

Laotsyá:n

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

Enoondaajgaazad (Anishinaabemowin)

Peetaachiimuw (Lūnaapéewak)



SHE:KOLI, AANII, KOOLAMALSIHMWA, GREETINGS.

With the end of what was a challenging year in many respects, we look forward to new beginnings. Happy New Year! We hope that 2022 will continue the progress we have made in returning to normal life, although we also remind everyone of the need to remain vigilant in observing public health guidelines. As we enter a new year, we encourage all our readers to engage in the work of the Office of Indigenous Initiatives and help advance Indigeneity at Western. With our third edition of *Laotsyá:n*, we are happy to share with you the progress we are making: as you will see, there is a tremendous range of ways in which Indigenous people are making their voices heard and engaging with the University community as a whole. We hope you will enjoy this edition, and as always, we welcome your comments and feedback.

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Message from the VP-AVP (Indigenous Initiatives)



Christy Bressette, VP/AVP (II) speaking at a gathering at Western's Concrete Beach on the September 30th, the inaugural annual observation of the National Day For Truth and Reconciliation.

She:koli, Aanii, Koolamalsihmwa, Greetings

Happy New Year, and best wishes to everyone. January is the month known as *Mnido Giiziz* (Great Spirit Moon), and it is a time to honour the resting, intentional stillness and silence of the season. It is also a time to ponder and reflect on our lives, to celebrate successes and identify areas where improvements are needed.

During the Winter, our Mother Earth (*Shkaakaamikwe*) rests under her white blanket of snow, as she prepares for the tremendous energy required in Springtime. This is the time of year when Indigenous Peoples have traditionally told stories, and we continue to do so. Winter stories often include one character in particular, Nanabush, known as the Trickster Spirit. As Elder Eli Baxter notes in this edition's Elder Spotlight, Nanabush sometimes approaches matters informed by the wisdom and teachings of Elders and Knowledge Keepers, but he is just as likely to act in his own foolish way—resulting in unfortunate consequences that carry a hard lesson.

Nanabush's adventures and misadventures, shared through story, are intended to teach us right from wrong. They are a guide to living a "good life" with care and compassion for all of Creation, by implementing life- and resource-preserving Indigenous concepts such as Sustainability and Seven Generations (future-oriented) thinking. When I think about our work to decolonize and Indigenize at Western, I recall the lessons of Nanabush, who is often presented with a choice of proceeding in a wise, informed way, or following a harder path that will ultimately achieve the

same objective but at greater cost.

I am often struck by how Indigenous ways of knowing and being, with their tremendous wisdom and enduring value, are increasingly relevant to our lives today. At Western University, we are striving to integrate Indigenous knowledge into what we do as a university, knowing that the work of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, the Earth, and each other will ultimately bring good for all. We also know, especially from the stories about Nanabush, that resistance to what is good will also have consequences—such as delaying the positive outcomes we seek for all beings.

As we move forward in 2022, let us be ever mindful of the choices set before us—and remember that while taking the high road may not always be easy, it will ultimately lead us in the right direction.

In unity,

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



As we move forward in 2022, let us be ever mindful of the choices set before us—and remember that while taking the high road may not always be easy, it will ultimately lead us in the right direction.

INDIGENOUS ATHLETES (AND TRC #87) IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Janice Forsyth is an Associate Professor of Sociology and former Director of Indigenous Studies at Western. She's also devoted to sports—especially in relation to Indigenous people. As vice-president of **Aboriginal Sport Circle**, she directly supports the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples by promoting engagement in sports and physical activity. And not surprisingly for an academic, she's also written a lot about sports. In May of 2020 she published *Reclaiming Tom Longboat: Indigenous Self-Determination in Canadian Sport*. That book, which recounts the history of Indigenous sport in Canada, won the 2020 Ontario Historical Society Indigenous History Award and the 2021 North American Society for Sport History Book Award.

