’s School of Social Work with a deep-seated commitment to ensure that social work students would have more knowledge and skill to work across cultures than I did when I was a social worker in northern Ontario and Montreal. Based on my observations and experiences social workers had been ill-equipped to work with cultures different from the dominant Western society. Likewise, texts and social work curricula of the time rarely discussed culture, Indigenous peoples, or the ways that different worldviews influence ways of thinking, doing and helping.

Change started slowly with a small ripple in the first year class that I was teaching at the end of my first year during the spring session. I asked Thom Alcoze, a professor from the University of Sudbury’s

Native Studies department, to give a guest lecture that would introduce social work students to Indigenous culture. I was hopeful that at least some students would then be interested in signing up for Native Studies courses as part of their Arts electives. After the class Thom and I started the first of many conversations on possible ways of making sure social work students would be better equipped to work with Indigenous clients. In our discussions over the next 18 months, Walter Schwager from the Sociology Department joined us. One day he said “So are we going to talk or are we going to do something?”

We consulted with two well known Elders from the area, Art and Eva Solomon. Art told us to ‘go to the people because they know what to do.’

We initially approached the Robinson Huron Chiefs’ Assembly for their agreement that we would undertake a process to consider better ways of preparing social workers to have better knowledge, skills and experience to work appropriately with Aboriginal communities. The Assembly asked us to go to each community within the Robinson-Huron Treaty Area to obtain consent to proceed. We were provided with initial funding from Health and Welfare Canada to hire two Aboriginal women, Joan Commanda and Mary Ann Naokwegijig (now Corbiere) to go to each of the 22 Robinson Huron First Nations communities to talk about the idea of a culturally relevant program of studies and determine whether the communities were in agreement with this idea.

During the same time we approached colleagues in our own programs, Native Studies and Social Work, to inform them about the project. Initially some colleagues from the Native Studies Department and the School of Social Work resisted the idea of the project. A colleague from Native Studies, James Dumont, raised the very legitimate question about whether this would be another colonizing process; such processes had never turned out well for Indigenous peoples. His question was a significant moment for me because I realized immediately the importance of this question for my own role as a non-Indigenous person, if any, with the project. I realized that I would not be a driver of the change process for the project; the drivers for change would be from among local Indigenous communities. I was prepared to step away at any time if my involvement would mean the project would not proceed shaped by Indigenous people.

If I had been determined to continue as ‘the’ change agent, the project would have failed as it should have.

In the summer of 1983 Thom and I were asked to determine if the Robinson-Huron chiefs were in support of an undertaking to consult the communities. We convened at Anderson Lake and Chiefs from 22 Robinson-Huron communities attended to listen to the proposed idea of engaging in dialogue with their communities about:

- whether there should be new ways of educating social work students;
- if so, what content should be included in such an educational process; and
- whether such a program should be established at Laurentian University

Looking back to this time, over 25 years ago, much has changed in post secondary education in Canada for Indigenous peoples, and therefore it may not seem obvious that this project was groundbreaking in many ways. In particular we were suggesting a collaboration between Laurentian University and local Aboriginal communities as lead partners with full control over the outcome to the three questions. At the time this sort of endeavour was new ground for a university.

Robert Hart, our funding contact with Health and Welfare Canada has this to say about the funding of the Native Social Work Project and how the funding review process also broke with the normal ways of approving such projects. I know that Rob played a key role in advocating for this project, supported eloquently by Art Solomon’s letter, mentioned by Rob. There is no doubt that the Native Social Work Project created ripples at Health and Welfare Canada and in a very good way.

Art Solomon’s Letter: Rob

Let me tell you the story of Art’s letter and how it began your school.

My name is Robert Hart. In the early 80s I worked for the federal government, for what was then Health and Welfare Canada. (The Welfare part has since been sent into exile in whatever we are calling Human Resources these days. I find the shift in language from welfare to human

resources chilling.) In those days, the department had two funding programs, not surprisingly one for health and another for social welfare. I worked for the latter and it was called National Welfare Grants (NWG).

NWG had its rationale in the idea that if the federal government was going to share the costs of social services with the provinces, it was in everyone's interest to try continually to create better services or, with our society changing so quickly, to create services for issues we were then just beginning to grapple with. Maintaining people with disabilities in their communities, violence against women and child sexual abuse were new, emerging issues then.

I had come to NWG having done child welfare work in the north and had left that practice completely frustrated with the inability of our approach to keeping children safe, families whole and communities healthy, especially Aboriginal communities. I was not the only one. Across the country, the profession and the communities were all looking for a better way, a way that would engage people in speaking to what was not working for them, what might work better and how we might get there. The goal of culturally based social services was beginning to emerge.

So it made sense for the Social Work and Native Studies programs to join forces to develop training that met the standards of both disciplines: high professional standards and appropriate cultural forms.

Anne-Marie Mawhiney, Thom Alcoze and I met with a number of other people to talk about writing a proposal to fund the development of an integrated program. It was a cold, grey day and the rain slid down the windows with an unremitting chill. Art Solomon was there, as the Elder to the program, and he was asked to say an opening prayer. It was as surprising as it was short. "We thank the Creator for the beauty of this day, in which we are called to carry on the work." How could anyone see this damnably damp day as anything other than dismal? But Art did. I looked outside and the day seemed less drear, more promising. Begin with gratitude, add work. My attitude made a paradigm shift and I have said Art's prayer every morning since.

But we had a problem. National Welfare Grants was a professional program. Projects had to be of national significance. Colleagues who had high standards for project design vetted proposals internally. Each proposal required a clear methodology and an equally clear evaluation design. The reviewers needed to have confidence that the planning was

solid with a realistic expectation of producing a working model the rest of the country could learn from.

But this was totally new territory and there were no maps through it. More important, the program had to be worked out by the people who would use it. Laurentian University serves northern Ontario and its graduates would be northerners who would return home to serve other northerners. This could not be a program made for the University. It had to be one made by the communities. Anything else would repeat the colonial approach that had contributed to the communities' pain and struggles in the first place.

So the only appropriate design had to be an open, exploratory one that involved the university working with the communities in a way that made sense to them in order to create an education program that made equal sense. The proposal would be short and simple. It would describe an exploratory process that might go in any direction but could not describe a product. Such a proposal had never been submitted before, let alone approved.

I asked Art to write a letter of support. It came, 3 pages of it, hand written, containing the most eloquent, impassioned plea for understanding and solidarity that I had ever read. Art penned a damning indictment of the existing child welfare system. He described the individual and family and community pain it created and, with unanswerable clarity, drove home the point that such a system could not continue. We had to find a way of protecting children that made sense to people and we had to train those people to do a new kind of social work. While he damned the system, he did not condemn those who worked within it nor did he dwell on yesterday's failure. He focused attention on the need of the day to focus on promise of tomorrow. I presented the proposal. I presented Art's letter along side it. I tabled my recommendation that the project proceed. There was not one voice of dissent.

The challenge of creating a culturally based social work practice is still with us. It is a long journey. "Nothing that is worth doing can be done in our lifetime; therefore we are saved by hope¹. But now the challenge is in the right hands, yours. Art would be pleased.

Robert Hart

1 Reinhold Neibuhr

By the end of the meeting in Anderson Lake we had unanimous support by the Chiefs to proceed. We were fortunate to obtain substantial funding (\$163,000) from Health and Welfare Canada over three years to undertake community consultations on the three questions and to work in partnership with the communities to design an educational process that communities could and would support. A Regional Working Group comprised of representation from the various Aboriginal groups and communities guided the consultations.

Principles: Thom

Here are some ideas and events that stand out for me as I look back on the beginning times that helped make the Native Human Services Program such a powerful achievement.

We began with the knowledge that too often Aboriginal communities received social services that were contrary to community beliefs and cultural expectations.

Aboriginal communities had always found ways to deal with social conflicts and were adept at sharing the burdens of child rearing, familial disputes and other community concerns. Their decisions typically focused on solutions that placed an emphasis on keeping families together with a strong reliance on extended family relationships in the context of cultural and social traditions. Conventional social work policies and practices assumed that solutions applicable to mainstream Canadian society would also be appropriate for Aboriginal families.

The implementation of these policies, aimed at extracting dysfunctional family members from their communities and often relocating children to foster homes outside their villages, created high levels of tension and mistrust among families and within communities. There was a significant disconnect between mainstream responses to social conflicts and Anishinaabe cultural practices designed to maintain social cohesion.

We decided to address a part of this core issue by creating a new kind of social worker.

The image was of a person whose education in social work was a blend of Anishinaabe cultural knowledge and responses and up-to-date social work theory and practices. Such a person would provide best practices to families because they would have the skills and training to work in and see both world views. At this point, Art Solomon helped focus our thoughts about what to do next. He reminded us that “the past is done and the present is what it is, but the future is ours”. A new approach was needed to train future social workers, one that went beyond language to include culture, traditional beliefs and effective community involvement.

We quickly understood that we were unable to create a new and appropriate culture based social work program on behalf of Anishinaabe communities.

An Anishinaabe social work program based on cultural knowledge and practices would have to be designed and implemented by Anishinaabe people and communities. Communities across Northern Ontario gladly accepted this challenge and began the critical discussions that would incorporate Anishinaabe values and knowledge into the mainstream social work curriculum. The proposal that emerged developed broad categories that included experiences and teachings that would illustrate how social services could be provided with cultural sensitivity and have outcomes beneficial to all concerned. One of the grandmothers who spoke made it very clear that just because this was a new degree with predominantly Aboriginal people it was not to be some kind of certificate program. Instead the graduates would attain a professional degree in Social Work with the same credibility and accreditation as all other social work degrees.

Our role could only be as “helpers” to the Anishinaabe people who would lead this new endeavour.

Health and Welfare Canada provided the generous funding to reach the communities while the School of Social Work and the Native Studies Department cooperated to assist with the numerous Laurentian University approvals necessary to establish a new degree program. The overwhelming support from the University community was encouraging and included many positive comments concerning the direct and integral

involvement of Anishinaabe communities and their role in establishing the new program. This helped us realize that we were on the right track. A meeting with the School of Social Work faculty brought this idea home. We met to give the combined Social Work faculty an overview of the new culture based program as approved by the University Senate.

I recall talking with some of the Francophone faculty who were impressed with the fact that culture, traditional values and language from First Nations would form central themes to guide the curriculum and program.

“Why didn’t we think of that?” was voiced by several of these faculty members as they realized that going beyond merely including a language in a mainstream program was a courageous step to matching the unique demographic of Aboriginal students. The Native Human Services Program was based on Anishinaabe culture, traditional values and included the importance of Native languages to achieve a comprehensive understanding of how best to serve communities and families.

The Native Human Services Program began when people came together to work toward new ways to help communities deal with social issues and find ways that would strengthen cultural and traditional relationships. “The past is done” and Anishinaabe People have social workers who assist them in culturally supportive ways. “The present is what it is” and Anishinaabe People proudly see their own as members of the professional social services community. “The future is ours” as Anishinaabe People reap the benefits of the Native Human Services Program for generations to come. I am pleased to have been a part of this change.

University Engagement: Anne-Marie

After an eighteen-month consultation, we had community responses to the initial three questions and a community-based framework and design for the curriculum. The communities told us that they were in full agreement with the importance, some said the imperative, of transforming social work education so that it would become culturally relevant, would understand issues and challenges from an Anishinaabe worldview, using traditional knowledge as part of the curriculum. The community

participants in the consultations wanted students to graduate with bi-cultural competence, to be able to work effectively in mainstream and in Aboriginal agencies and communities, making changes in policies and ways of working with all clients. We learned from the communities that the program needed to have the equivalent standards and accreditations as all other credible social work programs across Canada. Finally, it was important to the communities that initially the program, by now defined as a Native Human Services program, should be part of the existing School of Social Work as a stage towards an independent, stand-alone School at a later point. The communities also supported having the program as part of Laurentian University.

In the summer of 1986, Thom Alcoze and I were asked by the Regional Working Group to pave the way within Laurentian University to obtain Senate approval for a new degree specialization in social work (Native Human Services). We anticipated that the approval process, which involved preliminary consultations with a large number of departments, committees and councils, would create additional ripples, even perhaps, waves, because the proposal contained an expectation that virtually all courses would be taught from Aboriginal perspectives even when teaching mainstream skills, knowledge and experiences. Much to our surprise, in each and every meeting any question or critique raised by our academic colleagues was presented with the intent and spirit of strengthening the program and its case for the next level of approval. Colleagues throughout the university stood in strong support of what was then a unique and trailblazing idea of a university-level program that would be taught from a paradigm different from the norm.

In November 1987 Senate approved a new program leading to the degree of Honours Bachelor of Social Work (Native Human Services), and the founding class was admitted for the 1988-1989 academic year. Within three years five tenure-stream faculty members, one placement officer, one secretary – all Aboriginal women and men– were hired to support the program, designed by and for Anishinaabe communities. The community remained involved by way of regular presentations to the Robinson-Huron Chiefs' Assembly until the establishment of the Laurentian University Native Education Council (LUNEC) in the mid-1990s.

Reflections: Anne-Marie

It is still rare for universities to engage with a community-based process of curriculum development for a new program; more commonly, programs are designed by academics with knowledge, education and experience in the topic. At the time we were considering a new paradigm for social work education in the 1980s there were few Indigenous social workers working in universities with post-graduate education in social work. We were successful in recruiting five pioneering faculty members who brought into classroom the vision from the communities of social work education that would prepare students to work effectively from Indigenous and Western worldviews, would develop knowledge and skills in helping based on traditional concepts and ways of knowing and doing, and who would lead the social work academy in understanding the importance of culture and decolonizing methodologies in helping people. You will hear from several of these pioneers in the next sections of this volume.

Looking forward from 25 years ago: Anne-Marie

Twenty-five years ago, to many people, the idea of culturally relevant social work education was impossible. However, a stone once it is thrown into the waters cannot be easily retrieved nor the ripples quieted. It is not always clear how far the ripples extend or how deeply are felt the effects.

In this special edition of the *Native Social Work Journal* we present stories, reflections, and the experiences of students, faculty, staff and community people who have been involved in the School over the last 25 years. In their eloquent expressions they highlight the ripples of change that graduates from the School of Native Human Services have facilitated in Anishinaabe communities, mainstream agencies, Schools of Social Work across Canada and elsewhere. These powerful affirmations confirm that our Elders were right twenty-five years ago and that not only are Indigenous epistemologies -- ways of doing and thinking -- possible in post-secondary social work education, it is transformative not only for Anishinaabe communities and families but also within post-secondary education of all students.

By the end of your reading of the reflections in this volume, you will be able to conclude for yourself the extent to which 25 years of Native Human Services been successful in creating ripples of change for and by the people.

*Alumnus Testimonial: Lee Frappier***The Native Human Services Program**

A way of being

More than 20 years and half my life ago

A community of belonging

A source for emergence

A guide

A lens to sort and make sense

All my Relations

Resistance to hegemonic waves of reductionism and determinism

Awareness and Legitimacy

Creating safety

Teachings

A connection to history

Relationship to land and self

Pathways to identities – multiple expressions of strength and hope

Canadian identities of mutuality

Ways of being - with people

The Story – multi-storied lives

The Sacred – humanity

A Tree of Life

Alumna Testimonial: Donna Corston

My name is Donna Corston and I graduated from the Native Human Services BSW program in 2006. For six years I've been employed with a Native Child Welfare agency, located in Northern Ontario. My first position within the agency, I was a Child Protection worker. In 2008 I was granted educational leave for a year to study in the Masters of Social work program at York University. In 2009 I obtained my MSW degree. In February 2011 I left child protection. I am currently working in the Children's Mental Health department within the same agency as an Early Intervention worker. I work with children from ages zero to six and their families.

