

Peemahcheeowin (Nakawe)

THE JOURNEY

**2020 INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT
PROGRESS REPORT**



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Office of the Vice-Provost
Indigenous Engagement

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND VICE-PRESIDENT ACADEMIC



We're not just carrying a document, we're carrying a home and our children. The very essence and center of our culture is our children. We carry our kids and make a place for our people. Especially if we think of reconciliation; that came about because of the way that children were treated. There'd be no university without young people. They're going to inherit whatever we're carrying.

kêhtê-aya (Elder) Maria Campbell

tanshi (tun shee) Michif
tawâw (ta wow) Cree
anin sikwa (ah neen see qua) Nakawe
edlanet'e (it lawn ee tay) Denesuline
hau koda (how koda) Dakota

Welcome to the University of Saskatchewan. The languages, concepts and spirit woven into the University of Saskatchewan Plan 2025 were shaped by our relationships with Indigenous communities. These relationships have profoundly deepened our understanding of the principles, values and strategic direction that will define our future. Through the plan—and through the spirit embodied in *nîkânîtân manâcihitowinihk/ni manachîhitoonaan*—the University of Saskatchewan will be the University the world needs.

As we gather here today, we acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nation and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

We also acknowledge the lands and Treaty territories that constitute *kisiskâciwan* (Saskatchewan), and the Indigenous Peoples that call *kisiskâciwan* home. The University of Saskatchewan is ultimately intertribal in spirit.

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Photo: Honey Constant, BSc '19



Message from the President and Vice-Chancellor

2020 marked the fifth anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Final Report, and it signaled a moment when we could reflect on the work the USask community has undertaken to address the TRC's Calls to Action. Looking back, we can clearly identify and celebrate the steps made towards Indigenization, reconciliation and decolonization. Those successes, along with the accomplishments of the Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, are shared throughout this report. Even with progress, we humbly recognize that our work is not finished.

We are deeply engaged with the decolonization and Indigenization processes and are committed to building on past achievements for future successes. We also acknowledge that those past achievements and yet-to-be-realized successes aren't possible without the meaningful partnerships and relationships we share with Indigenous communities. The support, knowledges and shared commitment from Indigenous partners has helped us immensely on our path towards being a safe and welcoming community for Indigenous faculty, staff, and students.

Looking at any college or school at USask will uncover stories of success for Indigenous students, faculty and staff, as well as initiatives and programs aimed at furthering those successes. Guiding this future work is the first-ever Indigenous Strategy at USask, to be gifted to us by Indigenous Elders. This strategy—created by USask's Indigenous community of students, faculty and staff, as well as Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, Language Teachers and other Indigenous community leaders—will continue to build our momentum as we implement it.

The Indigenous Strategy, in combination with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan, sends a strong message about our dedication to being the best place we can be with and for Indigenous students, faculty and staff and their communities. We know that the key to a successful and vibrant campus community is one that is uplifted and enriched by the Indigenous communities it serves, and by the contributions of Indigenous students, faculty, staff and alumni.

The work ahead of us is not easy, but I know we aren't alone in completing it. This is a shared journey and we are fortunate to have meaningful and authentic relationships with Indigenous communities to guide our way forward. If 2020 taught us anything, it is that no challenge can prevent USask from achieving its aspirations.

DR. PETER STOICHEFF
President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Saskatchewan



Message from the Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic

Since stepping in as Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic in the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic in July 2020, I have come to appreciate the many initiatives supporting the University of Saskatchewan's Indigenization and reconciliation efforts. Certainly, as dean of the University Library I had an appreciation for this important work, but as interim provost, I see how all of this work comes together to present the entire vision for advancing Indigenization at USask, and delivering on the ambitions of our University Plan 2025.

Daily I see the commitment of the USask community towards these goals—and that commitment has helped us make progress towards being the best place we can be for Indigenous students, faculty and staff, as well as Indigenous communities. But USask is not alone in this journey, far from it. With the guidance of Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Language Teachers, we took steps towards weaving Traditional Knowledge throughout our university to create a stronger foundation for generations to come. Through continued work with Indigenous communities and partners, we continue to deliver on our bold ambitions related to Indigenous engagement.

Those necessary advances are found throughout this progress report. From relationship-building activities, like the MOUs with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and the Prince Albert Grand Council, to the completion of the Indigenous Strategy, all the varied work undertaken by the Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement is highlighted here. There is also important work that goes on in each and every college and school at USask; examples of that work are also featured in this report.

It has been a great privilege for me to serve USask as interim provost. I know it will also be a great privilege for Dr. Airini who joined us as provost on February 1, 2021. I look forward to sharing my experiences with her and gaining her perspective in this vital work.

2020 will be remembered forever. But for me, I will look back on 2020 with a sense of gratitude for all the experiences that came with the opportunity to serve as interim provost. I have witnessed our campus community—faculty, staff, and students—meet the challenges of the past year with courage, resolve and commitment. In the most challenging of times, we remained focused, agile and creative, all while discovering new approaches to teaching, learning and research. All the while, I am proud to be a member of the USask community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melissa Just". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DR. MELISSA JUST
Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic



Message from the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement

Indigenous Knowledges: Unremittingly Adapting to Change

2020 was an incredible year on so many levels. Due to the pandemic, humanity has been unexpectedly hurled into a state of disorientation and many have responded with creative forms of adaptation. We have all experienced this past year differently, in private and public ways. For many of us, our work and home worlds have converged into the same space, requiring negotiation (e.g., bandwidth) and navigation (e.g., new meeting platforms). In preparation for this year's message for the *Peemahcheeowin/ Journey Progress Report*, along with reviewing the year day-by-day (my winter count activity), I revisited my 2005 dissertation, *First Nations Leadership within a Saskatchewan Context*, because attention was drawn to the importance of adaptive leadership in the midst of change, in particular paradigm-shifting, crisis-generating change. I wanted to be reminded how, in general, we should respond to crisis and the kind of leadership that is needed to reassure us in times of uncertainty. Ronald Heifetz commented:

In a crisis we tend to look for the wrong kind of leadership. We call for someone with answers, decision, strength, and a map of the future, someone who knows where we ought to be going – in short, someone who can make hard problems simple... [We] should be calling for leadership that will challenge us to face problems for which there are no simple, painless solutions – problems that require us to learn in new ways... Making progress on problems demands...changes in our attitudes, behaviour, and values. To meet challenges such as these, we need a different idea of leadership and a new social contract that promotes our adaptive capacities... We need to reconceive and revitalize our civic life and the meaning of citizenship. (1994, p. 2)

Shapeshifting change that is life-giving and life-affirming requires all of us to be very aware, real, and to engage. I see leadership beyond position and title. We are all leaders; we lead ourselves, we lead in our small and large circles of influence, and along with leadership comes great responsibility.

