

Laotsyá:n

The Messenger (On[^]yote'a:ka')

Enoondaajgaazad (Anishinaabemowin)

Peetaachiimuw (Lūnaapéewak)



**SHE:KOLI, AANII,
KOOLAMALSIHMWA,
GREETINGS.**

This is a special time of year for Indigenous Peoples in Canada. June is National Indigenous History Month, and on the 21st we celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day. Both events are an opportunity for reflection and a source of pride. Here at Western we recognize that as an institution of higher learning we have an important role to play in recovering, explaining and disseminating the history of the many first inhabitants of Turtle Island. That history is the foundation of our identities, a guide to the future and a source of pride. In this summer edition of *Laotsyá:n* we honour our history, and welcome all to join in and celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Table of Contents

Message from the VP-AVP	4
Eniigaanzijig • Pathfinders	
Shining a Light on Indigenous Housing	6
“We’re better together”: <i>Biindigen</i> , the Indigenous Learning Circle	7
Head and Heart	8
Thsistó:t^’ • Lighting the Fire	
Covid Insights: Indigenous Staff Perspectives	10
“They told us, we listened”: White Corn Resurgence Project, Phase III	11
Kihtaachiimwiil • Storytelling	
Elder Spotlight	12
Peetooteewiit: Treaty Knowledge Sharing	14
<i>Baagaakige</i> —“It makes a sound like little thunder”	15
Wampum • News and Events	
National Indigenous Peoples Day	16
National Indigenous History Month	17
Tsi’ Twanakéhle • Community	
Our Career Launch Hires, in their Own Words	18
Call to Indigenous Artists	19



The devastation associated with COVID-19 showed me and many others how far we have drifted from our original instructions to care for and respect all relationships in Creation.



Message from the VP-AVP (Indigenous Initiatives)

Boozhoo all.

I am so very hopeful that you are enjoying this lovely warm season and have plans to attend one of the many in-person Pow Wows and Indigenous community celebrations planned for this summer. It's been a long while since we've been able to gather, so I sincerely hope you make time to reconnect with one another while staying well.

Recently, a colleague in the Office of Indigenous Initiatives (OII) asked me what I learned from the current pandemic. After some reflection, I realized that I had learned a lot. The devastation associated with COVID-19 showed me and many others how far we have drifted from our original instructions to care for and respect all relationships in Creation.

As the world shut down in March 2020, it became apparent how unprepared, disjointed, and out of balance our societies had all become under the influence of a consumer economy, where blatant disregard of healthy and reciprocal relationships with each other abound. Instead of steadfast cooperation, equality, and balance in response to the pandemic, many people have and are experiencing high levels of illness, poverty, hunger, fear, and violence.

The critical importance of returning to our original instructions, to walk softly upon Mother Earth while ever being mindful of our impact of the next generation, is absolutely necessary to help recentre our lives and priorities toward meaningful reconciliation with our planet and each other.

The value of enduring Indigenous Knowledges continues to inspire and keep me grounded and centred. As such, it continues to be the goal of OII to highlight Indigenous wisdom for the benefit of everyone at Western University and those still yet to come.

Wishing you all a lovely summer season.

Miigwech,

Christy R. Bressette
(Neta Noo-Ke Kwe – Hard Working Woman)

SHINING A LIGHT ON INDIGENOUS HOUSING

With the guidance of Indigenous campus leadership, Western has made several important commitments and investments to advance reconciliation on campus, including examining the provision of housing for Indigenous learners. Now Haudenosaunee scholar Victoria Bomberry, a graduate student in Geography at Western, is undertaking research to see how that can best be done.

A recent collaboration between Western Housing and the Indigenous Student Centre led to the development of Indigenous student housing options, such as *Ayukwanktiyóhake*, a student residence in Delaware Hall that offers cultural programming and academic support for first-year Indigenous students. *Ayukwanktiyóhake* was developed in consultation with Indigenous campus leaders and local First Nations knowledge holders to offer student housing that would provide “a safe place where [Indigenous students] can find rest and security.” Victoria’s research builds on this initiative by examining the off-campus Indigenous housing experience.