The knowledge I acquired from the Native Human Services BSW program prepared me for working in the field with children and families. While studying in the program I learned about First Nations history ranging from first contact to the development of the treaties and the residential school system. I also learned about how policy and legislation (e.g Indian Act and Child & Family Services Act) affected the identity and way of life (Education, spiritual & traditional practices, language, justice system and child welfare) of First Nations people in Canada. The courses also provided the opportunity to discuss social issues facing our communities.

One of the most important things I've learned and realized is how similar, but unique and diverse each First Nation community is. This also includes a person's attitudes, values & beliefs.

On a personal note enrolling in the Native Human Services BSW program was a decision that has enriched my life in several ways. Throughout the four years I've been exposed to traditional practices and teachings, from the significance of the sweat lodge ceremony to the seven grandfather teachings; including the medicine wheel and how it can be implemented in many areas in a person's life. The courses are culturally-specific and has encouraged me to work with

families from a preventive approach. Another important thing I've learned is the value of education and the importance of ongoing learning in the field.

Alumna Testimonial: Agnes Kanasawe

It is with great honour that I provide this statement of my experience with the Native Human Services (NHS) program. I came into the program with a mindset that I wanted to learn how to help our people; little did I know that the program was there to help me understand myself as well as our people. The NHS program was designed to allow me the student to experience any unresolved issues and get the necessary healing that I needed as I was getting an education in learning what it meant to be an Anishinawbe person. Learn and understand your past, to help you get to where you want to go and what you want to become. Thanks to the NHS program and the awesome faculty and staff I am now a much stronger Anishinawbe and have a better understanding of where our Anishinawbe people came from and where we are now.

It was while I was attending the Native Human Services Program that I got inspired to continue and pursue graduate studies. Once I graduated from the Honours Bachelor of Social Work in Native Human Services, I continued to pursue my Masters in Social Work which I completed. My thoughts are still to go further and pursue my Doctorate in the near future. I have had such a great work experience since I graduated. I have worked as an Educator in Aboriginal Language and Culture, Sexual Abuse Crisis Counsellor, Research Coordinator for Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Among Aboriginal People and now currently as a Resolution Health Support Worker for Residential School Survivors and their families.

I would strongly recommend this program; it had such a strong impact on my life as it surely will for you too.

**Yours in the Spirit and Wellness,
Agnes Kanasawe, HBSW, MSW, RSW**

Alumna Testimonial : Erin Vinkle

Ever since I have graduated from Native Human Services social work program I have been actively working in the field. Today I am currently working for The Canadian Mental Health Association and I am also presently working towards completing my Master's of Social Work degree at Laurentian University. I feel that my training in the Native Human Services program has provided me with the knowledge that has helped me to understand people through other cultural perspectives and worldviews. I feel this program has also broadened my ability to understand the importance of cultural competency and working with Aboriginal peoples within the social work profession.

The education that I have received through Native Human Services has helped to strengthen my skills as a social worker. I was taught how understanding a person's culture and history of one's people (personally or collectively) is imperative to one's healing. In order to understand people in their present we need to be aware of their past. The Native Human Services Program has provided me with the knowledge to comprehend fully the importance of understanding the essence of all relationships.

Alumna Testimonial: Sharon Corbiere-Johnston

In 1989, I was just finishing up my degree in Native Studies and Native Human Services was just in the process of being offered and I wanted to continue my education in a program that validated my cultural experience through course content that I could relate to and made sense to me as a First Nation person. I chose the Native Human Services Honours Bachelor of Social Work solely for these reasons and I was still unsure of my career path. All I knew at the time was that I wanted to be working with my people and I was still not sure of what direction my career path would be. I was apprehensive on going into the field of social work because of the negative impact this profession had on First Nation people. But, I also knew that the field of Social Work was a broad field and that the skills I would learn in this professional training would assist me to reach my goal of being able to support and provide for my children the things I never had. Little did I know that I was being guided because I met the right people who opened new doors for me. All I had to do was walk through them.

Being here in this program has helped me to find myself. I don't know if you understand what I mean when I say this but you will have to find this out for yourself. Being here has answered a lot of my questions that no one seemed to have an answer for. I learned about what made me tick and what makes me - me. I learned many, many good things which continue to get reinforced each and every day. I have met many, many good people and I understand what the "good life" is and try to practice this each day. I learned the meaning of culture and now see myself through a different set of eyes and my eyes are opened.

I have developed a great respect for all of which I learned here and that which I continue to learn on my journey. The Teachings I have learned I hold close to my heart. You will learn as much or as little as you want to learn here. The teachers and staff when I was here were

the best! They were the best support and encouragement I have ever had. If I did not have this, I would not have stayed. I am grateful. This proves that we can't do anything by ourselves without the support and encouragement of others. My self-esteem was so low that in the beginning I thought I was not smart enough to be at a university but making the decision to come here was the hardest decision I had ever made and yet, the best decision I ever made. I have never been unemployed since I graduated in 1991. My goal has been realized. I do not have any regrets nor would I change anything. Self-esteem is still an issue to this day and it probably will be until the day I die but it is better than it was and this is something that I continue to work on each day. I hope that you can relate to these words and hope that they have inspired you or challenged you to come to the School of Indigenous Relations formerly called the School of Native Human Services Honours Bachelor of Social Work.

A Pedagogical Aboriginal Paradigm

Herbert C. Nabigon

My use of the traditional teachings of the Oji-Cree peoples is the foundation of all my work. The Elders from whom I received my most significant trainings came from the Cree and the Anishnaabe peoples. This knowledge has been integrated into all aspects of my work in education. From the beginning of my tenure with Native Human Services in 1989, when I was writing curriculum, or teaching, or doing other types of work with students and the university community, the foundation of my pedagogy has been the legend of 'The Little Boy Teachings'. It has informed all the knowledge we received from the Creator and the Elders since time immemorial.

The Little Boy Teachings include the Seven Grandfather (Wisdom) Teachings, and The Five Colours of the Medicine Wheel. Within these teachings is contained a comprehensive paradigm of knowledge. Application of the knowledge, in other words, the "how" of integrating the "what" into daily living, is instructed by these teachings. The story of the ceremony was translated into the curriculum used in Native Human Services at every level.

In a place before time, on our mother the earth, the Creator was walking in the woods and he heard children crying so he came to investigate. He came upon a little boy and asked, "What is wrong?" The little boy said, "We are afraid, our parents are in conflict and scaring the children and we ran away from our community to hide from our parents". The Creator was very disturbed by this development and he went to think about what he could do.

He finally decided that he would take the little boy into his home, so while the boy was there, the Creator taught the little boy about the Medicine Wheel teachings. He started with the East door, where the sun rises every morning. The Cree Medicine Wheel places the color red in the East. Vision is part of the teaching of the East. We usually seek a vision in a fast and pray for the invisible helpers to help us understand what our vision is and to interpret dreams that we have in the vision. These dreams are usually an indication of where the Creator would like us to follow.

The turtle sits in the East and heals the broken hearts and broken feelings of the people. So when we pray in the East we ask the turtle spirit to mend the broken hearts and broken feelings of ourselves and our community.

The South direction informs us of time and relationship. Here the sun helps us to mend our relationships. These are the gifts of the South, and the colour yellow symbolizes this direction. We think of the Asian people of the world, and of all the gifts they have brought. All of the people in each of the directions have gifts. In this direction we also learn the lessons of patience and tolerance. Here, also, sits the Ginoo, the Golden Eagle, who carries the prayers of the people to the Creator.

In the evenings the sun sinks below the horizon and we turn toward the West direction. Everything turns black and we know from our experience that when we see black clouds in the sky we know that it will more than likely rain, so dark clouds bring us water which cleans the air and our bodies and nourishes all of life. So black is the color for this direction, and the spirit bird here is the Thunderbird. In this direction we think of the Black people, and their gifts, and say prayers for them.

As the North wind comes in late November, this part of the world is covered under a white blanket. The colour for this direction is white, and the people of this direction are the Caucasian people. We know from our experience that the cold North wind and the snow remind us to seek shelter to keep from freezing so the North wind is teaching us to care for our survival. This is the teaching in this direction – caring. The grandfather, or the spirit animal, the *dodem*, that sits in the North is the bear. The bear, the Elders tell us is the ultimate healer. He heals all physical illnesses, mental illnesses, and spiritual illnesses. He is a great protector. We are also told that when the bear sleeps and hibernates in the winter time that he prays for the East door, he prays for all the red people in the East, he prays for the Asian people in the South, he prays for the black people in the West, and he prays for the white people in the North, and he prays for peace in all the directions, world peace. The bear does that work for us every winter. We thank the bear in our ceremony for his work and thank him for guiding us and directing us to our own inner peace. The bear is a very powerful spirit animal that works with all of humanity.

Finally, the fire is at the centre of the Medicine Wheel. When we build a sweat, we make a fire, and heat the grandfather stones. That fire represents the Creator. It also represents the fire in our hearts, and when we pray in the lodge, we pray to the fire in the sky world, the Creator's fire, our fire in our hearts, and the fire at the centre of the earth. The fires align themselves and provide perfect balance, the perfect way of understanding how to heal the earth. The center of the Medicine Wheel also represents Mother Earth, *Shkagamik-Kwe*, and the colour is green, a colour of life.

As the little boy was descending from the Creators home, he looked from the other side of the moon, and when he viewed the earth from the other side of the moon he saw a sweat lodge. The sweat lodge had a cedar trail so he was very curious to discover what the lodge was about. He descended to the earth and looked inside. To his amazement he saw Seven Grandfathers sitting inside the lodge. He hesitated to go in and was afraid.

The first Grandfather said, "Come on in, *bindiigan*", but the little boy said, "I am too small, they will not listen to me". So the first Grandfather said to him, "That is okay, we will help you teach the people. We will teach the people Wisdom". Wisdom is what helps us understand life and its patterns, and understand ourselves and other people. When you look at patterns, such as how night follows day and day follows night, you gain wisdom by seeking to understand those patterns, and looking to find those patterns in what puzzles you, or the things you don't know about.

The second Grandfather said to the little boy, "We will teach the people Love. Love is the absence of fear, and there is no rascal". The Rascals are defined as inferiority (east), envy (south), resentment (west), not caring (north) and jealousy (centre). That is how we define fear and evil. Love has no rascal, no evil, and when you have love, you have no fear.

The third Grandfather said, "We will teach the people Bravery which means that you face your foe with integrity and you move forward in a good way to face your enemy". Sometimes your enemy is yourself; sometimes it is another person, or a thing or experience or idea. It takes bravery and courage to face those things head on and not falter, not flinch. Integrity means you do this with balance and steadiness, not anger, no rascals.

The fourth Grandfather said, “We will teach the people Respect”. “Re” means “again”, and “spect” means “to look”. So respect means to look again at everything. Look twice at your decisions, look twice at the people, at your family, and look twice at your community. The reason you look twice is to see the positive *and* the negative in everything you encounter in life.

The fifth Grandfather is Humility, which just means we are only one small part of creation; there is no one else just like us. Humility counteracts arrogance. Arrogance is not good for our spiritual understanding or for our relationships. Without Humility we have no vision or love or wisdom.

The sixth Grandfather said, “We will teach the people Honesty. We will teach the people to be honest with each other”. It is what you see out there and you interpret and you give your interpretation to what people say or don’t say. You maintain and develop your honesty by having no illusions, and making careful interpretations.

Finally, the seventh Grandfather said, “We will teach the people to speak the Truth”. Truth is what is *there*. It is what it is, and there is only one truth – *your* truth. I use myself as an example. I can only speak my truth, and I cannot speak for anyone else. I cannot say what their truth is. The Grandfather said, “We teach the people to speak their truth as they relate to each other and the spirit world”. So we must speak our truth when we go into our lodges.

Sometimes people ask about the difference between honesty and truth. Honesty is a value that people understand the world over. Every culture values honesty, and trustworthiness. Likewise, everybody values and honours truth, but the difference is: there is only *one* truth, *your* truth, the truth that *you* speak. There are as many truths as there are people.

So the seven Grandfathers said to the little boy, “If our people understand these teachings of wisdom, love, bravery, respect, humility, honesty and truth that will counteract the violence and it will help the people move forward in a good way, and to live well. Teach them how to live and to live well”.

Those are the Four Directions, the Five Colours, and the Seven Grandfathers, and all carry their own teachings that encompass the totality of knowledge. To reflect on these meanings and come to understand how to apply them to every situation, and every other paradigm, is to have true knowledge. It does not need to be defended – it just *is*. It has been my approach in teaching, writing, speaking and relating to people and working, to practice these teachings and to infuse them into every aspect of what needs to be done. These teachings form the foundation of our fundamental traditional knowledge and are the basis on which we build every way in which we move forward. We learn the things we know because we have these teachings.

An Aboriginal paradigm for pedagogy is often referred to as Indigenous Knowledge (IK). This grew from thousands of years of “research and development” in the natural world. The major premise of IK is a deep respect for all forms of life. The knowledge grew from the territory itself, as did language, and the people lived in a context of relationships and responsibilities with all of that natural world, the Creator, and invisible helpers. They did not have to deal with all the distractions of the modern world we have today.

An IK approach to the roles and values of each aspect of nature creates a paradigm in which relationships, and a relational guide to all human choice, holds the key to understanding. It informs our spiritual understanding and the traditional structure of community. It is the foundations of our Truth. Our language provides a comprehensive overview of traditional teachings passed on by our Elders, commonly referred to as oral teachings. This paradigm has been utilized by the Aboriginal community of this region for millennia. Passions in our communities run very deeply when it comes to oral tradition and the like.

Traditionally, knowledge development and ceremony were always linked. Ceremony is not just a ritual; it is a living encounter with Creator and the Spirit. All the rituals in the world will not take a person to ceremony because we need to go to ceremony through the heart. An Aboriginal paradigm of pedagogy teaches how to connect with learning through the heart.

We must remember that it is through living our teachings that we become who we are. Each person's path will be different. It is not our job to judge another person or their path, but to try to be helpful and loving to them in all ways. Even if that means there are times of confusion. We learn from those teachers also.

In conclusion, I can say that the wisdom of the Elders and our natural surroundings is looked upon as a living teacher and life itself. This has been the underpinning of how I delivered the teachings. Everything that I taught from books, I wove into it these understandings. The lessons the students took from me are their own, but I gave what was founded in the traditions. In the Aboriginal paradigm, learning goes hand-in-hand with experience. An Elder told me, "Use the teachings and the ceremonies or lose the culture." Our people have used these since time immemorial which is why it is understood as a living culture. In our modern times the people have to learn how to apply and use these teachings, how to live them in the midst of all the distractions of the modern culture. I am still working on learning how to do that. The praxis – reflection and action - has been my practice all throughout my career. This has been my Aboriginal paradigm of pedagogy, one which I used throughout teaching in the Native Human Services program.

Alumnus Testimonial: Gus Hill

My name is Waase-Gaaboo; though, many people call me Gus Hill. I feel honored to have this opportunity to briefly share my NHS story with you.

I entered the Native Human Services-Honours Bachelor of Social Work Program (NHS) in 1995. I was, what some might call, a hard sell; I was skeptical about sitting in circle, role playing, critical analysis of old hurts and wounds and much of the activities I encountered from day one. Talking was not an activity to which I was accustomed; however, NHS provided me with a safe space to explore my voice, share my story, practice social work skills and unfold my personality. I critically questioned my ability to ‘help’ and was quite vocal about my lack of confidence. In me the faculty and staff of NHS recognized honesty, humility, bravery, passion and a critical self-awareness that I had not yet recognized and articulated for myself. They very generously shared their observations with me throughout the five years I was a student, and challenged me to become an even better version of myself. They offered me honest, encouraging, kind words with regards to my gifts *and* shortcomings.