Indigenous knowledges teach us that the future is uncertain, change is constant, fluid, in dynamic flux, and these states are necessary for us to exercise our adaptation skills. For many organizations and countries, it may be the first time that planning is contained to a day-by-day, month-by-month basis because it's difficult to see beyond the immediate. The trickster is running rampant. An Indigenous leader commented:

You reconcile the old with the new because no culture has ever stayed static, they have always changed, sometimes due to environment and sometimes due to other situations. We always grow, we didn't just sit back and die and freeze in time. All I am saying is **let's grow**. [Change] has always happened and let's keep it happening. (2005, pp.186-187)

Our very fast-paced world has had to slow down. We have all had to adapt and create (invent) quickly, actively listen and collaborate in new ways, face trauma and grieve together, exercise resiliency, and uplift each other. We are forced to learn, question existing structures and create new systems, reflect on our integrity and sense of community – this is adaptive leadership and it is hard work. In the midst of all this, as individuals, a society, and as a USask community, **let's grow stronger**.

At our university, the stories of adaptation continue to emerge. The 3rd Annual māmowi āsohtētān (let's cross this together) Internal Truth & Reconciliation Internal Forum, which was held on February 2, 2020 was the most attended so far (250 attendees). The distinguished keynote speakers significantly contributed to the impactful day through their powerful stories: The Honourable Russell Mirasty, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan; University of Calgary Professor Kathleen Mahoney; Assistant Professor Willie Ermine of First Nations University of Canada; and, Phil Fontaine, former Chief of Assembly of First Nations. This event weaved Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into its essence, and ended with a beautiful expression of reconciliation – the joining of hands to engage in a celebration dance. The Forum will shift into a virtual space on March 26, 2021.

A story that began in April 2018, and one that draws the university into transformative/ shapeshifting systemic and structural change, is the journey of our Indigenous Strategy. The Strategy, which was primarily informed and created by Indigenous peoples, continued to evolve after USask pivoted into virtual platforms. In April 2021, the validation process began with Indigenous kéhtē-ayak (Elders), Traditional Knowledge Keepers, faculty, staff, students, leadership and community members. Once this was done, the Indigenous Strategy was presented as a gift to the University Council, the Board of Governors, and the University Senate – and this cherished gift was accepted by these governing bodies. We look forward to the ceremonial launch of the Indigenous Strategy this spring, as directed by the kéhtē-ayak (Elders) and Traditional Knowledge Keepers advisory committee: Maria Campbell, Louise Halfe, Roland Duquette, Eugene Arcand, Norman Fleury, Marie Battiste, Joseph Naytowhow, Lyndon Linklater, Kevin Lewis, and Randy Morin.

This year we welcomed new Indigenous leaders, new spaces for Indigenous engagement and learning, agreements with Indigenous organizations, and celebrated the success of our Indigenous researchers. The Prince Albert campus was celebrated with a virtual grand opening in September. This location promises education closer to home for many current and prospective Indigenous students. The USask OVPIE also secured a new location at the Muskeg Lake urban reserve on Packham Avenue for Indigenous engagement and gatherings. Collaborative partnerships were recognized by the signing of new MOU's (e.g., Office of the Treaty Commissioner, November 18, 2020); and, agreements were sustained with the negotiation of existing MOU's (e.g., Wanuskewin Heritage Park). New programs and opportunities that support Indigenous youth and students came into existence: the Building Intercultural Resilience Mentorship program (funded by the Suncor Energy Foundation); the Oyateki Collaboration Initiative between the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies and the University of Saskatchewan (supported by Mastercard Foundation); and, the emergency funding agreement with Mastercard Foundation, which allowed us to hire an Indigenous counsellor, provide laptops, internet connectivity, and begin offering online cultural teachings. The OVPIE continues its provincial and national reach. We are connected to Universities Canada (ad hoc advisory group on Indigenous higher education, social impact advisory group, EDI advisory group), NSERC EDI Dimensions project, and we have engaged regularly with Indigenous, provincial, and federal government departments on Indigenous education and initiatives.

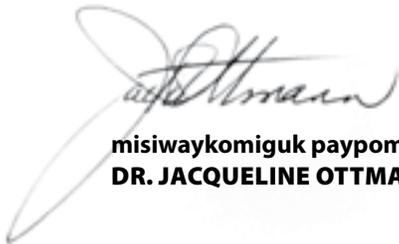
Adaptive leadership encourages that we face hard truths, to solve issues in inclusive and authentic ways. To be responsive and to meaningfully address the systemic-racism, discrimination, and inequities that exist within our campuses, Dr. Verna St. Denis (a member of Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation) was appointed as Special Advisor to the President on Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression. Dr. St. Denis will chair the OVPIE Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Committee and develop anti-racist/oppression education for senior leaders. To support Indigenous faculty and staff, the OVPIE has led the facilitation of 'sharing circles.' The New Narrative hosted by Elder Maria Campbell are virtual gatherings that will provide wellness and cultural teachings, and inspire community building activities for Indigenous staff. These sessions will be driven by USask's Indigenous staff in an effort to support the

empowerment of their voices on campus. The inaugural staff gathering was held on February 2, 2021. Similar gatherings are being planned for Indigenous faculty. I would like to remind our community that, even with the strong Indigenous leadership and guidance in these areas, we all need to be involved in supporting, uplifting and celebrating the accomplishments of Indigenous peoples on campus.

Adaptive and servant leadership are the closest parallels to Indigenous expressions of leadership. Indigenous knowledges recognize that all of creation is in a constant state of adaptation, in continuous motion of renewing energy, and always striving for equilibrium (balance). Good and right relations, renewal ceremonies, integrity, and openness to learning and change are adaptive principles, and are important for not only the survivance but 'thrivance' of community. 2020 has had us be adaptive and in service to each other, to shift into new systems and practices, to endure and not give up. As the OVPIE, and as a university community, we have continued to do work 'in good ways', while making and sustaining relationships with our internal and external community – even when we were exhausted by the circumstances. This has been a very difficult year, and we are not yet done this COVID-19 chapter. By taking the time to reflect on the each day of 2020, I was surprised by the volume of quality work our team has done because we were so immersed in doing. I've also been reminded of the purpose, mandate and vision for the Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement. I will end by reiterating, **let's grow stronger.**

In closing, I want to extend a warm welcome to our new Provost and Vice-President Academic, Dr. Airini, (Samoan).

kikawāpamin mīnawa pī,



misiwaykomiguk paypomwayotung
DR. JACQUELINE OTTMANN

Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Ottmann, J. (2005). *First Nations Leadership Development within a Saskatchewan Context*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK.