“Some of the early findings of our research have shown that while on-campus dormitory housing is desirable for some Indigenous learners, for others it’s simply not an option,” she notes. “They tend to be in different life stages than what we might assume a university student to be, such as being older or having families.”

To study that population more closely, Victoria interviewed 14 current and former Indigenous



Bayfield Hall Residence

students. The interviews explored students’ pathways to Western; if and how housing played a factor in their decision to study at Western; and their off-campus housing experiences during their studies. Participants were also asked for student housing recommendations to help the University better understand how to meet the housing needs of Indigenous learners.

“One of the big ideas from participants was to have apartment-style buildings for Indigenous learners,” continues Victoria. “They desired being in closer connection with other Indigenous students through shared housing. One of the more prominent shorter-term

solutions offered by participants was the idea of providing some of the academic and social supports offered in dorms to students living off-campus—the idea being that developing similar supports would help strengthen their connections to campus and each other, and thereby build a stronger sense of community.”

The experiences and recommendations shared by participants will help inform housing solutions for Indigenous learners. For questions about the study or to be informed of its final results, please email Victoria directly at ebomber2@uwo.ca.

“WE’RE BETTER TOGETHER”: BIINDIGEN, THE INDIGENOUS LEARNING CIRCLE

Biindigen is how we say “welcome” in Anishinaabemowin, which makes it the perfect name for the Indigenous Learning Circle. Western staff, faculty, and graduate students engage with Indigenous stories in a variety of formats, learning



Sara Mai Chitty
Curriculum &
Pedagogy Advisor, OII

with and from Indigenous Peoples by visiting, listening deeply, and engaging in critical conversations regarding Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation initiatives within Western. For those looking to learn respectful engagement with Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and how to bring them beyond the circle to their classrooms, homes, and every other Treaty person, *Biindigen* is the place to start.

A collaboration between Western Libraries, and the offices of Indigenous Initiatives, Student Experience and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the programming for *Biindigen* aims to capture the attention of all those interested in Indigenous ways of knowing through a variety of media. Evan Wiley (Data Analyst, Department of Medicine), a *Biindigen* member of the committee, states their “number one takeaway has



been the incredible vastness and diversity of Indigenous resources (books, podcasts, events) available.” While these resources all exist independently, *Biindigen* Co-Chair Alison Wetheral (User Services Manager, Western Libraries) believes that “the work has to happen in community. We are each on our own learning/unlearning journey, but I don’t think I’d be at the same stage if I were doing this alone—I have the chance to really unpack and learn from members of the *Biindigen* community.”

For Lesley Oliver (EDI Specialist, Office of the AVP), *Biindigen*’s impact extends beyond the Circle. She says that *Biindigen* helps her “develop more meaningful relationships with other committee members and to

be PRESENT in everything I do, from work to interactions with colleagues, students, as well as family and friends.”

While Western and affiliate staff, faculty and graduate students are the intended audiences for *Biindigen*, it is clear the Indigenous Learning Circle is much larger than just attendees. Its ideas are being shared through the social networks of every attendee, showing the value gained from the welcoming atmosphere of *Biindigen*’s engagement with Indigenous stories, perspectives and ways of knowing. With that said, *Biindigen* is a great example of how genuine learning and unlearning can be achieved when space is opened up for anyone who is looking for a place to start.

HEAD AND HEART

OII is pleased to showcase Western's 2022 Head and Heart Fellowship recipients! The Head and Heart Indigenous Research Fellowship offers Indigenous undergraduate and graduate students of various disciplinary backgrounds hands-on, 10-week, culturally-relevant research experience guided by a designated faculty supervisor. Our 34 newly minted fellows and their areas of research are listed below. Congratulations, Head Heart Fellows, and we look forward to the fruits of your research.