She recently followed up that impressive effort with another book on Indigenous athletic achievement, *A History of Excellence: The Untold Stories of Manitoba's Indigenous Sport*. The work is a joint effort with co-authors Scott Taylor, a Manitoba sports reporter, and Carreira Lamoureux, manager of sport for social development at the Manitoba Sports and Recreation Council. It tells the stories of more than 100 Indigenous athletes from Manitoba, and while for many it is an important contribution to bringing to life Indigenous narratives that have long been overlooked, for Forsyth it is something more. As she noted in an interview with *Western News*, the book is “an authentic response by Indigenous Peoples to the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action 87,” which is “to provide public education that tells the national story of

Aboriginal athletes in history.”

That Call to Action speaks to the need for Canadians to examine the degree to which Indigenous people have often been erased from history. That erasure has taken place not only in high-profile domains, such as politics and business, but also at the level of everyday popular culture and recreation. Forsyth's work is a welcome starting point for restoring Indigenous presence, and she is already thinking of possible follow-up books, on topics ranging from Indigenous NHL players to such events as the North American Indigenous Games. Her work is a reminder of the wide-ranging scope of the Calls to Action, and the need for Canadian society to engage with them at so many different levels. Her book can be ordered from the **Manitoba Sports and Recreation Council**.

WESTERN PROFESSOR EXAMINES INDIGENEITY AND ECOLOGY IN NEW BOOK

With the world recognizing that it is facing a major ecological crisis, awareness is growing that Indigenous worldviews offer an important approach to addressing it. That is the theme of a new book written by Lewis Williams, a professor in the Indigenous Studies Program and Department of Geography and Environment. Williams, who is of Maori and European descent, grew up in Aotearoa (New Zealand), and she brings Indigenous perspectives from that country and Turtle Island to bear on her work.



Indigenous Intergenerational Resilience: Confronting Cultural and Ecological Crisis centres on Indigenous knowledge systems and Peoples. Williams draws on those systems as a framework for responding to current challenges, most notably in the environmental sphere. She places a particular emphasis on intergenerational resilience, in recognition of the central position that Elders occupy in Indigenous cultures. By transmitting knowledge from earlier generations, Elders can provide



the key to unlocking the ecological wisdom of Indigenous Peoples that has accumulated over millennia. This is of particular importance to us in the face of ecological crisis, as Indigenous people have lived on Turtle Island since time immemorial—adapting to constant and profound environmental change.

The book devotes considerable attention to connecting with local places and spaces as a starting point for a sustainable relationship with our environment. It argues that our displacement from place has set us adrift culturally, and that reconnecting with our surroundings lays out the path to a healthier relationship to the land. This is a message that certainly resonates with Indigenous people, and constitutes a concrete example of what Indigenousization at Western looks like.

Are You a Pathfinder?

OII is always looking to support and celebrate Indigenous leaders. While we do our best to maintain close contact with Indigenous students, faculty and staff, we may not be aware of every Indigenous person in a leadership role on campus. As a result, we are asking you to get in touch! If you are Indigenous and in a position to lead change at Western, we would like to hear from you.

We are ready to help in different ways. We can publicize your role and what you are doing, by highlighting it in this Newsletter. We can facilitate introductions to others on campus with whom you might want to collaborate. And we can amplify your voice and make your issues better known within the Western administration. In addition, the ILS will offer bookable space for leadership activities and events as well as space for Indigenous students to study, relax and socialize. The Space will be a hub for Indigenous people and initiatives at Western, and space can be made available to you as a resource in your role as a leader.

To get in touch, contact us at indigenousinitiatives@uwo.ca.



WESTERN NAMES FIRST INDIGENOUS ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Western welcomed its first Indigenous artist-in-residence in the Fall of 2021: Kelly Greene, Haudenosaunee from the Six Nations Reserve in Ohsweken, Ontario. The position was created as part of Western's response to the Calls to Action of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and is under the umbrella of the Department of Visual Arts. The

residency spans a period of between eight months and a year, during which time the artist will engage the Western community with Indigenous themes and practices in the visual arts.

Kelly has embraced her residency, producing a number of visually arresting works with Indigenous motifs and grounded in a strong sense of both the

cultural and political aspects of what it means to be Indigenous. She has addressed questions surrounding colonialism, residential schools, the environment and other issues that are germane to Indigeneity. Look for more of Kelly's work at Western in the upcoming months, and check out her [website](#) as well, where you can see a collection of her many visual art works.