Dr. Airini (PhD)

"It is a genuine honour to join President Stoicheff's leadership team in this critical role," said Dr. Airini, who has a PhD from The University of British Columbia, an MBA from Massey University and a Master of Education from the University of Canterbury.

"The achievements by USask, one of Canada's top research-intensive universities, are exceptional. At a time when all universities are experiencing the headwinds of change, USask is redefining what it means to be a world-class university; and one that leads with respect. I very much look forward to working with the entire USask community in this vital effort."

<https://news.usask.ca/articles/general/2020/usask-appoints-new-provost-and-vp-academic.php>

OVPIE

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PROVOST INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

After years of advocacy and planning, the Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement (OVPIE) was realized at the University of Saskatchewan on October 1, 2017. The OVPIE builds upon the previous work, commitments, and aspirations of the USask campus community. We provide leadership and strategic guidance and hold the university accountable to its commitments of Indigenization and decolonization. OVPIE strives to support the USask community on its journey of transformational reconciliation so that Indigenization and decolonization is understood, embraced, experienced and evident on the lands of our campuses within all units, colleges, faculties, and departments.

nikānitān manāchitowinihk in Cree and **ni manachihitoonaan** in Michif (“Let us lead with respect”) is the philosophy that guides how we relate to and collaborate with USask and our stakeholders. Our primary principle is to ensure that work is done ‘in a good way’, is reflective of the distinct and contextual aspirations, goals, and strengths of Indigenous peoples, and is fulfilled, by drawing from the wisdom, knowledges, cultures, traditions, histories, lived experiences and stories of Indigenous peoples.

VISION

With and by Indigenous peoples and communities, the University of Saskatchewan will be recognized as the leader of Indigenization, Reconciliation and decolonization. Indigenous knowledges and wisdoms will be valued and positioned in a place of respectful prominence.

wāpa kih ôtēh nikāhn (wah paw key ohtay nee kahn) Cree
Tomorrow in the making, looking forward to tomorrow.

MISSION

The Indigenous Strategy will help realize the University of Saskatchewan’s mission, vision, values, principles, commitments, goals and aspirations by drawing from the wisdom, knowledges, cultures, traditions, histories, lived experiences and stories of Indigenous peoples.

nikānitān manāchitowinihk in Cree and **ni manachihitoonaan** in Michif (“Let us lead with respect”) has informed the creation and pending implementation of the Indigenous Strategy. The Indigenous Strategy will strengthen the University of Saskatchewan, as it will ensure that the work is done ‘in a good way’

GOALS

These goals align with the UPlan 2025 and the (forthcoming) Indigenous Strategy to advance strategic direction and achieve excellence, equity, and equality in all aspects of higher education (teaching, learning, research and governance) for Indigenous peoples.

The OVPIE has four goals:

1. Respectful and constructive engagement – realized through partnerships, collaborations and connections
2. Active communications – realized through sharing our stories
3. Systemic and systems transformation- realized through the transformation of university standards, policies and practices
4. System-wide learning – realized through active and respectful learning at all levels about Indigenous cultures, protocols, histories and contemporary lived experiences

Indigenization has been identified, in the UPlan 2025, as one of the four ‘pillars’ for USask. Other foundational documents communicate the importance of working alongside Indigenous peoples. USask’s vision reads: We will be an outstanding institution of research, learning, knowledge-keeping, reconciliation, and inclusion with and by Indigenous peoples and communities. The mission highlights welcoming spaces, diversity and meaningful change. The principles identify the importance of collaboration, community, different ways of knowing, learning, and being, diversity, equality, human dignity and reconciliation. USask’s values include fairness and equitable treatment, inclusiveness, and respect.

Meaningfully and continuously engaging in Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation is the ‘right thing to do’ for the University of Saskatchewan. We have legal (e.g., the Treaties, Canadian Constitution, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007), moral and ethical obligations to ensure this work is “done in a good way”, with integrity. Moral obligation refers to individual values and internal interpretations (i.e., internal compass) of what is right and wrong in relation to standards of behavior—the focus is on ‘right relations’ and doing the ‘right’ thing. Ethical responsibilities refers to community/ collective responsibilities to fairness and justice—the obligations to humanity.

The OVPIE serves as a key resource to leaders and units to advance our strategic priority of Indigenous engagement by identifying, exploring and advancing ideas, initiatives and strategies to uplift Indigenous efforts and support the process of decolonization. We work at multiple levels of governance and operations across, within and outside the university to meet the diverse and unique needs of Indigenous students, staff, faculty, Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, and communities to enhance understanding, knowledge and capacities of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing (i.e., Indigenous protocols, practices, content, etc.) within USask as a whole. We are leaders, supporters, communicators, and collaborators. Our work interconnects with existing portfolios and structures across the university, often intersecting with and building upon other work to create new systems, structures, and processes to implement the university's Indigenous-focused goals.

It's important
to "think outside
the box and live
within the circle"

Dr. Gregory Cajete, Tewa

**Vice-Provost Indigenous
Engagement**
**Executive Assistant to Vice-Provost
Indigenous Engagement**
**Senior Director, Office of the Vice-
Provost Indigenous Engagement**
**Director, Office of the Vice-Provost
Indigenous Engagement**
Indigenization and Reconciliation Coordinator
Cultural Coordinator
Project Manager, Indigenous Initiatives
Communications Officer
Project Officer
**Program Coordinator,
Building Intercultural Resilience
Mentorship**



THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PROVOST INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT:

- » will help the university realize the seven commitments identified in the Indigenous Strategy (Safety, Wellness, Stewardship, Representation, Right Relations, Creation, and Renewal) and the goals associated with Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation in the University Plan 2025;
- » manage the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre and the Indigenous Engagement space on the urban Indigenous lands of Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (Packham Avenue);
- » work at creating, initiating, implementing system-wide and structural change;
- » work alongside Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to provide guidance and leadership so that members of the University see themselves working towards and contributing to Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation initiatives;
- » support, teach, develop capacities, help begin processes, and facilitate Indigenization, reconciliation and decolonization;
- » support colleges and units in their Indigenization journeys and focus on system change;
- » offer advice and guidance on how to build respectful and reciprocal relationships;
- » promote, and evaluate the relevance of, representation on committees;
- » respect and promote Indigenous and university ethical processes and protocols.



Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, PhD VICE-PROVOST INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

Jacqueline is Anishinaabe (Saulteaux) and a former elementary and high school teacher and principal. She was Coordinator of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit undergraduate teacher education program at the University of Calgary, and Director of Indigenous Education Initiatives within the Werklund School of Education. She co-chaired the school's Indigenous Strategy and the university-wide Indigenous Strategy alongside the Provost.

Jacqueline became Professor and Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement at the University of Saskatchewan in 2017. In 2020, she also became the first Indigenous person to be President of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education. Ottmann is an international researcher, advocate, and change-maker whose purpose is to transform practices inclusive of Indigenous leadership, methodologies and pedagogies. Jacqueline is driven to create schools and communities that foster a deeper sense of belonging and appreciation for Indigenous peoples—their histories, stories, ways of knowing and being.

Debbie Venne, BComm

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE VICE-PROVOST INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

Debbie is a citizen of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation and grew up in Saskatoon. An alumna of the Edwards School of Business, she joined USask in 2018 as the Coordinator, Community and Government Relations and moved to OVPIE in 2019. Debbie comes with vast and varied experience working with a number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations.

Debbie provides high level executive support to ensure the implementation of strategies, initiatives and projects. She is responsible for the day-to-day management of the office and is the primary contact for those seeking the vice-provost's attention. She also assists USask's Speakers Bureau, provides support for the Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Committee and is a committee member for the māmowi āsohtētān (Let's Cross This Together) Internal Truth and Reconciliation Internal Forum.





Candace Wasacase-Lafferty, BA

(SECONDMENT, PRESIDENT'S OFFICE)

SENIOR DIRECTOR

Candace is a Saulteaux and Cree citizen of the Kahkewistahaw First Nation and a USask graduate. As the Senior Director Indigenous Engagement, she reports half-time to University Relations. Candace is currently on secondment as Co-Chair of the Post Pandemic Shift Commission for the Office of the President. During her 20 years at USask, Candace has held various roles in human resources, community relations, student services, fundraising, partnership development and helped to realize the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre.

She supports colleges and units to achieve success in Indigenous engagement and Indigenous student success. She also serves as a Past Board Chair of Wanuskewin Heritage Park and a board member for the Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority. Candace is committed to promoting and living Indigenous values and culture within the university and beyond.

Candice Pete-Cardoso,

CIBA, BComm, MPA

DIRECTOR

Candice is a nêhiyawiskwêw (Cree woman) from the Little Pine First Nation, Treaty 6 Territory. She is a USask alumna with a master's degree in Public Administration, a Bachelor of Commerce, and a Certificate in Indigenous Business Administration. Candice has over 20 years of experience working within the post-secondary sector, as well as with Federal, Provincial, and Indigenous governments. She is responsible for operationalizing the mandate of the office and focuses on strategic planning, operations and people planning, risk management and financial management. She is responsible for ensuring advancement of the University Plan 2025 and the Indigenous Strategy goals in collaboration with stakeholders across the institution. She serves as Co-chair for the Indigenous Advisory Committee and the Indigenous Strategy Working Group; and is a member of the Indigenous Identity Forum, Indigenous Scholarship TEAMS Committee, USask Standards for Promotion and Tenure Indigenous Task Force, NEIHR Grant Support Committee, Indigenous Research Resource Support Collaborative Committee, and the ASPA Social Justice Committee.



Matt Dunn, MSc, PEng

INDIGENIZATION AND RECONCILIATION COORDINATOR

Matt is Dene and a member of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation. He joined the OVPIE team in 2019 to support the development and implementation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultural programming, policies, procedures, strategies, and education that advance the University of Saskatchewan's 2025 Strategic Plan, Indigenous strategy, and the OVPIE vision and mandate specifically related to Indigenization, reconciliation, decolonization and manachitowin.

We would like to thank Matt for his work in the OVPIE. He left USask to pursue work in engineering, his field of education, in February 2021.



Robert (Bob) Badger, **BFA, MEd** **CULTURAL COORDINATOR**

Bob is from Kawacatoose First Nation. He was born and raised on Keeseekoose First Nation where he spent time learning from his Great Grandparents to be humble and respectful of different cultures. For over 9 years, he brings this teaching with him to work every day as he helps to educate the campus community in their Indigenization processes. Bob has a Bachelor of Indigenous Fine Arts from the First Nations University of Canada and a Master of Education, Indigenous Language Revitalization from the University of Victoria. He is responsible for walking beside Colleges, Schools and units on their Indigenization journey. He builds cultural capacity, provides guidance on how to work with Elders and Knowledge Keepers in respectful and meaningful ways, assists in the understanding of Indigenous cultures and teaches about the diversity of Indigenous peoples. Bob serves on the

Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Committee, the Buffalo Project, and the Indigenous Advisory Circle. He also provides presentations on Traditional Story Telling; the history of Indigenous Land Acknowledgements; working respectfully with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Language Teachers; and Cultural Responsiveness.

Meika Taylor, **BA, MAP**

PROJECT MANAGER, INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES

Meika is a Métis woman from northern Alberta with roots from Bresaylor, SK and Red River, MB. She has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Alberta, a master's degree specialization in Indigenous Community Planning from The University of British Columbia and over 15 years of experience working in Indigenous specific portfolios in post-secondary institutions. Meika currently manages the Oyateki Partnership between SIIT, GDI and USask (supported by Mastercard Foundation); supports the Building Intercultural Resilience Mentorship Pilot Project; facilitates the New Narrative hosted by Elder Maria Campbell; co-chairs the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Champions group; sits on the Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression committee and policy sub-committee; provides guidance on the Institutional Research Data Management Strategy Working Group; is a member of the Projects and Planning Network; the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Indigenous Steering Working Group; Indigenous Advisory Circle; Indigenous Strategy Working Group; the māmowi ásohtētān (Let's Cross This Together) Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum; and the Indigenous Identity Forum. She also manages the social media accounts for the OVPIE.



Shannon Cossette, **DipIPR** **COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

Shannon is a member of USask Communications, and holds memberships with both CPRS and IABC. She is responsible for the strategic communications planning and outreach to the key audiences that OVPIE seeks to engage with and influence. She provides a clear central point of contact and source of information for both internal and external stakeholders. She communicates news and events, and acts and assists with the creation and editing of communication materials. This includes the development and maintenance of OVPIE's website Indigenous.usask.ca, and the preparation of digital and print materials including OVPIE's progress report and the semi-annual newsletter ácimowin. Shannon is a representative for OVPIE on the USask Indigenous Research Series, the māmowi ásohtētān (Let's Cross This Together) Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum, Strategic

Communicators, PRT-COVID Communications, and the Recruitment Forum.