ABBY FEATHER AND TYME THOMSON

Indigenous art as a mode of expression in the ontemporary world

AMANDA MORIN

The effect of chloroform on mitochondrial DNA copy number variation

COURTENEY MORRIS

Decolonizing archives while identifying Métis identity and historical communities in Ontario

JAMIE POWLESS

Enhancing Indigenous identity of students and scholars in education

MACKENZIE DELEARY

Sports participation interventions and the health of First Nations rural youth

AIMEE DAWE

Sign language use in Indigenous communities

ARIELLE BRESSETTE AND SABREENA MACELHERON

Supporting the First Nations with Schools Collective in Indigenous-centred lifelong learning

ELISSA NOAH

Indigenous-centred and -led health services and programs in Canada

KALISTA JACOBS

The effects of mining on Indigenous communities

MAREK BROOKING

Teaching tools to aid law and business students' understanding of key topics and issues related to Indigenous land

AIYANA JONATHAN

Mental health crises and healing infrastructure in Indigenous communities

CHANTEL JAMIESON

Ecological crisis and Indigenous place-based knowledge and epistemologies

EMMA HEDDERSON

Implementing Indigenous perspectives in Ivey business case studies

KIANA MANITOWABI

Sport, Indigenous youth, and barriers facing non-reserve and on-reserve Indigenous athletes

MARSHALL MANELLA

Indigenous understandings of dinosaur bones and trace fossils

MATTEA DELEARY

Indigenizing outdoor play curriculum

MORGAN MANELLA

What does it mean to be an Indigenous researcher?

OLIVIA PACO

The impact of mining operations in the Peace Athabasca Delta on meat quality of lake whitefish

SHELBY THROWER

Incorporating Indigenous pedagogy into music education

TAYLORE MILLER

The potential of sage in managing Type 2 diabetes among Indigenous Peoples

XIMENA DESROCHES BORELLY

The Carolinian Canada Conservation Impact Bond as a model for cross-cultural collaboration and redirecting capital to conservation

MELANIE CORMIER

Incorporating land-based learning into Western's Indigenous learning bundles

MIKSO KICKNOSWAY

Learning artefacts rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing

OTSISTONKIE LAZORE

Preserving Haudenosaunee culture by telling the stories of local flora

SHERRA ROBINSON

Survivance theory in Indigenous scholarly research

WENDY LAZORE

Translation of ancestral oak-tree knowledge into informal curriculum resources that reflect Indigenous pedagogy, epistemology and ontology

MIRANDA PLAIN AND RACHEL RADYK

Creating a culturally safe space at Youth Opportunities Unlimited organization to reduce Indigenous youth homelessness

NOLA GEORGE

Decolonizing the history of World War II through trauma-informed teaching resources

PAUL PACQUETTE

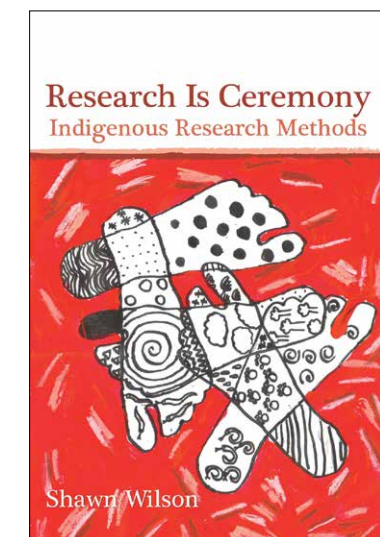
Using Indigenous methodologies and the Western-based scientific method to investigate the night sky

TAYLOR MARCUS

The probability of another animal-to-human pandemic, and the impact of Covid-19 on Indigenous Peoples

WILLIAM CHUKRA

Global inequities in health, gaps in NSSI research and how they relate to Indigenous people



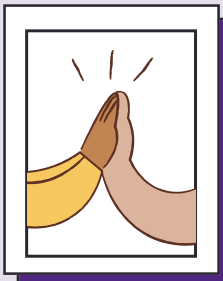
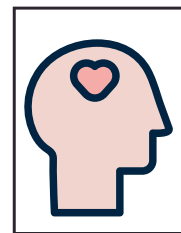
Research is Ceremony: Required Reading for H&H Fellows

COVID INSIGHTS: Indigenous Staff Perspectives

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed life as we knew it. When asked what our Indigenous staff members have learned from COVID-19, a wealth of perspectives were shared covering all aspects of our lives. The general consensus was that life looks a lot different. The new perspectives we've been afforded aren't all bad, they just show us new ways to keep improving.