Changing Currency:
Prototype Kanata 151 \$10



Deception, Reality & Regeneration

Call to Indigenous Artists

The \$35 million renovation of Thames Hall is nearing completion, and the building promises to be a beautiful, welcoming new space on campus. More than half of the funding is allocated to the Health and Wellness Centre, which will consolidate Student Health Services and Psychological Services into one location. The Centre requires art for its walls, and as part of the renovation the University has issued a call to Indigenous artists to contribute artworks. If you are an Indigenous artist and would like to see your work shown in a major campus building, this is your opportunity. Contact Paula Hedgepeth phedgepe@uwo.ca for more information, or check out the [OII website](#).

Tshístó:t'a' • Lightning the Fire
(On'yote'a:ka): to stand up the fire

INDIGENOUS LEARNING SPACE: ALMOST THERE!



It has been a long time coming, and there's still time to go—but the Indigenous Learning Space is moving to completion. The building has been hollowed out and is now being reconfigured according to the architect's plans.

If all continues according to plan, the Space will be ready for occupancy in April of 2022.

Equally inspiring is the work being done outside. A hole has been dug next to the Space, and that is where the Indigenous medicine

garden will take root. OII will be working with Agriculture Canada to develop the garden, which will feature a host of herbs and plants that figure prominently in Indigenous medicine, with white corn taking pride of place.



On[^]ste'u:we (white corn) – A Haudenosaunee staple

Corn is one of the most prevalent vegetables in the world, and it is grown throughout the hemisphere. First cultivated in Mexico about 10,000 years ago, corn was adopted over the generations by Indigenous Peoples across North America. There are a great number of different kinds of corn, and some hold special significance that make them more than just a source of food. Among the Haudenosaunee, for example, white corn is intimately bound up in cultural identity—it is mentioned in oral histories that recount the beginnings of life on Turtle Island, Haudenosaunee governance and the Haudenosaunee worldview.

White corn also constitutes one element of the famous “Three Sisters” triad—corn, beans and squash—that is central to Indigenous agriculture in this part of North America. The three were planted together because they provided each other mutual benefit. Corn was, in addition, used by the Haudenosaunee in trading with neighbouring societies. While today corn in southwestern Ontario is almost entirely a commercial crop, some Indigenous groups are reviving the growth of white corn as an avenue to Indigenous food sovereignty. The garden next to the Indigenous Learning Space will help contribute to this enterprise, and assist in reviving traditional Indigenous practices.

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION: AFTER THE PILOT, WHAT'S NEXT?



Western's 2021 pilot program in Indigenous language revitalization was a great success. During the Fall term, Western offered a micro-certificate in Indigenous languages revitalization (four, three-hour online workshops) accessible to all members of local First Nation communities; a co-curricular honour (four, two-hour virtual workshops) in Indigenous languages revitalization for undergraduates; and an online Anishinaabemowin language short course (six-week program of 2.5 hours a week) accessible to all local Indigenous community members.

Local First Nations communities were engaged in the design, development

and evaluation of the project through their participation in the Indigenous Languages Advisory Group (ILAG). Eleven applicants entered the co-curricular workshops, and a further 25 participants each were admitted to the language revitalization program and the course in Anishinaabemowin, respectively. The pilot endeavoured to address access barriers for Indigenous learners through such measures as waiving tuition fees and working with instructors to develop flexible class schedules.

Classes were oversubscribed, and the preliminary feedback has been very positive. OII is reviewing the pilot with hopes to creating a robust Indigenous languages

program that could be:

- overseen by ILAG, including local First Nation community partners;
- housed within the Indigenous Studies Program, with Centre for Teaching and Learning support;
- composed of Anishinaabemowin, Onyota'a:ka, and Lūnaapéewak language acquisition, as well as Indigenous languages revitalization courses;
- taught by full-time, Indigenous language instructors from local First Nation communities; and
- delivered both virtually and in-person, on campus and in the three local First Nations communities.