Darla Isaak

PROJECT OFFICER

Darla provides strategic administrative support and project management to the Senior Director, Indigenous Engagement. She also supports cultural stewardship on campus by providing a strong connection between Elders and the university administrative system. Darla represents OVPIE as a member on the Indigenous Advisory Circle, Indigenous Identity Forum, Powwow Committee, Indigenous Achievement Committee, Buffalo Circle Leadership Committee, Grounding Circle, māmowi āsohtētān (Let’s Cross This Together) Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum, and the Recruitment Forum.

Nahanni Olson, BA, BEd

(SECONDMENT FROM SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOLS)

PROGRAM COORDINATOR, BUILDING INTERCULTURAL RESILIENCE MENTORSHIP

Nahanni joined the OVPIE on secondment from the Saskatoon Public Schools division (SPSD) on March 4, 2021, as the inaugural Building Intercultural Resilience Mentorship (BIRM) Program Coordinator. Funding for the BIRM Pilot Program has been generously provided by the Suncor Energy Foundation for one year. Nahanni’s role will support the joint development and implementation of a First Nation, Métis and Inuit student mentorship program designed to increase the enrollment and retention of Indigenous students at SPSD and USask.

Nahanni is a member of the Onion Lake Cree Nation and a USask alumna with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education. She began her career as a teacher with SPSD including several years at wāhkóhtowin School’s nēhiyāwiwin Cree Language and Culture Program. Since 2017, she has worked at Bedford Road Collegiate and developed the Indigenous Student Advocate position, which empowers Indigenous students and families to achieve their education goals.



Dr. Verna St. Denis (PhD) has been seconded to the position of special advisor to the president on anti-racism and anti-oppression.

In this role, St. Denis will lead the development and implementation of the university’s anti-racism/anti-oppression policy and strategy. Working closely with both the vice-provost Indigenous engagement and associate vice-president people and resources, St. Denis will consult across the organization to assist with the articulation of a broad strategic vision for anti-racism/anti-oppression for the university; and report on our strategy and progress.

She will also chair the USask anti-racism/anti-oppression committee and provide leadership to support the shaping of its work and the ongoing evolution of its mandate.

GORDON OAKES RED BEAR STUDENT CENTRE

The Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre (opened 2016) brings together the teachings, traditions, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous peoples of Saskatchewan with the principles and values of the university in a respectful, inclusive, and mutually beneficial way to enhance First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success. By grounding the Centre in the teachings of respect, responsibility, relationship, collaboration, cooperation, humility, reciprocity, and sharing, the Centre is a safe and welcoming place that is respectful of the diversity of all Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

The Centre facilitates the coordination of effective student services for First Nations (Status and Non-Status Indians), Métis, and Inuit students together in relationship building within and outside the university with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples. It provides a home for Indigenous undergraduate and graduate student leadership and allows for opportunities to learn from, about and with Indigenous peoples in Canada.

The design of the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre was envisioned by Douglas Cardinal and RBM Architects. Cardinal is an internationally-renowned architect of Métis and Blackfoot heritage, and is a forerunner in philosophies of sustainability, green buildings and ecological design in community planning. Cardinal's architecture is inspired by his observations of nature and grounded within his cultural beliefs.

The building was named after Gordon Oakes Red Bear, a spiritual and community leader who guided many in his community and across kisiskâciwan (Saskatchewan). He was born in 1932 in what is now the Nekaneet First Nation, and passed away in early 2002. Oakes believed in Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples working together for each other's mutual benefit, using the analogy of a team of horses pulling together and living in balance to impart this teaching. Because he held a strong belief in education and honouring one's culture and traditions, this building is named in his memory.





OVPIE IN ACTION

OVPIE

STRATEGIC COMMITTEES

► **OVPIE Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Committee**

The OVPIE Committee on Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression was realized in August 2018, and chaired by Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann. This interdisciplinary committee consists of faculty and staff from across the university who are interested in or already delving into anti-racist, anti-oppression issues, education, research, teaching, advocacy, and/or publication. In 2020, to advance work in this area, a number of sub-committees were established, those are: Terms of Reference sub-committee will provide a working framework for the committee, Academic Credentials sub-committee to review the development of accredited anti-racism programming, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Policy sub-committee to work on the development of an institutional policy, and an Education Campaign sub-committee to work on the development of campaigns to educate and share information on anti-racism initiatives. In 2020, Dr. Verna St. Denis was appointed as Special Advisor to the President, and named as Chair for the committee.

► **māmowī āsohtētān Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum Committee**

In 2017, the University started an annual internal building reconciliation forum, aimed at bringing together faculty, staff, and students to listen, learn, and engage with local and national initiatives to help inform Indigenization and reconciliation among our campus community. The 2020 māmowī āsohtētān

Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum had over 250 participants in attendance. There were four renowned keynote speakers: Lieutenant Governor Russell Mirasty, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Phil Fontaine, human rights lawyer Kathleen Mahoney, and Cree Professor Willie Ermine. Each keynote introduced one of the four themes of the forum: educational policy and racism, Indigenous wellness, reconciliACTION, and ethical space. Following the keynotes, registrants participated in roundtable conversations to unpack and strategize ways to engage in constructive change, ways to implement the new learning, and contribute to individual and collective healing and learning. Videos of the keynote speakers and photos from the forum can be found at Indigenous.usask.ca.

► **OVPIE Indigenous Task Force – University of Saskatchewan Standards for Promotion and Tenure**

The OVPIE Indigenous Task Force concluded their work in December of 2019, resulting in recommendations on how to incorporate Indigenous Scholarship into USask Standards for Promotion and Tenure processes. During 2020, the OVPIE continued to dialogue with Faculty Relations on developing workshops to support the standards renewal process and on workshops to support career development of Indigenous faculty new to the academy.

OVPIE

SERVICE ON INSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEES

► **Indigenous Advisory Circle (IAC) - USask Executive Sponsors - VPIE and VPTLSE**

The IAC is a committee comprised of Indigenous and non-Indigenous academic advisors as well as USask staff and program managers who want a place to share information and the opportunity to support one another. Since it began in 2002,

the membership of the group has grown to comprise over 60 members who work exclusively or extensively with Indigenous students, as well as others who provide supports and services for Indigenous students. In 2020, the IAC received financial resourcing from OVPIE to enable work associated with supporting the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations First

Nation Post-Secondary Forum, and an Indigenous Language revitalization workshop facilitated by Elder Maria Campbell. IAC members also participated on the FSIN First Nation Post-Secondary Forum Planning Committee – Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations in 2020.