NHS provided me with the opportunity to develop into a confident Anishnaabe person with a beginning awareness of my whole self and my capacity for wellness and great achievement. NHS instilled in me the foundational tools and skills for self-reflection that I would further develop throughout my personal and professional life.

I learned the foundational skills in articulating culture-based social work practice. I learned, personally, how to articulate and reflect upon my place in society as an Anishnaabe person in relation to culture, ceremonies, Elders, medicines, self-government, the spectrum of traditional life and a beginning understanding of Indigeneity and decolonization.

NHS fueled me with curiosity and a hunger for further development, both professionally and personally. I went on to complete a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree.

Throughout my 14 years of post-secondary education I worked in frontline service in a variety of settings: child welfare, corrections, residential mental health and addictions treatment. After I completed my degrees, I was an Executive Director of a not-for-profit organization.

I am now a professor of social work at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) in Kitchener, Ontario. I am appointed to the MSW-Aboriginal Field of Study (AFS) which is a program that I helped develop when I was a PhD student at WLU.

I have achieved these things, in large part, because of the ways NHS shaped me. NHS planted seeds of pride and curiosity in me. I continue, on a daily basis, to find myself accessing knowledge and stories that were shared with me at NHS. Gchi-Miigwetch. I acknowledge the great gift that NHS is to the Creation. All my relations.

Alumna Testimonial: Minnijean Brown Trickey

In 1988, I went to Laurentian as a mature student thinking I would find a career. I did not anticipate that I would find a caring community that would remain forever, and a shift in consciousness that has guided me to this day. I was transformed by the experience. I was led to discover my own academic capabilities by my professors, and a way of life that I had always desired, but did not know how to live. As an immigrant who had left family behind, I was offered a new family that embraced my children and me and provided familial support that I missed.

As for that career I sought, the sky became the limit, as I was able to work across cultures with immigrant and refugee families, Aboriginal peoples on reserve and in urban settings, the Inuit community, and many other groups. I was prepared and capable to work across cultures because of my Native Human Services experience. Above all, I came to know that both learning and teaching would be a life-long journey for me.

I am especially proud to be one of the Charter class members in the Native Human Services program. Over the past few years I know that the students have been critical to necessary social change across the country. That is what education is meant to do.

Miigwech.

Alumnus Testimonial: Robin Maness

Boozhoo, my name is Robin Maness and I am a graduate of the Native Human Services Program. The most amazing thing I can say about the program is that it opened my eyes to the world. It was like someone had torn down the walls that surrounded me for so many years and gave me a totally different way of thinking because anger does not help us to change what has happened to our people but this program helps us to develop ways of repairing the damage of policies put in place to assimilate the First People of Turtle Island. In Friendship and Honour

Alumna Testimonial: Katherine Beddows

In 1996 I was working at a local college and found myself thinking about going back to school as a mature student. So I enrolled in the Native Human Services Program at Laurentian University and was accepted. Making that change in my life paved the way to where I am now.

I started at Laurentian University in 1996 in the spring program. It took me 9 years to get my degree as I had to take a break for a few years. I then enrolled in a few distance education courses and decided to enroll full time again in 2002. I graduated in June of 2005. The staff and professors at Native Human Services had supported me throughout every challenge that surfaced in my life. They guided me when they thought I was taking on too many courses and helped me find a tutor when I needed one. I found that when I needed assistance or clarification in any subject it was very easy for me to locate the professor and sit down and talk with them. The whole program, whether it be administration staff, courses, or professors, had helped me to develop a great deal of self confidence. It taught me to strive towards any goals I set as well as the importance of continuing with learning even after I graduated.

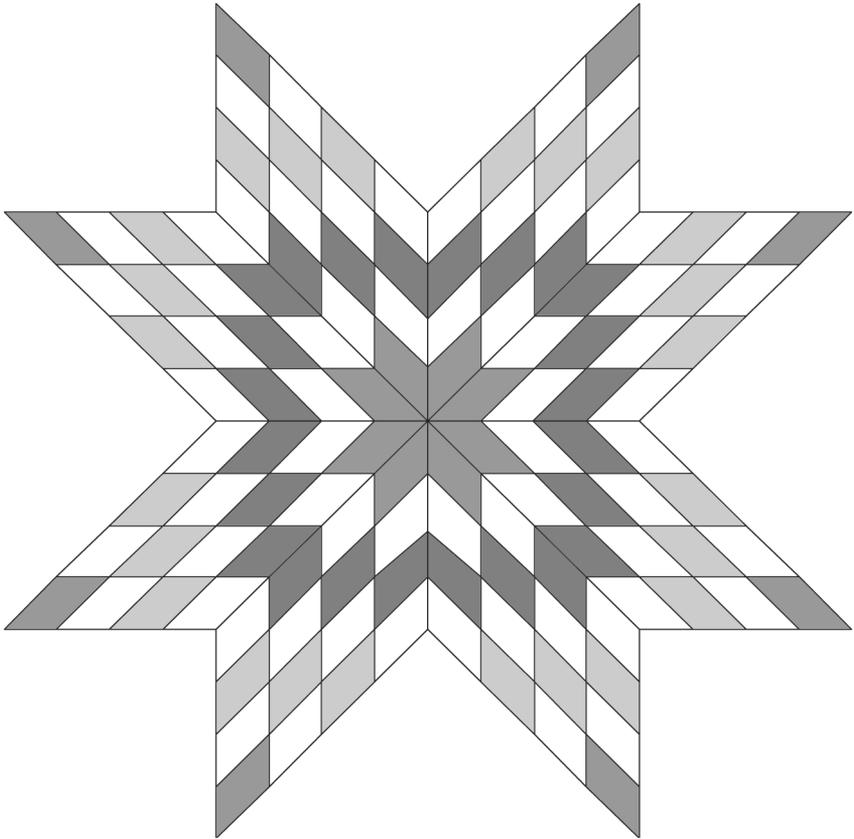
In 2003, I started working for Correctional Services Canada and have been working for them ever since. I have worked as an Aboriginal Reintegration Officer, Parole Office, Aboriginal Liaison Officer and now I am working as an Aboriginal Correctional Program Officer at the Sudbury Parole Office. Taking the social work courses at Native Human Services prepared me to work with clients with mental health needs, understand different learning theories as well as conduct proper risk assessments. In my position I am continuously being trained for the different courses I teach to my clients whether that be in the Violence Prevention, Substance Abuse, Basic Healing or Family Violence Program.

I am so grateful for having been accepted into the Native Human Service Program. It allowed me the opportunity to meet wonderful fellow students, faculty as well as learning tools within courses that are really used in my employment. I have also had the opportunity to supervise 3rd and 4th year Native Human Services students on their placements. I am proud to recommend this program to people who are considering furthering their education at a University level and especially within the field of social work - more specifically, the Native Human Services Program.

Chi Miigwech, for allowing me the opportunity to tell you a little bit of myself and how entering the program has allowed me to grow spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically within the realm of my career.

Katherine Beddows

Aboriginal Correctional Program Officer
Correctional Services Canada
Sudbury Parole Office



Coming Home

Cheryle Partridge

“Indian education for us is both a cultural and pedagogical experience” (Diamond, 1987, p. 86). Diamond could have been writing about the School of Native Human Services because in fact, this is what our program and school have always been about; in that order.

Boozhoo; Aanii; Wachiya; Sago; Tansi; Kia Ora; Kwey; Bonjour; Greetings.

Baybaamoosay-kwe n’dishnikaaz (My Spirit Name is Woman Who Leaves Healing Tracks), Migizi n’dodem (I belong to the Eagle Clan), winiizhoo Midewiwin¹ (I am Second Degree Midewiwin), Wasauksing miinwaa N’Swakamok n’doonjibaa (I am from Wasauksing First Nation and I live and work in Sudbury). Anishinaabe² miinwaa Bottawatomi n’dow (I am of Ojibway and Pottawatomi descent).

This is the way we introduce ourselves when we Anishinaabek (plural of Anishinaabe) are gathered together, only then do we introduce ourselves using our English name.

Beginning of this Personal Narrative:

I was extremely fortunate to have gone through and completed the Indigenous Social Work Program, formerly the Native Human Services (NHS) program. What did that mean to me? It meant there were Aboriginal professors! It meant I was able to re-learn Anishinaabemowin (Ojibway language)! It meant I was able to talk and be understood without having to ‘backtrack’! It meant I was able to share life experiences within the classroom! It meant I was able to joke around and laugh without being frowned upon! It meant I was able to share food during feasts! It meant I was able to listen to Ancient / Ancestors’ Teachings within the classroom! It meant I was able to learn the real Anishinaabe history!

All of these in combination are foreign to those of us Aboriginal peoples who have grown up studying in provincial schools. I always found I was

1 Heartway/Spiritual orientation of Anishinaabe Peoples

2 Denotes Ojibway, Odawa, Pottawatomi heritage

the only ‘Indian’³ kid in the class and I found myself shrinking smaller and smaller as the years went on, not really, but that is how I felt. There were always louder voices in the class who were asked for answers. I knew the answers but also knew I wouldn’t be asked. So coming into a classroom with an Aboriginal professor and other Aboriginal students was like *coming home*. I am sure this is what Alcoze and Mawhiney (1988) meant when they wrote *Returning Home*, here is an excerpt;

The key to an appropriate curriculum for training workers to serve Native communities is, of course, cultural relevance. That Native people are themselves best qualified to ensure this characteristic is beyond question. Equally obvious is the fact that a community-based curriculum must reflect the values and makeup of the community. This means that it must be inextricably intertwined with the social systems within the community, and its goals and potential benefits must be understood and supported by community members (p. 36).

Although I was a mature student and far past my blooming days, that is exactly what happened to me, I bloomed, I blossomed and I found my voice. I was so enthralled by everything I was hearing, seeing, and doing that I became alive in all my senses. I was meeting new people and forming life-long friendships. I can say that now because it has been twenty something years and I am still in close contact with many of my class-mates. I became a sponge and was absorbing and soaking in everything I could. I had always loved to read and now I was excitedly reading the books and articles that I “had to” with gleeful abandon! I had made a successful transition from being out of school for most of my adult life and working in the city, to being a university student. I had taken some college courses along the way and I am sure they had kept my creative juices flowing while I worked various administrative, supervisory and managerial positions in Toronto. This was different – I relocated to Sudbury and became a full-time student even though it was tough to give up a regular paycheque. I was in the environment I had always envisioned for myself.

3 Indian – Before the 1970’s, this was the term used to describe the Original Peoples of this land. It was before Native/Aboriginal/Native American came into common usage.

A Dream Realized:

It had always been my dream when I was in high school to go to university. Now that I was here, I couldn't believe it! I was walking around the campus in a state of wonder and awe and I am sure half the time my mouth was hanging open. Here I was, this Anishnaabe-Kwe from Wasauksing actually *in* university. I have vivid memories of walking down the hallways in the Arts and Classroom buildings and looking to see if anyone was coming and actually *touching the walls*, to see if I was really awake and not dreaming. I was so excited and happy to be at university that my age was of no consequence. It was as if the years had flown away and here I was, a student. Of course it only took one look in the mirror to see that grandmother's face looking back at me. It didn't matter, I knew instinctively that I was in the right place at the right time. This was my time and I had better make the most of it, which I did and was rewarded with marks to make graduate school a possibility and that was the inevitable next step for me. But I am getting ahead of myself, there is much more to share as this ongoing narrative will reveal.

Native Human Services transformed my life and I found that I could discuss anything with the professors. I was encouraged, empowered and embraced by the knowledge they imparted to me. I found that I even looked forward to being in the building, as if it had taken on the welcoming characteristics of those who worked there. Those feelings I never forgot. Why? There is a saying that goes like this;

I've learned that people will forget what you've said.

I've learned that people will forget what you've done.

But people will never forget how you made them feel.

Maya Angelou (n.d.)

A Word About the Program and Faculty:

The School of Native Human Services is an Aboriginal culture-specific social work program. We have to applaud and lay kudos and flowers at the feet of the movers and shakers of the era (mid-eighties) who were astute enough and had the foresight to realize that Laurentian University needed this type of program. When one thinks about it, it is a ‘no-brainer,’ after all, the institution is situated on Anishinaabe land / territory and the city is surrounded by First Nation communities. The original name of Sudbury in Anishinaabemowin is N’Swakamok which means where the three roads cross / meet. If one listens with all their senses they can feel and imagine the Anishinaabek of days gone by walking gently upon Mother Earth with their moccasin-clad feet as they traversed the well-worn paths of their ancestors. Those of us Anishinaabek who still live in the region do feel that sense of belonging that emanates from the land / Mother Earth. That’s why we feel so at home at Laurentian University, at least that is my theory and I think a very credible one. As students we were expected to get to know ourselves and to change those characteristics which we knew instinctively were not conducive to the practice of social work. We became familiar with the phrases, you have to help yourself before you can help others and you have to walk your talk.

Contained within the Statement of Philosophy, Elder Solomon tells us the purpose for NHS; “That is why there is now a Native Human Services Programme at Laurentian University. We will heal ourselves. We will heal our communities. And we will heal our Nations” (White, 1992, p. 3).

Within the NHS classroom students are introduced to the Seven Grandfather Teachings and it was explained that these teachings were a standard to which we should aspire to live by as these were Ancient Teachings that had been handed down from generation to generation since time immemorial.

The Seven Teachings or the Seven Gifts are; (1) **Nbwaakaawin:** To cherish knowledge is to know *wisdom*. (2) **Zaagidwin:** To know *love* is to know peace. (3) **Mnaademdiwin:** To honour all of the Creation is to have *respect*. (4) **Aakde’win:** *Bravery* is to face the foe with integrity. (5) **Gwekwaadziwin:** *Honesty* in facing a situation is to be

brave. (6) **Dbadendizwin: Humility** is to know yourself as a sacred part of the Creation. (7) **Debwewin: Truth** is to know all of these things (Benton-Banai, 1988, p. 64). As students we were expected to contribute and participate in discussions. Our interactions were reciprocal and had a give and take to them that we all understood. When a professor was imparting an important point or a particular social work theory, he / she would give a personal example from their past experiences in order to give us a context for the information shared. We were extremely fortunate because we also had mature students many of whom had years of experience in the field and they also shared their experiences so the younger students could learn from them. In this way we learned from one another. This type of learning is encouraged within our classrooms, it is as Baskin (2011) stated, “Most of what I learned that was valuable to me as a social worker came, not from school, but from other Indigenous helpers, service users, and experiences” (p. 27).

The professors were very knowledgeable about the culture and the Teachings, they were funny and didn't mind using themselves as the central figure in a joke (they could laugh at themselves while laughing with the students), they often drew diagrams to illustrate a point, which was so helpful to those of us who are visual learners, there were opportunities for us to attend ceremonies in the area such as pipe ceremonies, sweat lodges and feasts. Those who taught Anishinaabemowin (Ojibway language) were fluent speakers and were very patient with those who needed more help in pronunciation. It was their expertise that helped other fluent speakers (Cree, Mohawk, Iroquois, French, English for example) begin to have a familiarity with Anishinaabemowin. In fact, some learned faster and got better marks than the Anishinaabek. There was a feeling of community and camaraderie within the program that students responded to and became willing and enthusiastic Laurentian University community members.