From right to left: Eli Baxter and his brother Angus along the Albany River.



ELDER SPOTLIGHT

In each issue of *Laotsyá:n*, we spotlight the teachings from a local Elder. In this edition, *Laotsyá:n* interviews **Eli Baxter**, an Ojibway from Ogoki Post First Nation, Marten Falls Band.

Laotsyá:n: Now that we've entered winter, we'd like to ask what kinds of teachings come with this season.

Eli Baxter: Winter is definitely a special time of year. For Indigenous people, it's the time of Ta-tih-bah-chi-moh-win: "storytelling" in Ojibway. I remember as a little boy, asking my parents for ta-tih-bah-chi-moh-win, and in particular for the stories that were told only in winter. These were stories about Nanabush, who was sent to us by the Great Spirit.

And why were the stories about Nanabush only told in winter?

Nanabush is a very colourful character. He's known by different names in different cultures and regions, such as Glooscap among the Wabankai, and Wee-sah-kay-jaak in the Treaty 9 territory. And the reason we are not supposed to tell stories about him outside of winter is basically because the stories are too good! It's felt that if you tell them, everybody will stop working—all the spirits responsible for the plants and animals will forget about what they're supposed to do so they can listen to the story, and the normal cycle of life will just stop. So these are stories reserved for the winter, when the world has time to stop and listen.

That sounds a lot like binge-watching during the holidays...

Yes, you could say it's something like that. We all have a need to slow down during the cold months, and that's a great time for stories. But these stories weren't just for entertainment. They also have a purpose. They're meant to teach us correct behaviour, knowing right from wrong, and they also help us survive. So a legend isn't just a legend; it's a guide to life.

Can you give us an example?

When I was small, growing up in northern Ontario, winter came early. And when you went to bed at night, you would hear the ice cracking as you fell asleep, and sometimes the trees. And my parents told me that they were the sounds of Cha-kah-bayns, a great hunter. He would hunt at night, and the cracks that we heard were the sounds of his arrows missing his prey and hitting the trees. Or in the case of the ice, he was chasing fish under the ice and striking at them. And the purpose of this story was to warn us. If you stray from home up north, in the middle of winter, you can die very quickly. The story was a way of reminding us of danger—scaring us into staying close to our parents, basically, until we were old enough to survive on our own.

That's a good way to learn—colourful stories are stories that you're more likely to remember.

Yes, our stories are very imaginative, and there's a metaphorical aspect to them. For example, we have stories about Saa-be. He's come into North American lore as Bigfoot, but he originates with Indigenous people, and he was someone you wouldn't want to meet in the bush. So he's more than a scary figure—he's a warning to us that the forest can be dangerous.

Were the stories you learned as a boy mainly practical, or did they have other lessons?

A lot of them were practical. You learned about hunting, living off the land—for example, we have teachings about why you shouldn't hunt in the winter. That's because after mating season male moose and deer lose their antlers, so you can't tell them apart from the females. You don't want to risk killing a pregnant female, because it's the females who replenish the herd. So we had stories to remind us only to hunt in the seasons when we could identify the males.

But we also had stories that teach attitudes, philosophy—how to approach life. For example, there's a story about Nanabush flying with the geese, because he wanted to go south for the winter. And the geese told him to never look down while flying, and he obeyed them—until one day, on his way back north, he didn't, and so he fell to the ground and hurt himself. That story is a more philosophical teaching, about listening to those who know and understand, and following their instructions. It's about humility.