Intrapersonal Perspectives

"Working from home is better for our mental health. Being in our own space and being happier means we are able to create more meaningful work and have more time for self-improvement."
- Paul Porter, Indigenous Student Recruitment Coordinator

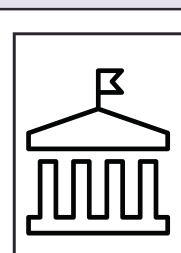


Interpersonal Perspectives

"I've learned to be choosy with my connections and time I invest in people. The same can be said for materialism, so much just isn't necessary. It's important to limit distractions and focus on what I need as a person. Stuff that isn't temporary."
- Donna Noah, Financial Aid Coordinator

Institutional Perspectives

"Governments and institutions can pivot when they need to. We can learn to transform and decolonize in similar ways. People get exhausted from trauma and society doesn't leave space for healing. The pandemic is not over. COVID exposed a lot of inequalities and inabilities to care for one another and we need to center the most vulnerable for an equitable and sustainable future."
- Sara Mai Chitty, Curriculum & Pedagogy Advisor



Environmental Perspectives

Seeing such an increase in disposable medical waste littered in the environment when we live in such a technologically innovative society has been very upsetting. We were able to create our vaccine, but failed to create a sustainable system for PPE. There's a lot of holes in our fancy societal fabric."
- Laura Ramirez, Indigenous Initiatives Project Associate



"THEY TOLD US, WE LISTENED": WHITE CORN RESURGENCE PROJECT, PHASE III

Haudenosaunee White Corn is an important element of traditional stories and culture for the Oneida Nation of the Thames, Munsee-Delaware Nation, and Chippewas of the Thames First Nations. To help restore food sovereignty and empower local communities, OII led a partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada in a three-phase approach to test the feasibility of bringing Haudenosaunee White Corn back to local communities. This summer marks the end of the third stage.

The partnership allowed students from the Master of Environment and Sustainability (MES) program and local Indigenous communities to work together and learn from each other. The students were delighted to find that key information came from community consultations, and that the project provided an opportunity to broaden their knowledge beyond its purely agricultural dimensions. As Lauren Van Dyke (MES '22) noted, "hearing from conversations with Indigenous community members how White Corn is not readily available and how important it is to the community gave the project a special significance, and it also gave me the opportunity to be an ally."

The conversations taught Lauren the importance of building trust, which was also an important takeaway for the other students on the project. Alicia Babbage (MES '22) and Erica Daly (MES '22) both expressed gratitude that the Indigenous partners in the project were willing to share their stories and histories. "I really learned



the importance of listening," said Erica. "We provided a rough outline of the project and then asked community members to tell us what we needed to know to support them. They told us and we listened—and we got a great amount of information from their stories."

It became clear to all the students involved that while the central goal of the project was to determine the feasibility of bringing **Haudenosaunee White Corn** back to local First Nations, it also produced trust and genuinely reciprocal relationships that are key to understanding.

BUILDING RECONCILIATION FORUM 2023—OUR VIDEO GREETING

As readers of this newsletter know, Western has been selected to host Universities Canada's Building Reconciliation Forum in 2023. To help welcome participants and encourage those interested to mark their calendars, we have produced a short promotional video for distribution across the country. For a sneak peak of what's in store, check out the video on our website, [here](#). And get ready for June 2023!

ELDER SPOTLIGHT

In each issue of *Laotsyá:n*, we spotlight the teachings from local Indigenous Elders. Our teachings this month come from **Elders Deb and Barry Milliken**.



Deb and Barry Milliken are members of the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation. While they both lived away for many years, they returned to finish their careers at home. After returning in 1991, Deb made healing and wellness for herself and the community her top priority. She spent numerous years working with Children's Services in Kettle Point, then managed community programs such as Waabinong and Species at Risk. Barry pursued a career in commercial art, then returned home in 2001 where he managed the Family Teaching Circles program while also working with Western to produce two volumes of community stories. Now retired, they serve in Community Wellness initiatives with Restorative Justice and Indigenous Language Retention programs. After working together for many years, they were engaged and then married in 2010.