Speaking of one of the members of our university community without whom our program would not be the same; Freda Recollet. Freda is the secretary of the school and has been here since the beginning. She is the backbone of our school and has the corporate memory of our existence in her very capable hands. We are fortunate to have her and that she is a

fluent speaker of Anishinaabemowin is the icing on the School of Native Human Services cake.

“Different Coloured Flowers:”

The School of Native Human Services has always consisted of about five percent (5%) non-Aboriginal students since its charter class and all have been welcomed in our program. “The Medicine Wheel teaches us that the four symbolic races are all part of the same human family. All are brothers and sisters living on the same Mother Earth” (Bopp, Bopp, Brown & Lane, 1984, p. 10). I make it a point to articulate to non-Aboriginal students that I am happy to see them in the class, I tell them that I am happy to see that their minds and hearts are open to learning a different world view and that I am happy to see they are willing to gain an awareness and become informed about the Original Peoples of this land.

A line from *The Sacred Tree* (1994) comes to mind and evokes such a beautiful picture with the words, “All the races and tribes in the world are like the different coloured flowers of one meadow. All are beautiful. As children of the Creator they must all be respected” (Bopp, Bopp, Lane, & Brown, 1984, p. 80). This reinforces one of the Sacred Teachings of the Seven Grandfathers, that of respect. One of my former professors and now retired, Professor Herb Nabigon had this to say about respect, it means to *look twice* and further to this, “If a person thinks twice before making a decision or taking some action, her or his reasoning is good” (Nabigon & Mawhiney, 1996, p. 30). If we all learned to pause and think before we said or did anything, our community / society would be a better place to live.

The School of Native Human Services (SNHS) follows the Social Work Code of Ethics as well as the Sacred Teachings of the Seven Grandfathers. “Native social work is grounded in Cree and Ojibway culture and its courses reflect the Seven Grandfathers and Medicine Wheel Teachings” (Nabigon, 2009, p. vii). When I came to university I considered myself a grounded individual and a proud Anishinaabe-kwe. My eyes were opened wide when I started learning about our real history, about residential schools, and about the legacy of colonization and oppression that we (Aboriginal peoples) were struggling with in our communities. I now

knew why there was so much chaos in our communities. I found out that it wasn't only my home community that was affected, but it was all Aboriginal communities that were affected. What a revelation! The more I learned, the more incredulous I became. To be honest, I saw with my own eyes the destruction that alcohol had caused in my community, but now I was learning the how, and why many Aboriginal peoples had turned toward negative coping mechanisms. It was systemic.

When I was a young Anishinaabe-kwe living in Toronto I was always active in supporting the many causes of the day such as the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Free Leonard Peltier Movement, in particular. I wore buttons that proclaimed I was "Proud to be Indian," that "Custer Had It Coming," that I believe in, "Indian Power," and that I, "Support Indian Resistance." I know exactly what the buttons said because I recently searched through old boxes and found them, I have kept them after all these years have passed. I guess we all keep things that we feel strongly about. What I am sharing is the fact that I always cared about and actively supported causes for Aboriginal peoples. It seems as if it was my destiny to end up teaching in an Aboriginal culture-specific social work program.

Lifelong Friendships and Healing:

There were certain students who seemed to gravitate toward each other and it wasn't long before there was a group of us who would get together to help each other out note-wise or to study. Of course it always meant a pot-luck at each other's place. We would gather together and study, play board games, laugh, eat, laugh, talk, laugh, sometimes we laughed so much, we cried. I remember one of our group members who just happened to be non-Aboriginal, and she had a round bed! Well, we had never seen such a thing before and we never tired of going to her room and lying across her bed and wondering where the head of the bed was? Many of us were mature students, not all, but you would never know it when we got together, we somehow recaptured that part of us that was childlike, retrieved it from deep within, and had a joyous time.

I always say the undergrad years were the hardest for me, and for sure they were, but I was able to balance the hard with the realization

that I wasn't the only one going through tough times, we all were. We had no money to speak of, our apartments were small, and some had children to look after. I believe our gatherings were one of the things that helped us succeed. Of course the other thing that helped us succeed were our families 'back home.' My parents and my daughter's family were supportive and proud that I was doing what I had always wanted to do. The gatherings provided stress relief, they were healthful, my classmates were good cooks, we helped each other solve academic and personal problems, and we listened to each other from the heart. That is why we are still friends to this day. We made beautiful memories together and it is always fun to get together and re-live, as Springsteen (1984) says, our "glory days."

It was also at this time that I became actively involved in the spiritual aspect of my life. I became friends with people in the Midewiwin Three Fires Lodge. There was a beautiful (inside and out) young couple who took everyone under their wings and taught us so much about who we were as Anishnaabe peoples. I had been on the periphery of the Lodge for a while by the time I came to Sudbury (my brother-in-law and other friends had joined the Lodge), but now I was drawn like a moth to the flame closer and started attending ceremonies in St. Charles; Sudbury; Roseau River, Manitoba; and Bad River, Wisconsin. I did my third year placement at Newbery House, a halfway house for Aboriginal Federal offenders, which was run very competently by the beautiful young couple. As a student I found that socializing with federal offenders at the halfway house through talking, listening and observing taught me so much in the way of human behaviour and I saw firsthand how our oppressive past was playing out right in front of my eyes. I thought how parallel our paths were; the offenders had started learning about their culture and spirituality within the prison walls and many of us had started learning about our culture and spirituality within the university walls. I have been on my healing journey for more than twenty-four years now and yet it seems like yesterday that I began.

Somehow I kept the two roads I was on separate, not deliberately, but that's how it played out. My academic road was strong and had flowers blooming along the edges which were my friends in the school and my Red Road was strong and it also had flowers blooming along the edges

which were my friends in the Lodge. I also have to mention that my family were the flowers blooming wherever I was, they were and are incredibly supportive in my life. The two worlds were not completely separate; there were students who were in the Lodge too, as well as one very important professor who was and is, the Chief of the Eastern Doorway, Jim Dumont. He has certainly done more than his share of helping, healing and teaching Anishnaabe peoples and non-Anishnaabe peoples over the past thirty to thirty-five years.

Full Circle:

Now that I am teaching in the very program I myself graduated from, I find myself trying to re-create the atmosphere and feelings I experienced. In other words, I want the students to love the program the way I did and do. Is this possible? Yes, it is. It is up to us, the present day professors to foster the feelings, to enhance the enthusiasm, and to be the role models we want the students to emulate. Not to be just like us, for we are all exquisite and unique human beings, but to feel the pride of being Anishnaabe / Aboriginal / non-Aboriginal and to study and work in an institution such as Laurentian University.

When students first come into my class whether I have taught them in previous years or if this is their first time in the class I teach, I ensure I have a welcoming smile on my face. Smiles are infectious, and on almost all occasions are reciprocated. If I can, I greet the student by name, I read somewhere that this is the most beautiful sound an individual can ever hear. It is hard for a professor to remember the names of all the students in her / his classes, but it is a vitally important skill to acquire. At the beginning of the year, I have a list of students names in front of me to use, but it becomes easier as time goes on to remember faces to names. It is also important to correctly spell and pronounce students names.

I have taken to holding the first day of September classes in the Tipi in Founders Square, which is centrally located on the university grounds. I find students appreciate being in a totally different setting than the classroom. They really enjoy the fire burning in the pit and watching the flames dance around, and the fact that we can actually burn the sacred medicines to cleanse ourselves. I share teachings about the role of men

and women regarding fire and water and also about the three “r’s” (respect for self, respect for others and responsibility). I also bring my hand-drum and sing a Welcome Song for the incoming students. Many of the students are shy and try to sit behind others but I tell them that is why we are sitting in a circle so we can all see each other and we are all equal within the circle.

During regular classes one of the main things I try to do is to be the first one in class. I believe this shows the students that I respect them and look forward to being there to greet them when they arrive. If this is the first class, I smile and introduce myself using my English name, since this is the name on the course roster, then I introduce myself using my Anishnaabe name, Clan, Three Fires Lodge designation, home territory and ancestral tribal affiliation as I did with in the introduction of this article. I then pick a spot to place a few sacred smudging items; a brightly coloured cloth upon which I place my shell smudge bowl, and a small vial of essential oil which contains the sacred medicines of sage and sweetgrass among others. I use oil instead of sage because the classrooms are not set up so we can actually carry out our time-honoured customs and burn the sacred medicines. I explain and demonstrate the technique to those students who have not experienced smudging before. I explain to them they must use their imaginations so they can see the smoke arising from the smudge bowl, they can certainly smell the soothing aroma coming from the oil. I make a motion as if I am washing my hands in the ‘smoke,’ then I draw the smoke with both hands over my head to cleanse all negativity from my mind and to open up my mind to all possibilities, I draw the smoke over my ears so I can hear good words and thoughts, over my eyes so I am able to see goodness and positivity around me, I draw the smoke into and over my open mouth so I will speak good words and good thoughts, over my heart and body so I will see, hear, feel, and speak from the heart. I tell the students that these items will be set up in the same place for every class and they can smudge when they enter into the class if they so desire.

This exercise is also a form of *empowerment* (a good social work term), they have been given the choice to smudge or not to smudge, it is entirely up to them. Many students do smudge both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. I mention that this is a positive way to begin the class. I believe it can’t help but make them feel good about the classroom setting

knowing all the negative thoughts and feelings lingering around have been cleared out. The sacred items remain in place for the duration of the class and help to make the students' environment a safe, accommodating and comfortable place to be. After all, some the subjects we teach are tough and even, dare I say it, gut-wrenching, especially when covering the residential school era.

I have also acquired the habit of beginning all of my classes with inspirational quotes, a short inspiring video clip or a short empowering article. I go around the room and ask each student to tell the class what gem they gleaned from the exercise. I find this fulfills three (3) purposes: (1) students learn to 'think on their feet,' as they aren't given any time to prepare an answer; (2) they learn to reflect on their life, because I ask them to make it personal and give an example from their own life, and; (3) we begin to form relationships in this way as we get to know one another better. I include myself in the exercise and the students get to know me as a person and not only as a professor.

At some point, usually during the last semester, I share my personal story with the students and I tell them that being a professor was the farthest thought in my mind as I was making my way through the program. As I share with the students, I find myself looking around the classroom and wondering and asking out loud, "Which one of you will teach in the program next?" Then I tell them that it could very well be one of them, after all, I was a student not that long ago. It might be the first time that they have ever thought about it, but once it is in their subconscious, it will surface from time to time, and before they know it, there they will be, teaching in the School of Native Human Services! It is rewarding and fulfilling place to be.

Students in the Native Human Services program are encouraged to begin their healing journey, if they haven't already started, as they will become social workers and helpers in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. If they are to become helpers, then they should be able to help themselves before they can expect to go out and help others. Aboriginal communities are small, whether they are reserve or urban, and there are always individuals who will see you, they expect their helpers to live a clean, healthy lifestyle. In other words, "Walk your talk." They will

know if you are all talk and no action, and you will be treated accordingly. There is nothing faster than the moccasin telegraph to inform community members of your actions. This is all part of your education and isn't meant to deter, but rather to inform you of the realities of the life of an Aboriginal social worker.

The courses I teach are variously; culturally-specific Indigenous social work contexts; culturally-specific helping utilizing Indigenous methods; culturally-specific programs and issues specific to Indigenous populations; peace-making in Indigenous social work practice; and colonization and decolonization issues of violence specific to Indigenous communities.

I would like to mention the different ways of Aboriginal healing that are practiced and / or discussed within the School either through guest speakers, through the Elders on campus, or through the professors themselves; Berry Fasting; Vision-seeking; Dreaming; Sweat Lodge Ceremonies; Pipe Ceremonies; Drumming; Smudging; Drawing; Humour / Teasing; Respect; Story-telling; Offerings & Prayers; Give-aways; Listening / Watching / Doing; Naming Ceremonies; Belonging (society / band / clan); Extended Family; Honouring; Encouragement / Acknowledgment; and Talking / Healing / Teaching Circles. The list is not exhaustive and if some have been missed, my apologies.

We do teach all the regular social work curriculum that is required to obtain an Honours Bachelor of Work Degree (4 year degree) and we are accredited by the Canadian Association of Social Work Educators (CASWE). The students who graduate from our program graduate with social work education PLUS. They can work biculturally, either in 'mainstream' organizations, in urban / rural organizations or in 'on-reserve' organizations. This is of utmost importance as we (Anishinaabek) are walking with one foot in both worlds.

Concluding Thoughts:

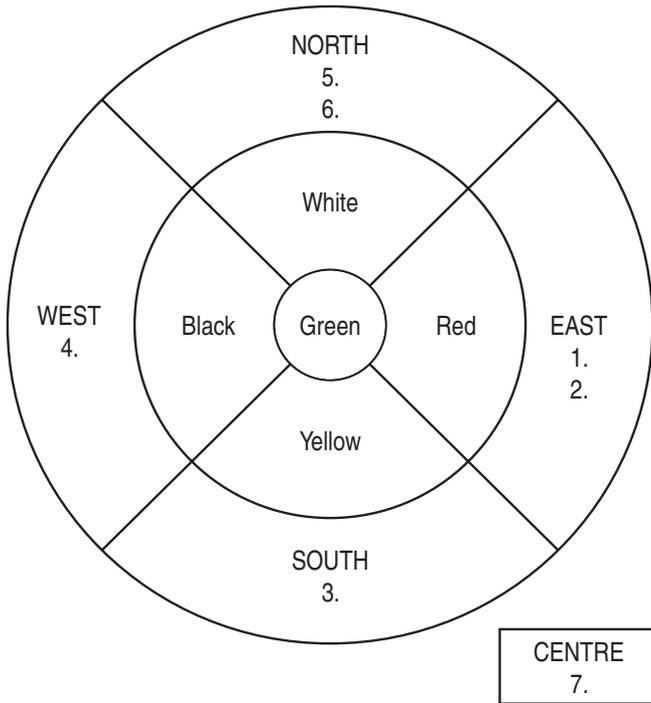
When we decided to publish a journal about the School of Native Human Services to celebrate and commemorate its twenty-fifth year of existence, it seemed like a wonderful and inspired idea. Now that it is almost a reality, it seems to me it is beyond my capacity to articulate what

a precious and invaluable place of knowledge we are privileged to work at, in the School of Native Human Services. For myself, I found the niche I didn't even know I was looking for, when I came to teach at this school. In closing I would like to re-quote Angelou, ". . . people will never forget how you made them feel." I teach from the heart and believe that by doing that, students can feel the passion I have for this program and hopefully it ignites their passion for learning about Aboriginal culture-specific social work. I would like to illustrate what my narrative looks like in my mind, in the context of the Medicine Wheel. See Diagram 1 on next page.

Diagram 1

Coming Home Legend

1. Beginning of This Personal Narrative
2. A Dream Realized
3. A Word About the Program & Faculty
4. Different Coloured Flowers
5. Lifelong Friendships & Healing
6. Full Circle
7. Concluding Thoughts



Medicine Wheel Legend

- East – Red, Vision, Beginnings, Feelings
 - South – Yellow, Sun, Time, Relationships
 - West – Black, Respect, Reflection, Water
 - North – White, Caring, Movement, Air
 - Centre – Green, Balance, Healing, Listening
- (Adapted from: Nabigon & Mawhiney, 1996)

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POEM

FOR I AM

*For I am empowered to be all I can be
 Done with all the crying, weeping and pity me
 It has made me what I am today
 For I am self-confident to be all I can be
 Done with the doubts, insecurity, and shyness
 Of what might be, it is safe, let me see
 For I am sanctioned to be all I can be
 I have the strength to overcome fear
 My inner instincts will let me know
 Of any danger, of any foe
 For I am allowed to trust my feelings and be all I can be
 For I am strong, a woman like me
 For I am powerful you can see
 I will not take anything that will discourage me
 For I am Beautiful
 For I am Worthy
 For I am ME*

- Agnes Kanasawe -

Alumna Testimonial: Cynthia Belfitt

Kwe', I am Mi'kmaq and a member of the Annapolis Valley First Nation in Nova Scotia. I am proud to say that I am a graduate of Laurentian's Native Human Services Bachelor of Social Work Program. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Native Human Services Department for their guidance and support throughout my academic years and professional career.