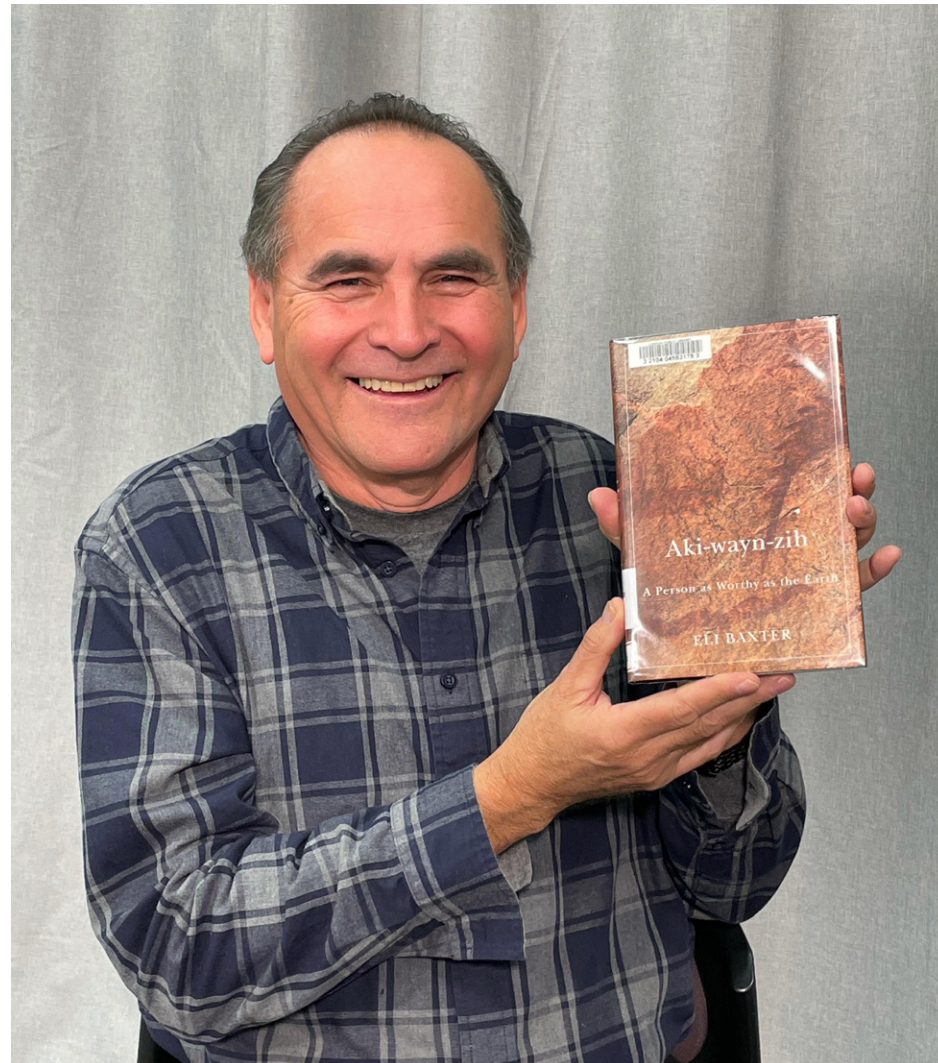
Tell us a little bit about your book, Aki-wayn-zih.

My book is an overview of Ojibway culture, as well as a personal memoir of growing up. I explain a lot about our culture through our traditional legends, as well as teachings about science, history and the law. For instance, I talk about the three kinds of law in the Ojibway worldview: the law of creation, the law of the land, and the law of the people. My aim is to keep our traditions alive and introduce others to them—to learn something about Our perspective on life.

So this is a book for everyone.

Absolutely. I think there's a lot that people who are not Indigenous can learn from it—about our language, the stages of life we pass through and our relationship to the world around us. Every culture has things of value that others can appreciate. This is my way of sharing the values of Ojibway culture.

AKI-WAYN-ZIH: A PERSON AS WORTHY AS THE EARTH, AT LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY



London Public Library will be hosting a three-part series featuring Knowledge Keeper and Elder Eli Baxter. Starting on January 12, Elder Baxter will share teachings from his early life, his experiences as a Residential School survivor, and the importance of language, as a fluent Ojibway speaker. He will draw on many of the stories he

recounts in his book, *Aki-wayn-zih: A Person as Worthy as the Earth*.

The series will be held virtually, and will welcome guests to ask questions and share their own experiences. To join, [register online](#) with your London Public Library card, or by calling the library at 519-661-4600 to receive your Zoom link to access the programs.