► **Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research (NEIHR) Grant Support Committee – USask Executive Sponsors - OVPR and OVPIE**

In 2020, OVPIE became a member of the NEIHR Grant Support Committee. The work focused on supporting various NEIHR grant applicants from across USask. The committee was brought together to discuss how to provide support mechanisms for NEIHR grant applicants, particularly focusing on strengthening communication and collaborative supports.

► **Indigenous Scholarship TEAMS Committee – USask Executive Sponsors – OVPR and OVPIE**

Various units were brought together early in 2020, to discuss shared outcomes regarding Indigenous scholarship on campus. A commitment was made to improve processes within departments to advance Indigenous Scholarship campus wide; to contribute expertise from each respective unit to achieve common goals; and to continue to meet as a group.

These discussions led to the co-creation of a series of system-wide learning events to educate the USask community about key areas of Indigenous Scholarship and Research. These events include respectful engagement with Indigenous communities, how to navigate USask processes when working with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, financial compensation for Elders and/or research participants; and upcoming in 2021, Data Sovereignty, Ethics and the First Nations principles of ownership, control, access, and possession (OCAP®).

► **Indigenous Research Resource Collaborative Support Committee – USask Executive Sponsor - OVPR**

The Indigenous Research Resource Collaborative Support Committee was brought together in November of 2020, to develop an Indigenous Research Resource Collaborative program. This is a multi-unit, collaborative initiative intended to provide Indigenous researchers with mentorship and support as they begin their careers at USask. Dr. Darcy Marciniuk, Associate Vice-President Research, and Dr. Jackie Ottmann, Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, were tasked with co-chairing this pilot program, the emphasis is on providing research and administrative supports to Indigenous scholars.

► **Reconciliation Saskatoon**

Reconciliation Saskatoon is a community of organizations, non-profits, businesses, faith-communities and partners who have come together to initiate a citywide conversation about reconciliation and provide opportunities for everyone to engage in Calls to Action. In 2020, OVPIE staff participated on the education sub-committee and will continue to support this important work in 2021.

► **People Around the World Conference 2021 – hosted by the USask International Office**

In 2020, the OVPIE served on the People around the World Conference 2020 organizing committee. This event brought together expert research, applied knowledge, and lived experiences to create the path forward for stronger, more resilient societies in the wake of COVID-19, and on the way to meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2030.

► **Indigenous Identity Committee – USask Human Resources**

► **Strategic Enrolment – USask Student Services, TLSE**

► **Institutional Research Data Management (RDM) Strategy Working Group**

OVPIE has representation on the Institutional RDM Strategy Working Group. Over the past year, this group has completed a gap analysis on the current state of data management at USask and will be moving forward with drafting a revised institutional data management strategy to address these gaps. Five pillars of a successful RDM strategy were identified by the RDM working group and approved by the Executive Sponsors in January 2021. They are:

1. Unified Institutional Policy and Support
2. Cohesive Service Model
3. Robust Infrastructure
4. Commitment to Assessment and Growth of RDM Institutional Support
5. Indigenization and Decolonization

The OVPIE will continue to support the development of the fifth pillar focused on Indigenization and decolonization through the RDM working group as it drafts the USask data management strategy and action plan.

► **Planning and Projects Network**

OVPIE is a member of the PPN which is focused on best practices for planning successful systems change.

► **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) Champions**

OVPIE serves as a co-chair for the EDI Champions group. This is a highly engaged group of colleagues from across USask that are committed to championing the work of equity, diversity, and inclusion in their respective colleges and units. EDI Champions meet monthly to discuss best practices for EDI work, break down silos between units and colleges regarding events and initiatives focused around EDI, provide professional development and training, and collaborate on institutional EDI events. An EDI events sub-committee was struck to support the development of an annual USask EDI day in 2021.

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

► **Working with Senior Business Advisors at USask**

In November of 2020, the OVPIE and the USask Enterprise Procurement unit presented to the USask Senior Business Advisors team. An overview of the OVPIE portfolio was given, including the statement of core purpose, status of the Indigenous Strategy, Indigenous Procurement Strategy, Cultural Service Provider Forms. Also included was the Smudging Policy and Smudging Guidelines, and introduction of the newly created USask and OTC Technicians Table focused on providing measures for reconciliation at USask.

► **Partnering with USask Connection Point - "How to Engage a Cultural Service Provider"**

OVPIE provided strategic guidance to ConnectionPoint on the creation of the "How to Engage a Cultural Service Provider" document, which is now available in the ConnectionPoint Knowledge Base. The document serves as a general guide for USask employees that want to appropriately and respectfully engage with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, and outlines the steps for requesting services and submitting an honorarium request.

► **Working with Safety Resources - "Smudging and Pipe Ceremonies Safety Considerations"**

OVPIE was able to provide communication support to Safety Resources by adding their "Smudging and Pipe Ceremonies Safety Considerations" to the [Indigenous.usask.ca](https://indigenous.usask.ca) website, as well as working with ConnectionPoint to house this document in the ConnectionPoint tool kit. The document provides health and safety information

related to smudging and pipe ceremonies, as well as guidelines for safely conducting these ceremonies indoors on campus. A list of approved spaces where smudging may occur is outlined; provided local communication processes have been adhered to.

► **Senior Leadership Consultations with Indigenous Staff and Faculty**

In November and December of 2020, President Peter Stoicheff, Interim Provost Melissa Just, and Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann brought together Indigenous staff and Indigenous faculty to attend virtual small group discussions. The gatherings were an opportunity for Indigenous staff and faculty to share their experiences and hopes for the future of USask. This dialogue is important as we continue to strive to be the University the World Needs, and the sessions were intended to listen then provide recommendations on the identified issues and challenges. The notes from these meetings have been analyzed and development of a summary report and action plan for implementation is in progress.

► **New Narrative Group – USask Executive Sponsor – OVPIE**

The New Narrative group is new initiative sponsored by OVPIE, but collaboratively hosted by Elder Maria Campbell. The New Narrative was created to bring together Indigenous staff across all USask campuses in staff-driven time together to build community, share cultural teachings, and empower Indigenous staff to create a new asset-based narrative for Indigenous peoples at USask. This group is honored to have Elder Maria Campbell host the group on a monthly basis.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

The Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, in collaboration with University Relations spent time engaging with various federal and provincial organizations. The meetings were focussed on strengthening relationships, and providing overviews of the work related to the development of the Indigenous Strategy. Meetings took place with:

- ▶ *Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)*
- ▶ *Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)*
- ▶ *Innovation Science and Economic Development*
- ▶ *Senator of Canada (Saskatchewan)*
- ▶ *Strategic and Service Policy Branch, Employment and Social Development Canada*
- ▶ *Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Secretariat*
- ▶ *Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River and Critic for Indigenous Services*
- ▶ *Indigenous Relations, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada*
- ▶ *Science and Parliamentary Infrastructure Branch*
- ▶ *Department of Biological Sciences, University of Calgary*
- ▶ *Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada*
- ▶ *Public Services and Procurement Canada*
- ▶ *Knowledge Circle for Indigenous Inclusion*
- ▶ *Office of the Minister of Northern Affairs, Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs*
- ▶ *Winnipeg Centre Constituency*
- ▶ *Employment and Social Development Canada, Strategic Partnership and Business Development*
- ▶ *Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation Sector, Natural Resources Canada*
- ▶ *Public Health Agency of Canada*
- ▶ *Indigenous Services Canada*
- ▶ *Ministry of Advanced Education, Saskatchewan*
- ▶ *Ministry of Education, Saskatchewan*
- ▶ *Ministry of Government Relations, Saskatchewan*

► ***OVPIE and the Office of the Treaty Commissioner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed November 2020***

In November 2020, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) and OVPIE signed an MOU to support reconciliation evaluation and Treaty education at USask. The indicators found in the OTC's evaluation framework will help to create measurable paths towards meaningful reconciliation at USask, and will provide demonstrable value to the UPlan 2025 and the forthcoming Indigenous Strategy.

► ***USask and Wanuskewin Heritage Park Authority - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in negotiation***

During 2020, OVPIE and Wanuskewin Heritage Park Authority worked towards revising and renewing their long standing partnership agreement. The agreement is in the final stages of revision and will soon be signed and honored by both parties. An MOU signed in 2002 confirmed the intent that the organizations would work together to reach common goals and to develop joint initiatives including, among others, land- and place-based education initiatives and cultural awareness programs to connect with STEAM based (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) colleges and departments. The renewed MOU will serve as a foundation for a dynamic, productive, and evolving relationship in the service of Indigenous education and opportunities for growth and mutual development.

► ***USask and New Zealand and Waikato - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed April, 2019***

In the summer of 2018, a delegation of doctoral students and scholars from the University of Waikato, New Zealand (Maori), visited USask. Relationships were developed between the faculty and students and new opportunities were sought for global Indigenous research. With a shared history of colonialism from the British Empire between Indigenous peoples in Canada and New Zealand, the ground work was laid for a return visit by the University of Saskatchewan and the creation of a memorandum of understanding between the two universities. This agreement has resulted in research opportunities and the sharing of Indigenous knowledges and experiences.

► ***USask and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT), Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed March 28, 2014***

USask and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) signed an agreement pledging to work together towards beneficial educational outcomes for Indigenous learners. This would provide a seamless transition between the two institutions to enhance a mutual goal of supporting the educational needs of Indigenous peoples in Saskatchewan. This is one example of collaboration and commitment to supporting and improving accessibility for First Nation students interested in pursuing higher education at USask.

► ***USask and the University of Manitoba (UofM), Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed February 2016***

The opportunity to partner with this unique centre of national and international significance is an important part of OVPIE's commitment towards providing opportunities for researchers and students at USask and the broader community, including residential school survivors, to access the vast resources and programs of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR).

The NCTR, located in Winnipeg and hosted on the University of Manitoba campus, is the permanent electronic archive for all statements, documents, and other materials gathered by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The archives currently hold approximately five million electronic records on the NTRC database, with about 40,000 records available for public access.

► ***USask and the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed February 2017***

This is a joint commitment to helping First Nations students succeed. The agreement is believed to be a first in Canada. It is a province-wide commitment by post-secondary institutions to close the educational gap for Indigenous students. This agreement supports a longstanding commitment between the FSIN and USask to work together to increase First Nations students enrollment and program completion at USask.

► ***USask and the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC), signed April 24, 2019***

This agreement establishes networks of diverse expertise needed in the development efforts of PAGC communities, and collaboration on projects and research activities that have mutual benefits for both partners. It assures PAGC's input into programs and courses offered by USask, especially at the Prince Albert campus. Northern Cree, Dene, and Dakota knowledge systems will provide a framework for Indigenous epistemologies, methodologies, and pedagogies that will inform teaching, learning, research and relationships. This agreement supports plans to ensure that its campus programs, courses, research and support services better reflect the needs of their First Nations students, especially those from PAGC communities in northern Saskatchewan.

► ***USask and the Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC), signed April 25, 2019***

USask and the Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC) signed a formal agreement to continue Indigenizing USask by making the university an inclusive place for First Nations people to improve their educational successes and opportunities. This MOU honors treaty relationships by addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

This agreement also provides opportunities to enhance

educational pathways from within First Nations to post-secondary by increasing educational opportunities for Indigenous young people in or near their home communities.

► ***USask and the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan (MN-S), signed November 18, 2019***

This agreement is designed to improve the education status of Métis people, remove barriers and close the university achievement gaps between Métis and non-Indigenous populations. USask and MN-S are committed to formalizing, expanding and enhancing their relationship by working to

identify common priorities and maximizing mutually beneficial opportunities. The MOU provides a foundation to encourage and contribute to Métis presence and representation at all levels, including employment, governance, enrolment, completion rates, Métis-specific research, Métis studies and curriculum, cultural celebrations, Métis-specific symbols, naming, and Métis community engagement. This MOU will also include partnerships, planning and sharing of ethical research initiatives that would advance the interest of the Métis Nation and residents of the province of Saskatchewan.

OVPIE

STRATEGIC PROJECT WORK

► ***OVPIE Secures Mastercard Foundation Emergency Funding – May 2020***

At the onset of COVID-19, Indigenous students shared that cultural and language teachings with Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, and Language Teachers was critical to their ability to be successful in school. With many students losing their employment as a result of the pandemic, it was clear that immediate access to emergency funding for Indigenous students was critical to students meeting their basic needs and being able to continue on and succeed in their post-secondary journeys during the COVID-19 crisis.

In May of 2020, OVPIE was successful in securing \$300k from the Mastercard Foundation COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Program. The funding was obtained to support four main COVID-19 response initiatives: (1) Connectivity for Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous students; (2) Emergency Bursary Funding for Indigenous students; (3) Development of virtual resources for Indigenous mental health and wellness; and, (4) Delivery of online cultural teachings with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers.

The funding enabled USask to move forward with the hiring of an Indigenous-specific student counselor to provide Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Indigenous students with connectivity support, to provide emergency bursary funding to ensure that the basic necessities of life were not at risk, and to develop online cultural teachings with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers.

Through the partnership with Mastercard Foundation we have also been able to strengthen our relationship with the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) and the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI). We look forward to continuing to work together in support of Indigenous students across the province.