When I first enrolled into the Native Human Services Program, I did not know my native culture as I was not raised in my First Nation community and was not exposed to any of the Native culture. I am grateful for this program as I was able to find my true identity and bring a sense of balance to my life. This program has continued to encourage me to learn my culture, traditions, and language.

Since I have graduated from the Native Human Services Program I went on to obtain my Masters in Social Work degree at Wilfrid Laurier. I continue to receive encouragement and support from the faculty and staff in Native Human Services program to obtain higher education. The encouragement that I continue to receive from this program is very up lifting.

The Native Human Services faculty and staff continue to be my role models. I know that I can count on them to continue to provide me guidance and support throughout my personal life, academic, and professional career.

Alumna Testimonial: Shelly Moore-Frappier

Native Human Services validated me as an Anishinawbe Kwe and gave me a sense of true belonging for the first time in my educational experience. I grew up in a mainstream academic setting where my culture was seen as “lived long ago” or “dissident”. It wasn’t until my second year of university that I found the Native Human Services Program. At this time I went through a cultural awakening. I had a new appreciation for my family’s customs and traditional knowledge instead of feeling ashamed of it.

Native Human Services helped me realize my true potential and it was the first time that I connected with curriculum on a personal level. Entering into a world of Indigenous scholars was very empowering. Studying with students of similar lived experiences was empowering. Through the Native Human Services Program I grew emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. I also gained mentors and lifelong friendships.

All my relations.

Shelly Moore-Frappier, OCE, B.Ed., MSW

Alumna Testimonial: Debbie Koski

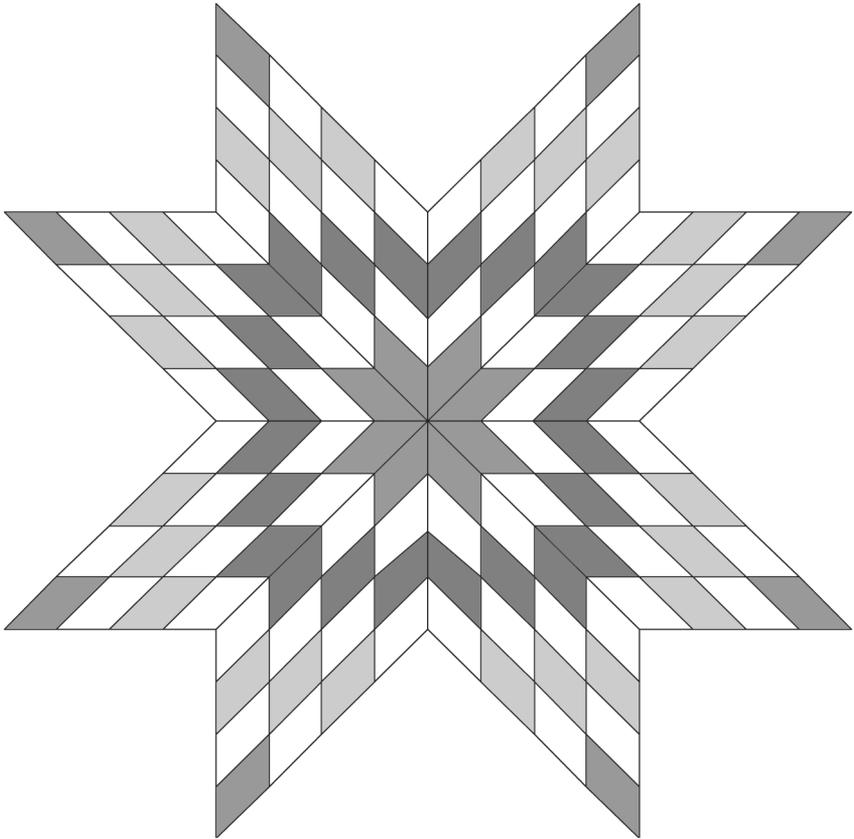
Hello everyone,

I would like to tell you about my three years, of a four year Social Work Degree, in the Native Human Services Program at Laurentian University. I say three years because for the first year of my undergraduate degree, I was in the Mainstream Social Work Program. Two of my electives that first year were Native Studies classes with Professor Jim Dumont and I was fascinated with Native culture and the history of Aboriginal people. Up to that point in my life, my contact with people from other cultures was very limited and I developed a desire to learn more for both professional and personal reasons.

For my second year of social work, I applied to the Native Human Services Program and was thankfully accepted. During the next three years I worked hard at learning Social Work practice skills while educating myself about Aboriginal culture. As I had no experiences to draw on, like social programs brought to my reserve, it was very challenging at times to write papers from a “Native Perspective.” Thankfully I met some of the most wonderful professors and fellow students in the world who were always there to offer help and provide a shoulder to lean on. We got through those years with a lot of interesting potlucks, healing circles, laughter and shared research.

I want to say thank you and meegwetch to everyone in the Native Human Services Program for all the fun and learning. I was well prepared to obtain my MSW years later and to work as a Social Worker with both Native and non- Native clients for seventeen years. I have now retired from my job with Health Sciences North in Espanola but often look back with great fondness to my years spent with my Native Human Services family. I feel very blessed to have known the staff and students.

**Sincerely,
Debbie Koski MSW, RSW (retired).**



Relationships with the Aboriginal Communities

Sharon Corbiere-Johnston
Lissa Lavallee
Susan Manitowabi

The intent of this paper is to discuss and provide a number of examples of how relationships between the Native Human Services Program and the Aboriginal community have been built and sustained. These relationships with the Aboriginal community have been integral to the development and evolution of the Native Human Services Program. This paper will touch briefly on the early beginnings of the Native Human Services Program and the role that the Regional Working group played in the development of the Native Human Services Program including the need for culturally relevant programming. We will then highlight recent developments within the Native Human Services Program specifically the accreditation of the program and the creation of the School of Native Human Services. Next we will explore the relationship between the School of Native Human Services and the Laurentian University Native Education Council and how this relationship has and continues to support programming. Field education is a crucial component of the Native Human Services Program as this is where students in the program gain practical experience in social work. Finally, we will discuss the partnership agreements with First Nation educational institutes as it is through these relationships that students in outlying areas of the Province can earn their degree without leaving their communities.

The Development of the Native Human Services Program

The first article in this edition of the journal discussed the beginnings of the Native Human Services Program. The need for a culturally relevant social work program grew out of the response to the challenges identified by the Regional Working Group such as: failure of social services to “improve” the Native situation; the imposition of non-Native standards; lack of control over programming; lack of input into the design, content and implementation of programs; inadequate funding; and, lack of appropriate training of social workers (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988, p. 5).

Further, Art Solomon, an Elder within the Regional Working Group, identified early on the need to involve the Aboriginal communities in the design, delivery and implementation of the program. Thus the need to ground the program within an Aboriginal worldview and the need for strong relationships with the community was important at the onset and remains a central part of the program today.

Grounding the Program within an Aboriginal Worldview

What is meant by Aboriginal worldview? Aboriginal peoples have a view of the cosmos in which there is a vertical layering of realms and horizontal expansions related to the four cardinal directions – east, south, west and north (Hart, 2008). The individual and the community stand at the centre of the intersection between the vertical and horizontal dimensions. From this Aboriginal worldview come our understandings of time and relationships. Our understandings of time are related to kinship and clan structures which are also tied to life course development (birth to death) within the family and community which are also connected to rituals and ceremonies. Contained within this worldview are several beliefs; that the people are caretakers of the land; that individual wellness is connected to the welfare of the community; and, there exists a relationship that extends beyond the human world. Thus, the notion of “all my relations” that speaks to the special relationship that Aboriginal peoples have to one another, the environment and everything in it and to the Creator (Hart, 2008; Morrisette, McKenzie and Morrisette, 1993). This teaching about relationships is embedded in the Native Human Services program and in the relationships that the program has to its community partners.

The Evolution of the Native Human Services Program

Establishing a good strong relationship between the Regional Working Group and the university community was crucial in the development of the Native Human Services Project. This connection to the community initially supported the development, implementation and growth of the Native Human Services Program. Under the guidance of the Regional Working Group and university partners, the Native Human Services Project evolved into the Native Human Services Program, a program

under Laurentian University's School of Social Work. The benefit of this relationship was that the Native Human Services Program became accredited with the School of Social Work through Canadian Association of Social Work Education.

In 2007, with the goal of self-determination, the Native Human Services program applied to the Canadian Association of Social Work Education to have its own stand-alone accreditation. The self-study process began in 2007 with the assistance of Gord Bruyere, a member of the Canadian Association of Social Work Education Board of Accreditation. He provided guidance and advice around the standards of practice that the Board of Accreditation would be assessing for. In April 2008, the Native Human Services Program submitted its self-study to the Board of Accreditation.

Around the same time, the Native Human Services Program applied to become the School of Native Human Services. This process involved writing a proposal to the Dean of the Faculty of Professional Schools providing a rationale for the development of the new school, a five year plan and an organizational structure outlining the new relationship within the Laurentian University structure, more specifically, the relationship between the School of Native Human Services and the School of Social Work and the community represented through the Laurentian University Native Education Council (LUNEC). In June 2008, the Native Human Services Program received Senate approval to become the School of Native Human Services. In 2009, the School of Native Human Services received its first conditional accreditation for 4 years from the Canadian Association of Social Work Education with reports to the Board of Accreditation due in 2011 and 2013.

Subsequently, the reports submitted to the Board of Accreditation were satisfactory and in 2013 the School of Native Human Services received the remainder of its term of accreditation until 2016 when they will undergo the accreditation process once again. It is noted that each School of Social Work must apply for accreditation every seven years unless they receive accreditation for a shorter term at which time they must submit reports as requested from the Board of Accreditation.

As noted above, part of the rationale for the development of the new School of Native Human Services required that we describe the relationship between the Laurentian University Native Education Council and the Native Human Services Program. In the following section we will describe that relationship and highlight how that relationship supports and helps to sustain the program.

Laurentian University Native Education Council

When the Native Human Services Program was in its developmental stages a Program Committee (comprised of four members from the local community, two members from the Department of Native Studies and two members from the School of Social Work) was established to ensure “ongoing effectiveness” of the Native Human Services Program (Alcoze & Mawhiney, p. 47). A letter of understanding between Laurentian University and the Robinson-Huron Chief Council formalized the terms of the collaborative partnership ensuring that members of Native communities would continue to have supervisory and decision making powers as well as input into all academic matters via the Program Committee. This Program Committee was responsible for “personnel matters, such as faculty appointment and renewals, tenure evaluation, promotion and the selection of programme coordinators” (p. 50). This committee was disbanded in the early 1990’s.

On July 17, 1991, a Working Group to Establish a Native Advisory Committee was formed. This committee eventually evolved into the Laurentian University Native Education Council (LUNEC). Laurentian University Native Education Council is an Advisory committee to the President of Laurentian University (LUNEC, Terms of Reference, 2009).

Laurentian University Native Education Council’s mandate is to facilitate Native self-determination. It does this by providing advice and recommendations on all matters related to Native education at Laurentian. The Laurentian University Native Education Council is comprised of representation from the regional and local political leadership (Robinson-Huron Chiefs Council, Union of Ontario Indians, or United Chiefs and Council of Manitoulin), local First Nation communities, Aboriginal Organizations, Laurentian University Indigenous student associations and

Elders. This broad representation ensures that the Aboriginal community has sufficient representation at Laurentian University.

Laurentian University Native Education Council has a special relationship with Laurentian University, specifically to the President of Laurentian who reports regularly to the Board of Governors and to Senate on advice received from the Laurentian University Native Education Council. A representative from Laurentian University Native Education Council sits on both the Board of Governors and the Senate. The Board of Governors and Senate each appoint a representative to Laurentian University Native Education Council. These relationships ensure that advice is followed up on by the university.

At the program level, Laurentian University Native Education Council plays an important role in supporting the School of Native Human Services. For example, Laurentian University Native Education Council supported the decision of the faculty, staff and students to change from the Native Human Services Program to the School of Native Human Services.

Responsiveness to community

The School of Native Human Services maintains its responsiveness to community needs in a number of ways such as student recruiting, job fairs, field placements and through being actively involved with Laurentian University Native Education Council. Many of the faculty and staff are from local Aboriginal communities and maintain their connections to the communities by being actively involved in their communities. For example, members of the faculty are involved in ceremonies (Midewiwin Society, sweats, cedar baths, etc); community events (Aboriginal Day, cultural activities, powwows); community planning initiatives, (Aboriginal Women's Initiative, Water Walk); drum groups (Waabishki Mkwaa Singers); and volunteering as board members (Anishinabemowin Teg Board). Involvement in these kinds of activities creates exposure in the community that help faculty and staff to keep abreast of community issues so that we are able to assist communities in developing appropriate responses. This helps our students as we are able to relate to them the realities of social conditions and provides opportunities to learn

based on real life experience. Building a relationship with community provides a solid foundation to explore research partnerships and to create opportunities for students to gain meaningful practicum experiences.

Building relationships with community groups establishes a strong foundation for community change. By working alongside the community, the School of Native Human Services assists communities to be self-determining and to gain knowledge and skills that help them achieve self-determination. This relationship with the community goes both ways. Without the input, advice and support from the community Native Human Services could not possibly maintain its connection to community and thus its connection to the issues that impact the community and therefore could not maintain its responsiveness to the needs of the community.

The community is involved with Native Human Services in several ways: agency representatives support the field placement; agency representatives support Native Human Services by attending class as guest speakers; and they provide input into the program through consultation through Laurentian University Native Education Council.

Research Projects

There are a number of research opportunities available through the School of Native Human Services. Our students' first exposure to research is through our research course. This is a full six-credit course called Indigenous Social Work Research Methodologies that runs from September to April. In the past, we have worked with communities to develop funding proposals and research projects. We welcome the opportunity to work with our communities to provide hands-on experience. Although we use research methodology textbooks in this course, this hands-on experience brings the text to life by providing practical experience for the students. There is no cost associated with this kind of research from the community however we would work with the community to develop research proposals and seek out funding sources. For example, in 2008 we hired a Native Human Services Student as a research assistant to work on the research project "Soul Retrieval as a Means of Healing from Family Violence". In return, all that is needed on the part of the community agency is simply a willingness to work together

to provide the students with a learning opportunity that is meaningful and may benefit the community.

As researchers we look to establish partnerships with communities on various research projects. For example, we have worked with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) on the Ontario Woman Abuse Screening Project, the Neegoni Wabun Gi Gay Win Healing Lodge on their Cedar Bath and Soul Retrieval Projects, and the Salvation Army on ensuring that there is housing for Aboriginal women and their families. Research has also focused diabetes, and, addressing issues around poverty and homelessness. This is an example of the scope of work we are involved with.