BIINDIGEN

Biindigen, the Indigenous Learning Circle at Western, fosters a learning community comprising faculty, staff, and graduate students dedicated to examining truths about Indigenous heritages and histories in Canada; exploring our individual and collective roles and responsibilities in reconciliation; and respectfully engaging with Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The Circle creates a space on campus for conversations touching on a wide range of Indigenous-focused themes and topics by engaging with Indigenous stories and storytellers.

Biindigen is ever-growing and evolving, and we are busy planning the upcoming year. Look for the events listing in the Spring edition of this Newsletter! You can also join the [Learning Circle's OWL site](#) for updates, events and more information.

Illustration by Jim Oskineegish



INDIGENOUS VOICES SERIES

OII hosts an ongoing program of Indigenous storytelling throughout the year. We invite Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Teachers to share their wisdom with the wider Western community, and to transmit Indigenous ways of knowing and being to a new generation.

JANUARY 13, 4PM

Dr. Lewis Williams will share and discuss topics from her recently released book, "Indigenous Intergenerational resilience: Confronting cultural and ecological crisis"

[Register for the event here.](#)

FEBRUARY

Hunting and Moose Hide Teachings

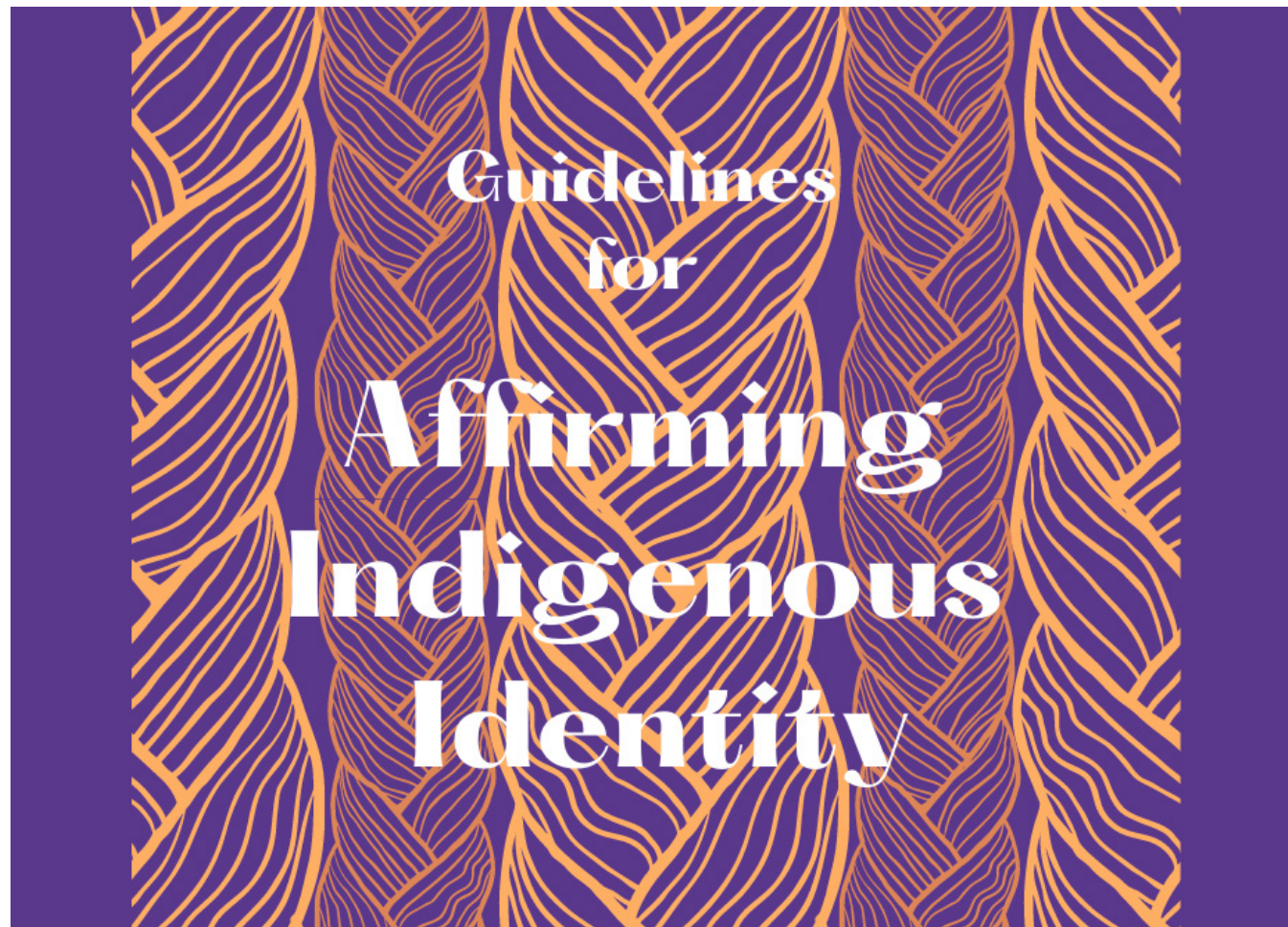
The **Moose Hide Campaign** is our inspiration for this month's teachings. We are proud to amplify the work of this Indigenous-led grassroots movement to end violence against women and children.