Deb

So much has happened in the pandemic, with many kinds of isolation and fragmentation. Even though most of the pandemic is ending, our families are still changing, and we must work to get back to where we were and out of our isolation. Everything is new, but it is okay that we don't understand. We have lost a lot. However, we must not give up. We must give ourselves time. It has been over two years, so it will take time to heal. Remember to start small, with your family. Take time to smile at someone and "hi". When someone takes the time to smile, it helps me inside – I am still a person. Kindness goes a very long way.

Barry

COVID has been a hard lesson, telling us that we need to change. The human population has caused much of the trouble that the earth is in today. We need to embrace the teachings that we have forgotten or put aside. The greater power we sometimes call the Great Mystery tells us what is needed in order to survive, for both ourselves and for Mother Earth. We need to listen and make the changes. As our Ancestors did, we need to pass on this new knowledge of change to the next generation. A knowledge still based on our teachings.

Throughout our work, and especially through this pandemic, we have been continuously reminded of our Ancestor teachings. Following them ensures a good life. Humility tells us that we are no better than any other species on the planet. Getting the message of Respect to everyone is important; Earth, Creation, Other, Self, and Water. These are teachings that will help us survive. We must think about what is being given – is it being given because we deserve it, or do we have to earn it? We have to earn it. Mother Earth has been taken for granted for too long. If we disregard the lesson that COVID brought, we are going to lose this Earth and all that is provided.



Peetooteewiit Treaty Knowledge Sharing

June 28, 2022, 4–5:30PM via Zoom

Register in advance for this meeting at:
[westernuniversity.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlucemsrDktGdCQVAwnNKtcOeASPAuwU4PJ](https://westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/96011222222)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Nanfan 1701 Treaty

The Nanfan Treaty of 1701 is one of the lesser-known treaties of the area but there is much confusion and misunderstanding over what is covered under this treaty. Some say it only covered hunting and fishing rights, but a deeper study shows that it was a lot more than that. Join *Peetooteewiit* as we discuss with Al Day, a traditional Chief of the Oneida, the complexities and try to come to a solid understanding of this important treaty.



Al Day

Al is of the Anowal (Turtle) Clan and his On[^]yota a:ka (Oneida) name is Lutihawit. Currently, he sits as Shonuhses, one of nine traditional Chiefs of the On[^]yota a:ka Lotiyaneshu (Oneida Nation Council of Chiefs). Al has been involved member of the Oneida community in sports and community service organizations, including over fifty years in leadership positions. He has represented Oneida and N'Amerind on numerous boards and agencies. Al was instrumental in the establishment of a number of regional and local organizations whose goals are to contribute to the well-being of Indigenous Peoples. He has served as a policy analysis for Indigenous organizations in the United States and Canada, and has participated in negotiations with federal, provincial and state governments in both countries.

BAAGAAKIGE—“IT MAKES A SOUND LIKE LITTLE THUNDER”

For local artist and Western University alumna Summer Bressette (MA Indigenous Education '13), stories are so much more than words: they are the feelings they evoke and the relationships they build. And that is what informs *Baagaakige*, a collaboration between Summer and graphic designer Katie Wilhelm on exhibit at Forest City Gallery this June and July.

Translating roughly to “it makes a sound like little thunder,” *Baagaakige* refers to a part of the process of harvesting ash trees; it is a sound that helps you know when they are ready to use for ash baskets. It is also a word that shows how the Anishnabemowin language can hold so much more meaning than the literal English word may allow us to understand.

Baagaakige, is a vulnerable sharing of the timeless nature that stories hold for Indigenous Peoples, connecting us to our traditions, ancestors, and present and future generations. Using creativity as resistance, this exhibit will use projections to embody the temporal reality of words and treasured family heirlooms, all the while encapsulating the eternal nature of these same stories and skills. Reflections on art, utility and artifact, Residential schools, survival, and the resilience and fierce protectiveness of women and their children are embedded into the images and stories shared in the exhibit. By bringing her individual family stories of resistance and passing down teachings and traditions into the gallery space, Summer’s



Black ash hat made by artist's great-great grandmother

project reminds us how these stories are a part of community history, present and future.