Another opportunity that is available to both faculty and students is through the Anishinabe-Kweok Research Network (Manitowabi & Gauthier-Frohlick, 2012). This network of Aboriginal women researchers was established by Aboriginal faculty within the School of Native Human Services and a community-based researcher to address health and social research needs of Aboriginal women. We are committed to building the capacity of Aboriginal researchers, especially new researchers looking to establish themselves. This creates opportunity for students within the School of Native Human Services to be mentored by Aboriginal women researchers.

Continued Responsiveness to Community

An example of community responsiveness is contained within the Laurentian University Strategic Plan 2012-2017 (Laurentian University, 2012). This plan identified the goal of a comprehensive approach to Indigenous education. The plan includes increasing Indigenous content within the curriculum across the university, building the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre and proactive hiring practices to increase proportion of Indigenous faculty and staff (Laurentian University, 2012). The plan also discusses the importance of dynamic student experiences that nurture a strong sense of community and belonging. For example, support from School of Native Human Services faculty and staff provides a welcoming environment for students. Fitznor and Lavallee (2012), external reviewers for the Masters of Indigenous Relations Program

noted that the “School of Native Human Services students identified that the Native Human Services program was like a second home, and the opportunity to study within an Indigenous/Anishnaabe grounded perspective was refreshing and life transforming”. Another example of community responsiveness is the development of the Masters of Indigenous Relations (MIR) Program (Fitznor & Lavallee, 2012). The idea for the Masters of Indigenous Relations Program came from graduates of the Native Human Services program who expressed a need for graduate programming. Many graduates of the Native Human Services program found employment in management and administrative positions and were looking for a master’s program that would prepare them for working in these areas.

Fieldwork – *Sharon Corbiere-Johnston, Access Supervisor*

The following is based on this writer’s nineteen years of experience coordinating the Field Education Program.

Alcoze & Mawhiney (1988) recommended that student field education experiences would take place in Aboriginal communities and in non-Aboriginal agencies that provide services to Aboriginal people to create a balanced experience (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988, p. 45). Therefore, the relationships to community in the Sudbury and surrounding area has become an important foundation for the School of Native Human Services’ Honours Bachelor of Social Work program, both on campus and through distance education. The importance of community connections is also supported by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work Education, Standards for Accreditation, which has dedicated a section of the standards specifically to Field Education (CASWE Standards, 2012, p.12). For example, standard 3.2.4 states field education is an important foundation for the School because the field education component of the program provides the student with the ability to apply, practice and, most importantly, experience what is learned in the classroom (Ibid). The field education component also allows students to learn those experiences that cannot be learned from a book.

As a graduate of the program and now the field education coordinator, I can say that field education is a vital component of the learning

process. In my view field education is that important connecting bridge between theory and practice. It is through field education that the student experiences and develops his/her ability to practice which includes the development of professional relationships that will enhance and support the graduates' practice.

To date the field education component of the program provides a range of experiences in the areas of social welfare, child welfare, mental health, community development, corrections, research and development, and it is certainly not limited to these areas. The two field education experiences are both in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies. However, it is important to note that it has only been recently that recognition has been given to culturally relevant service delivery to Aboriginal people. With this recognition there has been an expansion of culturally based services in First Nation and urban communities. For example, the Native Friendship Centres have been in existence since the seventies. Since then there has been an increase in the development of Aboriginal services such as the Native Child and Family Services, Aboriginal Health Access Centres, and the newly established services specifically for Métis peoples. This demonstrates that there are now greater cultural specific field education opportunities that mirror what is being taught in the School of Native Human Services Honours Bachelor of Social Work program. It was not too long ago that cultural appropriate services for Aboriginal people were unheard of.

The benefits of the relationship to community in the context of field education are many. Students bring with them their personality, life experiences and the newly acquired professional knowledge that they are eager to practice and experience. It is this writer's experience that the student becomes more in tuned with their personal values and the values of the profession and learns how to differentiate between the two through the field experience. For example, one's personal values may not be congruent with that of the agency or state even though the values may superficially be the same. Students are also able to gain a fuller understanding of the role of family structure for the individual who is in receipt of services and how they have come to access services. Through the field experience the student also learns the structure of the agency, the funding sources and the relationship between various levels of the

government. The student also becomes aware of their limitations of what they can work with and what they cannot work with. They learn what a skill is and can apply that skill. For some, the field experience helps them to build their sense of self when they learn that the skills they already possessed are validated through this learning experience. They learn how to establish and develop professional relationships and now see very differently. This new insight demonstrates understanding and growth.

For the School, the benefit of community relationships is in the establishment of strengthening reciprocal relationships with the goal of community development. Community development is achieved with the establishment of supportive relationships with agencies and potential supervisors. The supportive relationship begins with contact either face to face or by voice with a potential agency. An overview of the specialized program is provided and a determination of whether or not there are social workers present within the agency and there is also a determination of whether or not there are Aboriginal people being serviced in that agency. More often than not, there are Aboriginal people accessing services but there are no Aboriginal people on staff in the agency and as a result a need is identified within the agency and for us! Then, a field education experience is borne. This is an example of a true win – win situation. The program wins with a field experience and the agency wins with an opportunity to establish a working relationship with the program. The agency is provided with an opportunity to learn how to work with Aboriginal peoples and provides an educational opportunity for students. Therefore, it is a good learning experience for both the agency and the student. This is how the relationship is maintained.

Agency staff, who ultimately become Field Instructors, are utilized as resources in the class room and they also participate in agency career fairs. We, in turn, support one another by sharing resource information back and forth etc. Field instructors comment that they enjoy having students as they have a fresh set of eyes to see the delivery of services and bring with them new insights. The learning benefit for the student is enhanced through the establishment of professional relationships with all involved in the field education process. There is always something new to add or reinforce in building one's chest of helping tools. The same can be said for Faculty consultants as they see the personal and professional

growth that takes place within the student throughout the field education processes.

The field education team is comprised of the student, the field instructor and the faculty consultant. An additional benefit for field education team as a whole is the enhanced learning that occurs through the cultural context of a field education experience. For an Aboriginal student this type of experience is a validation of culture and of self within the Canadian context. For the non-Aboriginal student this type of field experience provides another approach to service delivery that is culturally sensitive to Aboriginal people. The cultural context can be explained this way: how one achieves an objective will be based on cultural values which will be expressed differently. For Aboriginal people everyone is given respect. In mainstream society respect is earned by having credentials, social, economic or financial status, etc. All Schools of Social Work including the School of Native Human Services follow the same standards of practice, but the way in which they are expressed will be based on their own cultural values and experiences.

Therefore, the relationship to community in the context of field education is an integral component to the program and the student. Without community support in the areas of social welfare, child welfare, mental health, community development, corrections and research and development, the benefits of learning as presented would not be the same. The benefits are many but I have only reported the most obvious. The relationship to the community is vital in the development of future human resources who are trained to meet the cultural service needs of Aboriginal people.

Community-based Programming

Community-based programming ensures capacity building of the people. To alleviate the problem of control over human services programming must be community based. This means that the program must be controlled by those who have “a genuine interest in it and a concern for a community and its members, people who are in touch with and respected by those members, people who recognize the community’s needs and have experienced, first hand, its values, customs, and way of life (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988, p. 25).

This means that community members play a key role in identifying and deciding their own needs, participate in and have control over the design, development and implementation of new programs, and are responsible for evaluating all aspects of the programming. Most importantly, the support of community leaders is crucial.

In the first year of its formation, the Regional Working Group developed several guiding principles to ensure that the direction of the project coincided with community wishes. These guiding principles included: “insistence on community control; respect for Native culture and institutions; recognition of each community’s unique characteristics and needs; and commitment to ongoing community involvement” (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988, p. 12). The Regional Working Group was committed to ensuring that the program available in First Nations communities would meet the needs of the communities within this region (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988, p. 12). This goal has been realized and now the program has expanded to all areas of Canada through distance education. The Returning Home document recognized that potential students who were unable to attend full-time studies on campus were provided the opportunity to have professional training thus meeting the mandates of their agencies (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988).

The original idea behind the development of the Native social work program was to have Aboriginal social workers to work with people from their own communities. Integration of culture was the most important part of the program curriculum (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988). This was important because of our value system and the differences in worldview. We are not the same as our non-Aboriginal counterparts. In the past we have been measured by the non-Aboriginal yardstick and a more individualistic perspective. Indigenous worldview operates from a community perspective so it is a different way of thinking, of seeing and of being. The creation of this programme met the demand for Aboriginal health and social agencies to have employees trained to meet the cultural needs of the community. While our partnerships involve First Nations communities, there is opportunity for partnerships with those agencies that provide services to Aboriginal peoples wherever they reside.

Since 1998, the provincial government legislation governing social work practice was instituted to protect clients receiving social services. This meant that individuals employed in health and social service agencies were now required to be eligible to register with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW). This requirement has increased the demand for Aboriginal health and social agencies to have employees who meet standards of the College to work in the field. Most front line workers have the community experience and know the needs specific to their communities but don't have the degree(s) necessary to meet their mandate. Many workers have tried to take course work through distance education, but find it hard to juggle work and school.

Partnerships – *Lissa Lavallee – Partnership Coordinator*

The following is based on the writer's eight years of experience coordinating the Partnerships for the School of Native Human Services.

Partnerships have evolved out of program recruitment and promotion. As communities became more aware of the uniqueness of the Native Human Services program interest was generated to have this program delivered as close as possible to the First Nations communities.

Our first partnership resulted from a visit by our Access Coordinator who attended a career fair in Fort William, Ontario. Representatives from Seven Generations Education Institute reviewed the Native Human Services brochure and indicated that this is would be the best type of program that would meet the needs for their communities. The Seven Generations Education Institute recognized that the Native Human Services program, while accredited by the Canadian Association of Social Work Education, offered knowledge, skills, and experience to work specifically with Native and non-Native communities. They viewed this program as meeting their culturally specific needs in the promotion of cultural identity, self-determination and Aboriginal social work practice.

Why Are Partnerships Important?

The partnership between Laurentian University through the School of Native Human Services and the community through First Nation Education(al) Institutes and other partners in the community allow for students to take on-site, community-based course work close to their communities so that they can continue to maintain their employment while pursuing their degree.

These partnerships allow students to remain in their own communities thus keeping the connection with their family and community. Further, on site instruction is a preferred method of learning for these individuals. Meeting face to face is consistent with our cultural sense of community (Returning Home, 1988, p.12).

Who benefits from the Partnerships

Communities benefit by: having access to an accredited Aboriginal social work degree program that allows for employees and students to be trained in Aboriginal social work practice; being able to pursue a professional degree; maintaining their employment in the field of social work; or being able to upgrade their current credentials (Returning Home, 1988, p.15). Community members will continue to reside in their communities rather than re-locating their families to the urban centers to get their education. The partnerships also creates employment for sessional instructors through accessing existing community resources to facilitate the delivery of the Native Human Services courses; creates more opportunities for the expansion of other partnerships such as with community colleges; and assists the School of Native Human Services to develop best practices for partnerships with Aboriginal communities.

The Nature of the Partnerships

Requests for our program have been received from First Nation Education(al) Institutes, Aboriginal child welfare agencies and community colleges. A consistent goal for all requests is to have post- secondary programs that provide educational training to increase overall skill levels of their community members.

Who are our Partners

We have been approached by First Nation Education(al) Institutes that house post-secondary programs in their communities to deliver our Native Human Services (NHS) program in their respective Institutes. The institutes are governed by Indigenous People to meet the postsecondary educational needs of the Indigenous communities of Canada (Tribal College Journal, 2002). Currently we have two partnerships.

Our first partnership was formed with the Seven Generations Education Institute located in Kenora, Ontario. Seven Generations Education Institute has the catchment region of First Nations communities of Treaty 3 area (2012, MOA). The delivery of this partnership was based on commitment of six years on a part time basis. Originally there were twenty students who started in the first cohort, of which ten students graduated in June 2012. The NHS Partnership Coordinator, NHS Director and the Associate Vice-president, Academic and Indigenous Programs attended the graduation ceremony. While attending the ceremony on-site in Fort Frances, Ontario there was second signing of a Memorandum of Agreement with Laurentian University, School of Native Human Services and Seven Generations Education Institute. As of September 2012, the second signing has a cohort of twenty two registered students.

Our second partnership is with Kenjgewin-teg Educational Institute (KTEI) located on the M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island, Ontario. Kenjgewin-teg Educational Institute responds to the First Nation communities of Manitoulin Island and the North Shore (2012, MOA). This partnership has a commitment to deliver the program over three years on a part time basis. At the start of the program we had twenty six students registered and to date we have been able to maintain this cohort.

Who Coordinates these Partnerships

A Partnerships Coordinator position was developed to coordinate the partnerships within the School of Native Human Services onsite at Laurentian University. The Partnerships Coordinator maintains the connections and relationships between Laurentian University, the

students and the on-site coordinators of the First Nation Education(al) Institutes. The position was initially a part time one until July 2012 when the position became full time.

The Partnerships Coordinator has many responsibilities which include, administration, registration, admissions, coordinate field placements, coordinate course delivery, coordinate challenge exams, academic supervision, advocacy on behalf of students and the institutes and provide technical support to all involved in these partnerships. The Partnerships Coordinator also works with other post-secondary institutions on articulation agreements for the School of Native Human Services.

Reflection

These Partnerships have grown and have flourished into successful Partnerships. I have seen one of two Partnerships from beginning to end. Both Partnerships have been learning curves for me as the Partnerships Coordinator. I have followed with the process of the initial meetings of the institutes, creating and formalizing the agreements with the institutes, promoting and marketing the program, recruiting sessional instructors, coordinating the program and most importantly being the link with the students to the University. I have watched students struggle with their family life and their community life and they have continued to manage with their academic life.

I have proudly witnessed ten amazing students walk across the stage to receive their Honours Bachelor of Social Work – Native Human Services degree. These students committed six years of their lives into a part-time program and it was with great pleasure to be there with them through it all. I have been able to create such strong connections with the students, the institutes, the sessional instructors and the administration at the University. I look forward to our many more Partnerships.

Conclusion

The local Aboriginal community and university community came together for the development and implementation of this program. The development of this program might not have occurred without the support

and commitment of the Aboriginal community to the idea of creation of a Native social work program. The community already felt that mainstream social work programs in existence did not adequately address the social needs of their community. Therefore, the Regional Working Group (RWG) of 1986 had the goal of developing the Native Human Services Program in consultation with the School of Social Work and the Department of Native Studies (Alcoze & Mawhiney, 1988). The Regional Working Group has since been replaced by the Laurentian University Native Education Council and therefore, the community still plays a major role in the education of Aboriginal people.

The relationship that the School of Native Human Services has had with the Aboriginal community has been continued over the last 24 years. The program has maintained connections with the community through community partnerships such as with Seven Generations Education Institute and Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute; community-based programming; field agency agreements; research projects; guest speakers; and, involvement with community groups. Connection to the community is an important component of the Native Human Services Program and is a reflection of the Indigenous worldview.

During their studies in the School of Native Human Services social work program, students learn that relationships are important. They also learn that the self-determination needs of Aboriginal people are being addressed at the individual, family, community and Nation through the connection to community.

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Alumna Testimonial: Sandra Martin

Aanii, my name is Sandra Martin and I am a member of Sagamok Anishnawbek and mother of two children Chelsey and Brodey. I graduated from the Native Human Services program in 1999. Coming from a small town north of Sudbury, ON, my mother Clara Sewrey always stressed the importance of education. Luckily for me, I came across a newspaper article about the Native Human Services program and after further research and the application process I was accepted into the program. I was the first in all my family to attend a post-secondary institution. Needless to say, my family is very supportive and proud of all that I have accomplished.