MARCH

Language Revitalization in honour of March 31st – National Indigenous Languages Revitalization Day

Indigenous Voices will be inviting local language speakers who are committed to the revitalization of Indigenous languages to share their journeys and their passion for cultural renewal.

GUIDELINES FOR AFFIRMING INDIGENOUS IDENTITY IN THE RECRUITMENT OF INDIGENOUS FACULTY



Recent reports in the media have drawn attention to the issue of Indigenous identification in education institutions, especially in relation to hiring. This is a complex and challenging question, and Western is cognizant of the need to address it with respect and sensitivity. In November OII began to do so by reviewing its policy on Indigenous identification, with a view to developing new guidelines that the

University can integrate into its human resources protocols.

We began our process by soliciting participation from Indigenous students, staff, faculty and community partners. Based on the contributions from these stakeholders, OII established the need for a rigorous policy of identification that will protect against the possibility of ethnic fraud while recognizing the many ways in which Indigenous identity is experienced

and expressed, as well as the historical denial of identity that many Indigenous people have encountered. The guidelines, which are at present being refined, will serve as the basis for Indigenous identification that Western can employ in hiring. OII would like to thank everyone who contributed their insight to this important process. We are continuing work on the new policy, and we anticipate publishing it in early 2022 on our website.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: ONLINE RESOURCES AVAILABLE



Land acknowledgements are a major subject of discussion these days, and the interest they generate reflects a growing awareness of Indigenous land claims and treaties, as well as the history of Canada more broadly. OII often receives enquiries about land acknowledgements—requesting everything from additional information about acknowledgements to assistance in crafting them.

To respond to these requests, Sara Mai Chitty, Curriculum and Pedagogy Advisor has developed a [dedicated page on our website](#). It's a great resource

for anyone who is interested in land acknowledgements at Western, and includes sample acknowledgements, a guide to pronunciation and answers to common questions. For those who are interested in examining this issue further, we have also produced a detailed guide to land acknowledgements entitled [More than Words](#). The guide is a comprehensive synthesis of extensive information about Indigenous peoples, histories and cultures, especially in the local area. It is not only useful as an aid to developing a land acknowledgement, but also highly educational about

broader issues in Indigenous history and identity. We encourage readers to explore the guide on our website, and as always we welcome your feedback.

Sara Mai was recently nominated and awarded with a 2021 Western University Award of Excellence for "Going Above and Beyond". Nominated by faculty, staff, students and alumni, Sara Mai was chosen for her outstanding service, creativity and innovation, the ability to share her knowledge and expertise, and her capacity to foster values of integrity and respect across campus.

WESTERN UNIVERSITY'S NATIONAL INDIGENOUS



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Awarded annually to three incoming Indigenous undergraduate students

(First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) studying full-time at Western's main campus based on their outstanding academic excellence and meaningful and impactful contribution toward Indigenous communities. Two scholarships will be awarded to incoming students applying from Canadian high schools, and one scholarship to an incoming Indigenous student applying from a postsecondary institution. Recipients must meet the minimum academic averages for their programs, and will be selected on the basis of academic achievement, creative and innovative thinking, and previous or intended contributions to Indigenous communities (both on and off reserve, as well as in urban settings).