The exhibit is an extension of a story Summer tells of her great-great grandmother’s woven ash hat, weaving many smaller stories into the hat, just like the strands of ash that make the hat what it is. She asks us to contemplate how every day of our lives becomes like the single piece being woven into the bigger picture. Our words, single pieces, woven into a complete story.

Baagaakige will immerse you into a multi-generation story and reality. With hopes of increasing the storytelling power and influence our stories have on our communities, these projections will fill the space with bits and pieces of the story. Opening June 23rd and running until July 23rd at **Forest City Gallery** (1025 Elias St).

Join us for the Opening of *Baagaakige*!

Join *Biindigen* at Forest City Gallery June 23rd from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to check out *Baagaakige* with the artist, Summer Bressette, of Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation. Please arrive promptly at 11 a.m. to do the walk through with Summer, and bring your lunch, as once we are finished we are headed to Boyle Community Park to share strawberry drink and learn from Summer and Katie about their collaboration. Free! Registration is limited - register today: forms.office.com/r/7ANmerpU92. In event of rain, we will move inside the Boyle Community Centre. Parking is limited, please use public transportation, carpool or bicycle, where possible.

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY



2017 Western powwow

June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day, and we take this opportunity to send out our best wishes to Indigenous students, faculty and staff at Western. The date marks the summer solstice, and it was chosen for the importance attached to the solstice—the longest day of the year—by many Indigenous Peoples and cultures.

The origins of this celebration date back to 1982, when the

National Indian Brotherhood (now the Assembly of First Nations) called for the creation of National Aboriginal Solidarity Day. This was followed 13 years later by a call for a national holiday to honour Indigenous Peoples that was launched by the Sacred Assembly, a conference that brought together Indigenous and non-Indigenous people from across the country.

The following year, in 1996, National Aboriginal Day was declared, and

in 2017 it was re-named **National Indigenous Peoples Day**.

OII invites everyone at Western to join us in celebration. This is a day to reflect on the many achievements and cultural contributions of Indigenous Peoples, and to celebrate our growing presence on campus and in our wider society. We hope this will be a joyous occasion for our readers, and one that will fill us all with special pride.

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

In addition to marking National Indigenous Peoples Day, we also observe National Indigenous History Month for the entire month of June. This is an important event for all of us, for many reasons. The recovery of those parts of our histories that have been lost or obscured is a vital project for enriching the understanding of all of humanity. As we chart our way forward in environmentally uncertain times, for example, the lessons that Indigenous Peoples can teach us from millennia of change, adaptation and survival can help us shape a more sustainable future.

In addition, our more recent past since European contact requires greater study and awareness. While we have made much progress on this front, too many people in Canada remain ignorant of the colonial experience and how it impacts Indigenous people today. To note just one instance, the history of Residential schools has long been known to most Indigenous people, yet only recently has become known



to most settlers.

There are countless resources available to support more learning about Indigenous history—both online and in **Western Libraries**, as well as from the personal experiences of Indigenous people and the inherited knowledge of Indigenous Elders. OII marks this month with a **30-Day History Month Challenge**, which promotes a variety of educational materials and activities that you can engage in to sharpen your understanding of the Indigenous past.

Another interesting resource that we recommend is the **Government of Canada's website for**

National Indigenous History Month. It includes various links related to Indigenous history, ranging from **Áísínai'pi National Historic Site of Canada** to National Historic Person **Onondayoh (Frederick Ogilvie Loft) (1861–1934)**, and is a great resource for browsing people and events related to Indigenous history. And for those who are especially dedicated to profiling our past, there is also a **National Program of Historical Commemoration** that allows anyone to nominate a person, event or site that should be recognized for its national historical significance. Happy exploring!



We've gone Social!