After graduation, I first became the Office Manager with the Native Social Work Journal office as well as the Placement Coordinator for the Native Human Services program. Once these contracts were completed, I applied and was the successful candidate for a position with the N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre as the Employment Counsellor.

In 2002 I applied to Teacher's College and in 2003 I obtained my Bachelor of Education and graduated from Nipissing University. In the fall of the same year I became a Family Home Visitor for the Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children program.

Then, in 2004, I obtained a position as an Employment Counsellor with Gezhtoojig Employment & Training and held the position for almost six years. After a short stint in 2010 with Laurentian University as a Native Student Counsellor, I returned to Gezhtoojig Employment & Training as an Employment Services Officer where I am currently employed today.

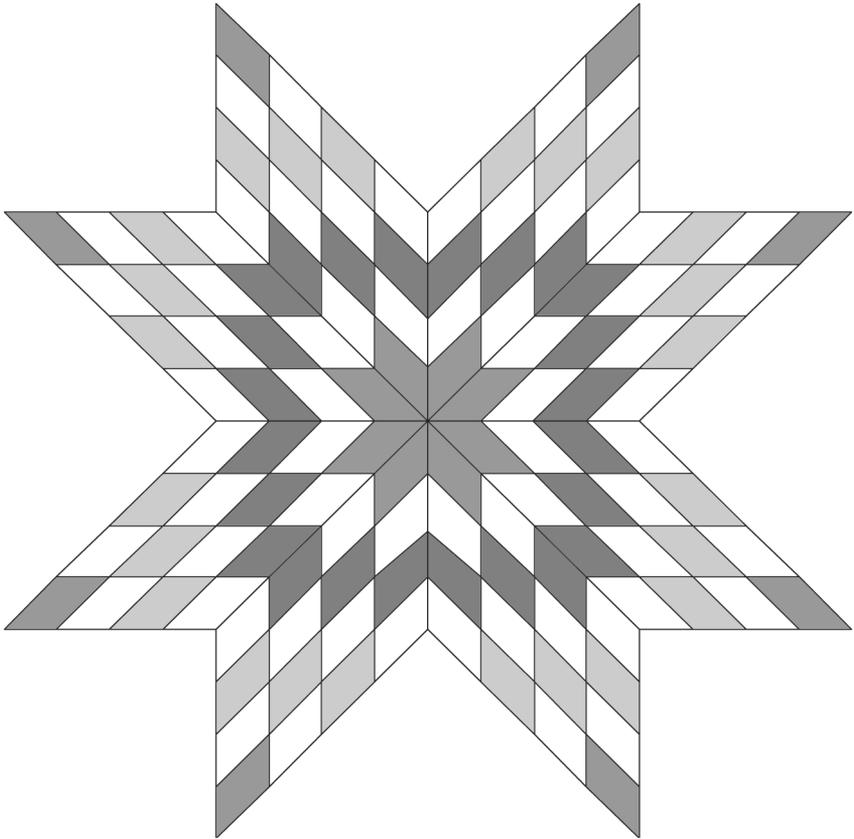
I am a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers as well as the Ontario College of Teachers. The Native Human Services program at Laurentian University provided me with the necessary skills, knowledge and

confidence to carry out a variety of roles throughout my career. The opportunity to help individuals, families, communities and organizations develop the skills and resources they need to enhance social functioning has always been important to me. I have assisted clients in developing skills to deal with and resolve their social and personal problems including referral to other agencies and advocated on their behalf. Currently I also volunteer at the N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre on the Board of Director's as I believe in giving back to my community and I am wholeheartedly committed to serving the Aboriginal community.

Alumna Testimonial: Jamie-Lea Pollock

The Native Human Services Program is more than just a social work program at Laurentian University it is a community of people who are caring and compassionate about the future of their students and the larger society. As a non-Aboriginal transfer student from sociology I initially had many fears; would I be accepted? Might I accidentally say or do something that would offend people? Do I even belong in the program because I am non-Aboriginal? Our professors frequently conducted ceremonies, great feasts and sharing circles; these experiences made me feel so welcomed and within the community of students and professors. My fears quickly disappeared, the acceptance and support in this program was like nothing I had ever known in my prior university experience.

This program was more than learning about social work; it provided me with opportunities to challenge my own worldview and values in a supportive and accepting environment. The professors guided me to be open minded to differing worldviews which provided me the safe space to form my own opinions and beliefs while incorporating new ways of being. The knowledge I acquired in the program has given me the tools to be a social worker but has also shaped me to be a critical thinker about society on a larger scale. Any program can teach students theories, research procedures and social work protocols but not all programs can instill in their students the confidence to question why we do things the way we do as social workers and to question whose worldview and values we are using when we are approaching social work. Being a graduate of this program has made me a part of the future changes and growth that will ultimately arise within the field when we as social workers constantly reflect on our opinions, worldviews and values and how these can impact the communities and people we work for.



Insights gained from the evaluation surveys conducted with the School of Native Human Services students during the periods of 2008, 2010 and 2012

Taima Moeke-Pickering

Kia ora, Aanii, Warm Greetings. When I started as an Assistant Professor with the School of Native Human Services in 2006, I brought with me skills and experiences carrying out research evaluations learned from the Community Psychology program based at Waikato University, New Zealand. This training prepared me to carry out evaluation research with communities and training programs that embrace a strength and empowerment based approach. This was complimentary to my own values, which centre on Indigenous worldviews, self-determination, social action and resource collaboration.

It was therefore an honour and privilege to be given the task of conducting a series of evaluation surveys on behalf of the School of Native Human Services, over a six year period. The first survey was conducted in 2008, then 2010 and the latest one was in 2012. This article provides readers with a glimpse of insights and student view-points that was gathered across the three surveys.

During the six year period, surveys were distributed to students who were enrolled on the On-campus program; Distance education program; the part-time Partnership program offered to Seven Generation Institute and Kenjgewin Teg Institute¹ (both Aboriginal Educational Institutes) and a cohort of Dual-Credit Students² (who completed the first year courses of the program).

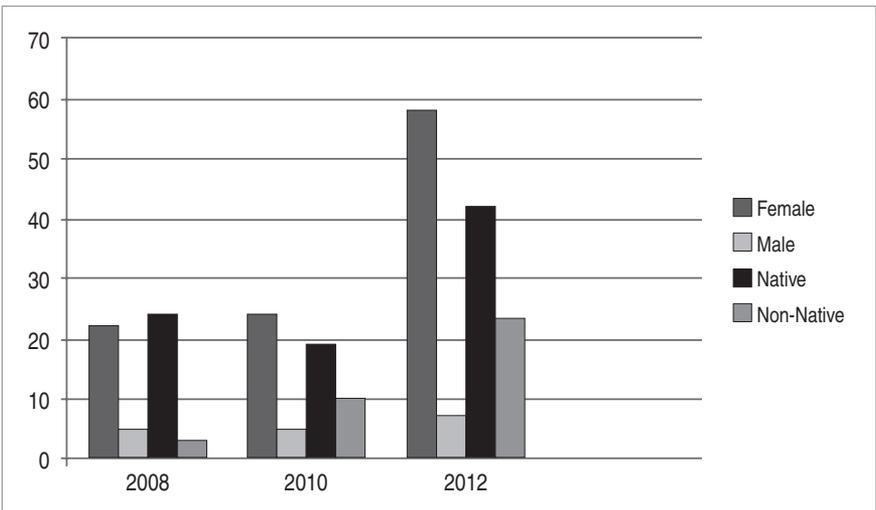
1 The School delivers part-time programs to Seven Generations Education Institute (based in Kenora, started in 2007) and Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute (based on Manitoulin Island and started in 2010). External partnerships assist to provide students in rural areas with access to higher education programs and the capacity to advance their careers with a professional degree.

2 The School was asked to participate in a “dual credit” pilot project. The pilot project was a collaborative partnership between Laurentian University and the Rainbow District School Board and the Catholic District School Board in Sudbury. The project was geared toward providing Aboriginal High School students with an opportunity to obtain a university experience plus complete first year courses with a view to gain credit toward a University Degree. The dual-credit project started in 2010.

Across all surveys, information was gathered: 1) via email to the Distance education and the two Partnership programs and, 2) collected from students in their classes (for both On-campus and Dual Credit). The questionnaires that were administered consisted of qualitative questions and also included a Likert Scale that was used to assess satisfaction levels. Most of the questions were similar across the three surveys. The main purpose of keeping the questionnaires similar was that it would be easier to compare results across the surveys.

Demographics across the three Surveys:

To set the context, there were a total of 121 students who completed the surveys. Of these, 27 completed the 2008 survey, 29 completed the 2010 survey and 65 surveys were collected for 2012. Of the 121 students, 17 identified as male and the rest (104) identified as female. With regard to ethnicity, of the 121, 85 identified as being of Native ancestry (Aboriginal, First Nations, Métis and Inuit or identified as being of Native Ancestry) and 36 identified as being non-Native.



Graph 1: Gender and Ethnicity

It is clear from the table that there have been a large number of females who enrolled in the program, and that the variance of male enrolments across the six year period remained relatively unchanged (i.e. 5 in 2008; 5 in 2010 and 7 in 2012). In 2012, there was a large increase of female enrolments. It could be assumed that as the number of enrolments for females increased so too would the number of male enrolments. It is too early to tell from these surveys, if in fact male enrolments are decreasing or that this trend is an indication of the maximum male enrolments within a program. However, this is an issue that is worthy of exploring.

The 2008, 2010 and 2012 surveys indicated that students with Native ancestry made up the majority enrolled on the program. The 2008 and 2010 surveys showed that the majority of students were Native (i.e. 2008 = 24 Native: 3 non-Native; 2010 = 19 Native: 10 non-Native). However, the 2012 survey found that the margins of difference decreased. For example, of the 65, 42 were of Native ancestry and 23 self-identified as non-Native. Again, this trend is recent and should not be over-interpreted, but the program may need to consider if this pattern might have an impact on the classroom environment, if the pedagogies might need to be adapted or there might be a need for more literature on cross-cultural theories and practices.

Strengths, Satisfaction and Insights:

For this article, I have decided to focus on three key results: Strengths of the Program; Satisfaction Levels; and Insights.

Strengths of the Program:

In all three surveys students were asked to identify strengths of the program. In each survey, the top three themes were identical. There is a slight variation for the 2008 survey, where the Strengths of Faculty and Staff was listed as 3rd, however in the main, the top three themes remain significant. The three themes are: a) Relevant Cultural Curriculum Content; b) Strengths of the Faculty and Staff and c) Culturally Relevant Pedagogies in the Classroom. Each theme below indicates number of times they were indicated per year and includes a selection of student quotes:

- a) Relevant Cultural Curriculum content –
(2008 cited 24 times, 2010 cited 16 times, 2012 cited 34 times)

“I really enjoyed the program because it taught me about my own heritage. The program taught me what it means to be an Aboriginal person in today’s world.” 2008

“Learning about Aboriginal history, culture and applying to social work practice, theory, knowledge.” 2008

“Great content, with a mixture of Indigenous views that specialize in First Nations but can also relate to visible minority groups” 2010

“That the spirit is included in the healing of the person, I think that mainstream helpers usually forget the importance of the spirit” 2010

“The culture is practiced in the program from the professors who are aware of the traditional ways and are able to discuss and teach issues that need to be addressed” 2012

“NHS is culturally correct and the material is relevant to what I need in order to work with First Nations. The Professors have experience working in Aboriginal Services, they are teaching me what I will need when I go to work” 2010

“It promotes a holistic view of social work” 2010

- b) Strengths of the Faculty and Staff –
(2008 cited 14 times, 2010 cited 14 times, 2012 cited 24 times)

“Professors are aware of Indigenous knowledge/paradigm” 2008

“Professors were able to bring us teachings and we were able to experience ceremony in the classroom.” 2008

“Competent Instructors” 2010

“Insightful Teachers” 2010

“Teachers are easy to get to talk to and get a hold of” 2012

“The staff and Professors who want to move towards a better future for Aboriginal peoples” 2012

“Friendly and welcoming and understanding and supportive Professors and staff” 2012

- c) Culturally Relevant Pedagogies in the Classroom –
(2008 cited 17 times, 2010 cited 11 times, 2012 cited 22 times)

“How course content taught, delivered pertinent information in a manner easy to grasp” 2008

“Some faculty really challenged me to expand my critical thinking abilities, felt I learned a lot” 2008

“Culturally sensitive instructors” 2010

“The personal level of interaction, so that the students are able to gain the interactive learning” 2010

“I am in the social work program and I find it to be so beneficial in regards to the helping profession. The ways and what is taught gets right to the core of the person!! Excellent” 2010

“Training students in a cultured atmosphere, providing the tools necessary for a culturally sensitive social worker” 2012

“I like how there is no censorship [sic] that we can speak our minds without judgement being passed” 2012

“I really appreciate the emphasis on making the program accessible to people not comfortable in a traditional university setting”. 2012

“Builds relationships between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals” 2012

It is apparent from the surveys that a Native-based curriculum, the faculty and their pedagogical teaching methods are sources of strength for the program. The most cited strength is that the program offers information on Aboriginal knowledges, skills, traditions and practices.

Satisfaction Levels:

Across all surveys, students were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the program using a Likert Scale with 1 being the lowest level of satisfaction and 5 being the highest. Numbers for each category were totaled and divided by the number of participants producing the mean. Below are the mean for each category and the year.

- a) level of satisfaction with the program
4.1 (2008); 4.2 (2010); 4.4 (2012)
- b) level of satisfaction with the teaching quality
4.0 (2008); 4.1 (2010); 4.5 (2012)
- c) level of satisfaction with the choice of courses
4.0 (2008); 3.7 (2010); 4.5 (2012)
- d) level of satisfaction with the course content
4.2 (2008); 4.0 (2010); 4.4 (2012)
- e) level of satisfaction with the required assignments
4.2 (2008); 4.0 (2010); 4.3 (2012)
- f) level of satisfaction with the suitability of classrooms
3.8 (2008); 3.7 (2010); 4.1 (2012)
- g) level of satisfaction with your field placements
4.2 (2008); 4.2 (2010); 4.2 (2012)

In summary, the median across all the categories is a 4.2, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the programme. The exception is 3.7 found in the 2010 survey indicating a medium level of satisfaction with the classroom suitability and choice of courses. However, results from the

2012 survey indicate that the classroom suitability mean increased to 4.1 from 3.7 and the choice of courses increased to 4.5 from 3.7. The increase of classroom suitability could be due to the fact that all classes are now based in classrooms under the responsibility of Laurentian University. Previously classes were on the University of Sudbury. As a result of the 2010 survey the School changed its program to remove a number of restrictions to its courses to make it easier for those transferring from other universities and colleges to enroll in the program. This could be the reason for the increased satisfaction in choice of courses. Likewise, it is encouraging to note, that the mean ranges for the course content, teaching quality and assignments had also increased in 2012. In general the Likert Satisfaction Scale indicates that students appear very satisfied with the overall program (across the three surveys).

Insights:

The findings from the surveys have assisted to improve the program, its content and its delivery. As well, the evaluations provide insight as to what is valued and what needs to be improved. Perhaps it is also important to note some of the major areas elicited from the surveys as “suggestions for improvement”. The main issue for improvements for the program was that students were dissatisfied with classroom spaces and course restrictions. The latter meant for some, that a number of courses that they completed at previous universities or colleges were not counted toward their Honours Bachelor of Social Work (HBSW) Native Human Services program at Laurentian University because of the specialized nature of the original curriculum, which required students to take a certain number of Native studies courses prior to professional years. However, since 2011 a program change has meant that students can now use more transfer credits to enter the program. Another improvement that was suggested was that the program did not have a Student Council that was specific for the School. Since 2009, the School now has a Native Human Services Student Council that is actively involved in campus activities and with some of the committees within the School. An active Student Council also has enabled cohesiveness across the student body, as well as across Distance Education and Partnership programs.