For more information please contact our Indigenous Financial Aid Coordinator Donna Noah at dnoah@uwo.ca or (519) 661-2111 ext. 86437

Scholarship Values

2 awards at \$50,000 each to incoming Indigenous students applying from Canadian high schools*

1 award at \$50,000 to an incoming Indigenous student applying from a postsecondary institution*

*\$20,000 for year one, \$10,000 for years two to four based on ongoing registration

*not applicable to second entry programs

How to Apply

To apply to the National Indigenous Scholarship Program please go to the following link:

[studentservices.uwo.ca/
NationalIndigenousScholarship/
Students/NSIntroPage.cfm](https://studentservices.uwo.ca/NationalIndigenousScholarship/Students/NSIntroPage.cfm)

Deadline: March 14th, 2022



Indigenous
Initiatives



WESTERN TO HOST BUILDING RECONCILIATION FORUM



It is pleased to announce that Western has been chosen to host a national forum dedicated to building Truth and Reconciliation in the academic context. In association with **Universities Canada**, the seventh annual Building Reconciliation Forum will take place on campus in June of 2022, with the theme "Education for Reconciliation:

Rebuilding Stronger and with Intentionality."

The forum will welcome participants from the university community across Turtle Island, and will involve local Indigenous communities and organizations. The aim of the forum is to explore the many issues related to decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy. It will touch on such areas of interest as Indigenous language

revitalization, Indigenous knowledge frameworks, Indigenous research, and issues of governance in the university. Planning is now underway for the forum, which will host keynote speakers, talking circles and workshops over a two-day period. We will provide updates on our progress in *Laotsyá:n* and on our website throughout the year.

Our First National Indigenous Scholarship Winners

In September of 2021, Western welcomed its first cohort of National Indigenous Scholarship recipients: **Nicholas Keller**, Ojibway from Walpole Island First Nation, Bkejwanong Territory—Social Science; **Delainey Mattern**, Métis, Sherwood Park, AB & Fort Smith Settlement, NWT—Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry; and **Isabel Savard**, Naicatchewein First Nation—Social Science. We offer our warmest congratulations to the recipients and wish them success in their ongoing program of study.

[Read more about these amazing students in Western News.](#)

INDIGENOUS AT WESTERN: ALUMNI CHAPTER HAS LAUNCHED



In the fall of 2021, OII hosted a virtual cedar tea during Homecoming to launch *Indigenous at Western*, the alumni association's new chapter for Indigenous graduates. We're happy to announce that the chapter's website is now up, and together with the formation of a leadership circle (executive) now

in place. The leadership circle held its first meeting on December 16, and began developing a plan to make the chapter a dynamic focus for Indigenous alumni who want to stay connected to the University. In the New Year it will start a recruitment drive and develop a schedule of events for Indigenous alumni. If you or someone you

know is interested in joining the chapter, get in touch! You can register for the Indigenous Alumni Chapter by filling out this [form](#) from the Alumni Association, or you can get more information and join by viewing the [Indigenous Alumni Chapter page](#).

CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS WITH BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE



Oil and friends began celebrating the holiday season a little bit early in 2021: on November 26, we attended a concert showcasing Indigenous music icon Buffy Sainte-Marie. Buffy played to a sold-out crowd at Aeolian Hall in London, and the absolute highlight of the evening was our own "backstage pass" to meet the star!

We were all delighted to gather with Buffy, who is Cree from Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan, and who is well known for her activism on behalf of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island. Buffy is a legend in the music industry, having performed professionally since the



Bamble kommune (via Wikimedia Commons)

1960s, and among her many impressive accomplishments is that in 1983 she became the first Indigenous person to win an Oscar. We were honoured to meet Buffy, to

whom we presented a gift by a local Indigenous artist as a token of our respect—and who graciously agreed to a photo with our star-struck group after the show, shown above.

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, you will need to **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



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