OII has long been planning to make the move to social media, and it has finally happened. Our medium of choice for maximum impact and reach is **Twitter**, and as of June 21, we're live. And in the spirit of keeping things to 280 characters or less, here's our message:

Follow us! We're at **@westernuOII**. Chat soon.

OUR CAREER LAUNCH HIRES, IN THEIR OWN WORDS



The 12 new hires including, back row, Laura Ramirez 4th from left, and Lauren Poeta, 6th from left

As part of its focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Western recently hired on 12 new graduates as work associates, giving them a chance to launch their working lives with positions at the University. OII was fortunate in being able to bring on two candidates, who have joined us for a two-year contract and will be supporting us in our communications, curriculum and pedagogy efforts.

Western's Career Launch program was the first time I have been considered for a job that not only suited my love for social activism but also suits me as a person. This position is also the first to allow me to fully utilize my broad academic background, including undergraduate and graduate degrees earned at Western. Being un- or underemployed is a sad reality for many recent Western graduates. Western saw the need to increase programming and opportunities for recent grads—specifically those who are possibly neurodivergent, Indigenous, marginalized, or minority community members. Many Western students are not fortunate

enough to provide for themselves upon graduation, feeling left by the wayside after accumulating debt with nowhere to turn for a hand. I was fortunate enough to be selected to help develop culturally relevant training for staff as well as students. I'm delighted that my voice is finally being used!

Even if you think "I will never get that job...they won't call me back..."; keep trying, keep searching, your perfect job is out there, I promise. Maybe it could be the same community you started your path with!

— Laura Ramirez

Boozhoo! I'm so excited to have the opportunity to join OII thanks to the Western Career Launch Program. Having completed both my undergraduate degree and my Master's here at Western, I had the opportunity to foster a strong community on this campus. Academia isn't always a welcoming space for Indigenous people, as I have experienced before, so the prospect of needing to find a new safe space to follow my passion for education was daunting.

Thankfully, as I was applying for jobs, and not hearing back from anywhere, the Western Career Launch program presented the perfect opportunity for me. Not only could I use my anthropology education and volunteer experiences with developing educational materials, but I could also advocate for Indigenous voices on the campus I loved.

The current job market can be incredibly discouraging. However, new opportunities will always come around and never forget where your true passions lie, your extracurriculars may be what land you a job doing exactly what you love.

— Lauren Poeta

Call to Indigenous Artists



The new Indigenous Learning Space (ILS) is slated for completion in the fall of 2022. Indigenous art is one aspect of the many ways Indigeneity will shine throughout this space, and we are calling for Indigenous artists to showcase their talents!

There are places set aside for Indigenous art throughout the space, as well as on the main campus. A central motif will be the oak 'cookie' slices that we rescued from a 350-year-old oak tree that stood near the space—we intend an image of this ancestor and the slices to become synonymous with the ILS.

We are looking for artists who will be added to our artist interest list, to provide us not only with imagery for the space but also with a line of Indigenous merchandise to be sold exclusively at the ILS and the Western Bookstore. If you are an Indigenous artist and are interested in submitting your portfolio for consideration in future art commissions or projects, as well as the ILS branding and merchandise line, please contact Paula Hedgepeth at phedgepe@uwo.ca for more information, or check out the [Call Out Guidelines](#).

Laotsyá:n is published four times a year by the Office of Indigenous Initiatives at Western University. The views and opinions expressed by contributing writers do not necessarily reflect those of the University. If you would like to receive this newsletter regularly, please **subscribe to *Laotsyá:n***. The current edition is also available on the **OII website**, along with archived editions.

Office of Indigenous Initiatives

The Office of Indigenous Initiatives leads system-wide change at Western University in order to advance Truth and Reconciliation efforts and achieve equitable outcomes for Indigenous Peoples. It plays a lead role in championing Indigenous strategic directions; building collaborative and community-engaged partnerships; and supporting campus partners in implementing Western's Indigenous Strategic Plan.



Indigenous
Initiatives



Indigenous Initiatives
1151 Richmond Street
London, Ontario, Canada N6A 3K7
Tel: 519.661.2111 x83240
indigenousinitiatives@uwo.ca