Another insight gained from all the surveys is the support that students received from the Native Student Affairs services. This includes support and advice from the Elders, the Counsellor, the Learning Strategist and other staff. The Native Student Affairs office also provides planned activities which bolsters student connectedness across all programs at Laurentian as well as provides students with support for culture, scholarships, housing and writing.

It is heartening to note that there is an increase in younger (18-30) students enrolling on the program. It is good news that young people are choosing the field of Native social work as a career path. Likewise, there is an increase in enrolments on the program by non-Native students. This is also encouraging news, as it means that students appreciate the cross-cultural learning environment, which assists to break down barriers and negative stereotypes as well as strengthens relations and ultimately leads to social change.

Evaluations assist to identify gaps too. Students requested a Master's program. This was mentioned across all the surveys. Currently the School has developed a proposed Master of Indigenous Relations program that has been approved by the University's Senate and in the spring of 2013 has been approved for funding. This new Master's program will start in September, 2014. This program will provide a pathway for those who have graduated from the HBSW as well as for other students interested in completing a graduate-level Indigenous-based program.

Conclusion:

The evaluation surveys provide the School with an opportunity to reflect, improve and envision a strong, Aboriginal and professional Native social work program. The content of courses and the pedagogies by professors provide an important and unique experience for the incorporation of a Native social work profession with cultural relevance. Holistic healing, traditional knowledge and practices combined with social work theories provide students with necessary skills to prepare them for working with families, individuals and communities. Importantly, the program provides students with opportunities to explore their personal introspection as well as strengthens their cultural identities.

Another facet of the program is to encourage students to develop their academic competencies. It is encouraging that students have cited a number of sources that assist them while they are on their journey of University life and study. This also shows in the number of graduates (238 have completed since the program started in 1998) who have successfully completed their HBSW degrees.

Finally, the School should be commended for their foresight to carry out evaluations and to make the necessary changes to improve the program as well as maintain a high standard in their teaching and support.

Chi Miigwech.

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Alumna Testimonial: Carol Hopkins

Reflections on my experience within the Native Human Services Program, University of Sudbury at Laurentian University.

Carol Hopkins, M.S.W., Executive Director,
National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation.

There are three specific experiences that stand out considerably and which I often refer to as critical to the ongoing development of my capacity to contribute towards the wellbeing of First Nations and Inuit peoples of Canada. Most significant was the learning environment which presented as a “community” with a commitment towards building meaningful relationships between professor and student. This dynamic was very empowering and challenging at the same time. I suppose it may be obvious as to why this dynamic was empowering and yet it has to be said that the relationship nurtured strengths and leadership characteristics of students and as such the empowerment is more about nurturing. Students were encouraged to value the learning of life experience and this was welcome within the learning environment as credible evidence. The challenge arose in the accountability and responsibility that comes along with sharing the learning journey. Open dialogue and respectful debate between student and professor was common within the classroom and this was critical to developing skills for translating theory into practice within First Nations community in a meaningful and relevant way. Similar to this is the expectation of certain professors to develop and demonstrate critical thinking skills through summarization of chapters into one paragraph! One could master this skill if the focus was on translating the theory or model into First Nation community reality. These two experiences provided rich experience for developing key leadership skills: empathic empowerment, critical thinking, and knowledge translation. Finally, the Native Human Services Program provided safe space for my own personal healing. It would be impossible for a First Nations person to progress through

the program and not experience some level of healing because the program courses are rich with education on the colonial history and deep trauma suffered by First Nations that is our collective story that is not present in any part of the Canadian education system.

Unless one has the good fortune to have an educated family, then the native specific post-secondary education is the first experience facilitating access to a comprehensive education on “his-story” and “our-story” of First Nations experience. The balanced approach to the story of Indigenous peoples through the valuable courses that educated students on the strengths of indigenous peoples and their thriving culture cannot be understated.

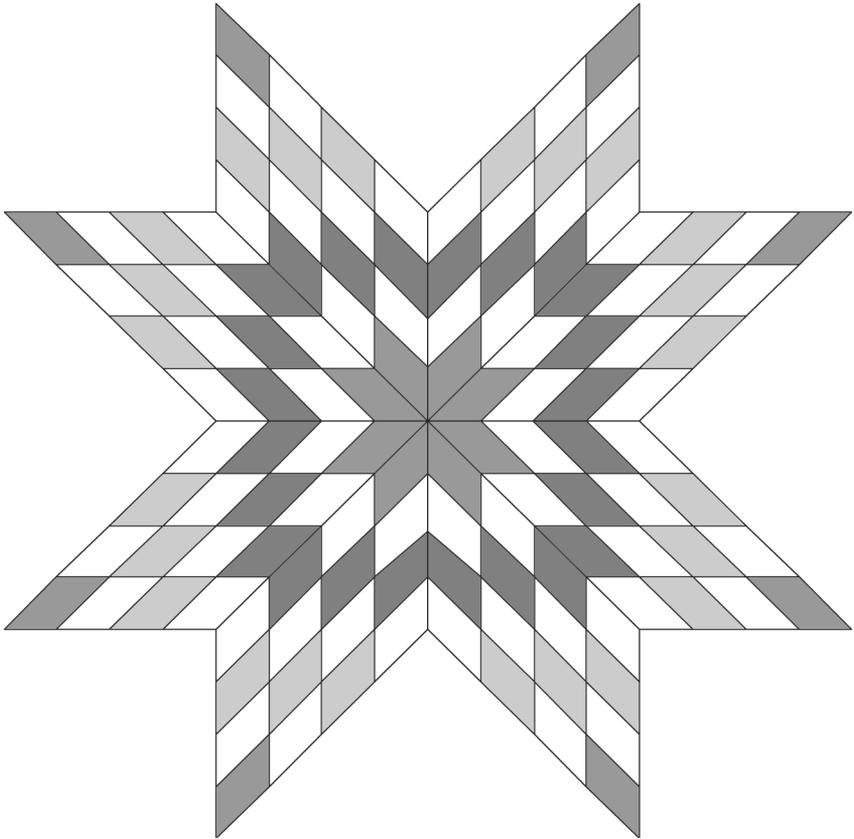
With this experience, I have worked in leadership positions in the field of addictions and mental health. I was the founding director of one of the most successful youth treatment programs in Canada. In that capacity, I chaired a national committee on Solvent Abuse that developed culturally relevant best practices, changed and formed culturally relevant government policy and established a greater understanding for the role of culture in addressing addictions and mental health. This experience led to my current position as the director of a national organization whose mandate is to support First Nations and Inuit in addressing substance use issues. I have chaired many national committees in this capacity which have also changed government policy, improved opportunity for the role of culture in community based and treatment centre programming and research initiatives. I have had the good fortune to participate in international discussions, with Indigenous people, academic and government audiences on the role of indigenous peoples culture in addressing substance use and mental health.

Alumna Testimonial: Holly Brodhagen

The Native Human Services program changed the course of my life. I received a top notch education that trained me to practice in any number of social work settings in both mainstream and Aboriginal communities. But above that it provided me with the opportunity to explore my cultural roots and to address my own identity issues in a safe environment. Between my classmates and professors, I received the support to take care myself so that I would enter the workforce as a confident and well adjusted person. The program stresses self-care so that its students have the skills necessary to ensure their own well-being while working in the stressful field of social work, and in particular working within Aboriginal communities. It is because of this emphasis on self-care and cultural exploration that I have felt confident to explore my career options in a number of fields including child protection, education, policy development and research. Eventually, I chose to pursue a higher level of education by completing the Master of Social Work program at Lakehead University with an emphasis on Aboriginal child welfare.

Although I am not currently working in the social work field, my choice to remain home with my children and explore a self-sufficient lifestyle is a direct result of the training and experience I received in the Native Human Services program. At one time my life goals were to achieve professional excellence and financial security, now I actively pursue personal well-being and happiness. My children actively participate in cultural activities and I personally feel a connection to my culture and the Aboriginal community that I did not feel prior to participating in the program. This change in perspective directly impacts the manner in which I interact with my family, the community and society as a whole.

I think all social work students whether they are Aboriginal or not would benefit from the core values and teachings that the Native Human Service program instills in its students. It is an amazing program that creates professionals that do great things in the community. I count myself lucky to be a graduate of the program.



Visions of the Way Forward

Sheila Cote-Meek

The submissions in this special edition of the journal recount many stories of the ways that Native Human Services was conceived, how it was developed and implemented, and how the program has impacted the lives of graduates and their communities of practice. The evaluations of the program consistently speak to the importance of the program in a number of areas but importantly the program has become pivotal in bringing about change to the way in which social work is practiced with Aboriginal peoples. In this section I have the honour to write about visions of the way forward; to think and dream about how the program and the School can remain responsive to the ever changing needs in Aboriginal communities, and importantly suggest how the program and school will continue to flourish.

I want to start with a short narrative to set a context. It was timely that the day I sat down to begin to write this piece I received a copy of the Assembly of First Nations submission to the United Nations to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (AFN, 2012). The 40 page submission spoke directly to the issues that continue to affect the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal children in Canada including the inequities in education at all levels, the legacy of the residential schools, the continued overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in care, and the problems in the justice system with respect to Aboriginal youth. As I read through the report I was struck by the fact these issues continue to resurface time and time again. I am saddened that in this country that we even need to write to the United Nations and report on the health and welfare of First Nations children. Shouldn't we have made more progress in Canada? In my view this is a good example of the need for highly skilled and trained social workers with extensive knowledge on Indigenous worldviews and issues. I have no doubt that programs such as the Native Human Services (now named Indigenous social work) will continue to be needed for many years to come. In this regard, I believe this program will continue to play an important role in assisting with developing a cadre of graduates that will lead the way in areas such as child welfare.

As the growth of Indigenous social work continues to grow in recognition nationally and internationally I envision that masters and PhD programs will be needed. In fact, we have already seen specialized Indigenous based masters level social work programs emerge in several institutions (see for example Wilfred Laurier's Aboriginal MSW Field of Study). At Laurentian University the School Native Human Services is currently evolving into the School of Indigenous Relations in order to support both the undergraduate degree in Indigenous social work as well as a new Master of Indigenous Relations. This School is also positioned to respond to the growing need for Indigenous knowledge and expertise across campus in programs such as Mining, Environmental Sciences/Studies, Nursing, and Rural and Northern Health to name a few. I envision that the need for expertise in Indigenous relations will continue and the School of Indigenous Relations will continue to grow through partnerships both on campus and off campus groups.

As the need for higher education continues to grow within the Indigenous sector there will eventually be a demand for a PhD program that is responsive to the needs of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners. In fact, one could already say that there is a need since there are a number of graduates from Native Human Services who have gone on and completed Masters and are now ready to move into PhD programs.

Another potential area that the School of Indigenous Relations can emerge as a leader is in the development of expertise in Indigenous relations. Indigenous social work is well rooted in notions around relations and relationships so it is fitting that research in this particular field will continue to emerge. Faculty members in the School and elsewhere are in a good position to begin contributing to the literature and growing body of knowledge of Indigenous social work and Indigenous relations.

The university has committed to building the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre by 2016. For Aboriginal peoples this centre represents many things but importantly it will be a 'home away from home', a place where students, staff, and faculty will feel comfortable as well as find support. The School of Indigenous Relations, while not physically located in the centre, will play a critical role in ensuring its success. I

see the School playing an active role in keeping the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre alive by encouraging the use of the space as well as actively participating in the many social, cultural, and academic activities that will be part of the Centre.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the world is changing at an incredibly rapid rate and the School will continue to be challenged in the future to remain rooted in Indigenous worldviews as well as continue to provide degrees that remain responsive to the ever changing needs of the communities.

CALL FOR PAPERS – Journal 10

“Issues That Relate to Indigenous Relations”

INDIGENOUS SOCIAL WORK JOURNAL

(formerly Native Social Work Journal)

NISHNAABE KINOMAADWIN NAADMAADWIN

(Native Teaching and Helping)

The Board of the Indigenous Social Work Journal, a scholarly and community based publication, is pleased to announce a Call for Papers for Volume 10 of the Indigenous Social Work Journal. The focus for this issue is on “Issues That Relate to Indigenous Relations”.

Indigeneity (being Indigenous) is a term that is gaining momentum at the local, regional, national and international levels. “Indigenous relations” focuses on the relational aspects of Indigeneity. In this edition of the Indigenous Social Work Journal we are seeking submissions that focus on the social, cultural, political and intellectual aspects of “Indigenous relations” as they relate to social work practice. In particular we are seeking submissions in the following categories:

- Understanding the relations/relationships among Indigenous peoples, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and between communities at local, regional, national and international levels.
- Indigenous thought – what it means, how it is expressed, and its importance in the global world.
- Indigeneity – how it is expressed and understood in our complex, globalising world, what indigeneity means, and the kinds of cultural, political, and ethical issues that are negotiated.
- Indigenous research related to international Indigenous issues such as Indigenous landscapes and space, communications in Indigenous contexts, and Indigenous policies.
- Indigenous perspectives on natural resources and the environment, economic, social and political development, and Indigenous peoples’ history.

Authors must submit their articles in A.P.A. style format (6th edition). Please follow manual guidelines. Articles should be no longer than 5000 words, 20 pages. Papers accepted for publication will have copyright assigned to the Indigenous Social Work Journal; articles previously published or under current consideration for publication elsewhere shall not be considered for publication. Please provide an abstract, double space all material and submit an email version.

The Indigenous Social Work Journal utilizes a peer reviewed process in the selection of articles and is a registered member of the Canadian Association of Learned Journals.

Deadline date for submission of narratives/articles is August 9th, 2014.

Please submit your article to:

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CALL FOR PAPERS – Journal 11

Nishnaabe Kinoomadwin Biindik Enaadmaadget
“Traditional Knowledge in the Helping Professions”
 INDIGENOUS SOCIAL WORK JOURNAL
 NISHNAABE KINOMAADWIN NAADMAADWIN
 (Native Teaching and Helping)

The Board of the Indigenous Social Work Journal, a scholarly and community-based publication, is pleased to announce a Call for Papers for Volume 11 of its journal. The focus of this issue is, “Traditional Knowledge in the Helping Professions.”

Since time immemorial, the Indigenous Peoples of North America, and beyond, practiced time-honoured healing systems. With the arrival of settler societies, colonial policies such as the Indian Act of Canada, outlawed these healing systems, gradually leading to their decline. Despite this, knowledge of Indigenous healing remains and the helping professions are gradually accommodating the inclusion of Indigenous approaches to healing. In recognition of this, we are seeking article submissions that explore this changing terrain in the helping professions in the following categories:

- Indigenous theoretical frameworks in healing practices.
- Challenges and lessons learned from incorporating traditional healing in contemporary contexts.
- The incorporation of traditional knowledge in program policies and procedures.
- Critical approaches to the integration of traditional healing.
- Indigenous knowledge, healing and decolonization.

Authors must submit their articles in A.P.A. style format (6th edition). Please follow manual guidelines. Articles should be no longer than 5000 words. Articles previously published or under current consideration for publication elsewhere shall not be considered for publication. Please provide an abstract, double space all material and submit an email version.

The Indigenous Social Work Journal is peer-reviewed and is a registered member of the Canadian Association of Learned Journals.

Deadline date for submission of articles is December 31, 2014.

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