► ***USask and the Saskatoon Public School Division Work to Build Intercultural Resiliency***

The Suncor Energy Foundation (SEF) has granted funding to the OVPIE to pilot the Building Intercultural Resilience Mentorship (BIRM) Program. The goals of BIRM are to inspire hope and strengthen pathways to self-determination for Indigenous youth.

The BIRM Program will focus on supporting Indigenous secondary students from two of Saskatoon Public School Division's largest high schools through leadership and academic mentorship that weaves Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) culture and language learning facilitated by Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, and Language Teachers.

Indigenous high school students from Mount Royal and Bedford Road will soon be connected with Indigenous and non-Indigenous undergraduate and graduate students from USask to inspire reciprocal and highly engaging learning opportunities.

These relationships will be intercultural on many levels (i.e., educational, interracial, etc.). The mentor-mentees will have university experts (world renowned faculty, researchers, authors, and community experts) to support their project work.

The current Indigenous student populations in Saskatoon's high schools that will be involved in the pilot project include: 270 students at Bedford Road (41%) and 523 students at Mount Royal (59%). These are significantly high numbers. The numbers are also high at USask where the overall Indigenous student population was 3,320 in 2018-19; 16%, and perhaps much more as this statistic is based on self-declaration. BIRM will be structured as a wrap-around network of inspiration and support for these students and students will be able to develop mentor-mentee relationships that will be intercultural on many levels.

There is one year of funding provided from the SEF to hire Nahanni Olson, the BIRM Program Coordinator. She has been seconded from the Saskatoon Public Schools effective March 2021. The focus will be on building relationships and curriculum at USask to start with, with the intention of starting programming at the high schools in the late spring.

INDIGENOUS STRATEGY

OUR COMMITMENTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND ASPIRATIONS

“The strategy uplifts Indigenous voices. It presents our stories. It honours seven generations of our ancestors and seven generations of our children not yet born. As an act of self-determination, this strategy expresses the creativity, the aspirations and the expectations of Indigenous peoples. It testifies. It teaches. It guides.

The strategy, as a gift invites non-Indigenous peoples to walk with us. We are indebted to the generosity of Indigenous peoples across Saskatchewan who dedicated such care and effort in creating this document. We are hopeful the university community, in accepting this gift, will dedicate reciprocal care and effort in embracing the responsibilities this gift entails.”

Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann
Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement

The strategy is grounded in seven fundamental commitments—interdependent, mutually reinforcing, and interconnected in time and space. These commitments reflect important concepts to Indigenous peoples, our ways of knowing and being. These commitments are central to the wholeness of Indigenous self-determination:

- ▶ **Safety.** Creating and realizing inviting, welcoming and safe spaces for Indigenous peoples, free from racism and oppression.
- ▶ **Wellness.** Integrating wholistic healing supports for the University's Indigenous community, including students, staff, faculty and leaders.
- ▶ **Stewardship.** Preserving and amplifying Indigenous cultures, languages and protocol learnings.
- ▶ **Representation.** Uplifting Indigenous peoples in University spaces and places.
- ▶ **Right Relations.** Supporting active and respectful partnerships and engagement with Indigenous peoples—ethical and relational spaces.
- ▶ **Creation.** Acknowledging, resourcing and investing in wise practices and activities—conjuring the creative spirit that inspires innovation.
- ▶ **Renewal.** Strengthening and sustaining pathways of access and success—connecting with Indigenous youth.



kēhtē-ayak (Elders)

oskâpêwak, Traditional Knowledge Keepers,
and Language Teachers

Eugene Arcand

Lorna Arcand

Bob Badger

Marie Battiste

Anthony Blair-Dreaver Johnston

Monica Buffalo

Maria Campbell

Mona Creely-Johns

Nora Cummings

Roland Duquette

Norman Fleury

Louise Halfe

Murray Hamilton

May Henderson

(the late) Frank Kayseas

Enola Kayseas

Margaret Keewatin

Kevin Lewis

Lyndon J. Linklater

Maria Linklater

Randy Morin

Larry Oakes

Harriet Oakes-St.Pierre

(the late) Jacob Pete

(the late) Jacob Sanderson

Senator Sol Sanderson

Myrna Severight

Edwin St. Pierre

Cy Standing

Sonia Starblanket

Wendell Starblanket

Leona Tootoosis

Rosalie Tsannie-Burseth

INDIGENOUS STRATEGY TIMELINE

engagement

validation

dissemination

2019

ENGAGEMENT ADVICE AND GUIDANCE MEETINGS WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES CONTINUES

JANUARY

- 30TH** Morning: Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous Undergraduate Students – Green Room, Administration Building, USask
- 30TH** Afternoon: Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous Graduate Students – Green Room, Administration Building, USask
- 31ST** Morning: Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous staff – Green Room, Administration Building, USask
- 31ST** Afternoon: Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous faculty – Green Room, Administration Building, USask

MARCH

- 7TH** Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers – Holiday Inn Express, Saskatoon

APRIL

- 2ND** Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous undergraduate students – College of Education Building, USask
- 4TH** Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous undergraduate students – Health Sciences Building, USask
- 5TH** Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous undergraduate students – Arts and Science Building, USask

MAY

- 30TH** Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers – Parktown Hotel, Saskatoon

OCTOBER

- Indigenous Strategy Draft Development

2018

ENGAGEMENT ADVICE AND GUIDANCE MEETINGS WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

APRIL

- 17TH** Indigenous Strategy Proposal, Presentation to Senior Leaders Forum – Saskatoon Inn, Saskatoon

NOVEMBER

- 1ST** Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers – Holiday Inn Express, Saskatoon
- 29TH** Engagement, Advice and Guidance Meeting with Indigenous Community and Organizations – Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

2020

PRESENTATION OF DRAFT INDIGENOUS STRATEGY AND VALIDATION SESSIONS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

MARCH

31ST Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers cancelled due to COVID 19

APRIL

7TH Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous Undergraduate and Graduate students – Zoom Meeting Room

Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous Undergraduate and Graduate students – Zoom Meeting Room

8TH Planning and Priorities Committee

Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous staff – Zoom Meeting Room

Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous faculty – Zoom Meeting Room

9TH Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous faculty – Zoom Meeting Room

Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous staff– Zoom Meeting Room

Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous Undergraduate and Graduate students – Zoom Meeting Room

Presentation of draft Indigenous Strategy and Validation Sessions with Indigenous Undergraduate and Graduate students – Zoom Meeting Room

MAY

6TH Meeting with Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, Language Keepers – Naming, Advice/ Guidance on ceremonial aspects of strategy launch

7TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan – Presidents Executive Committee

12TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan Deans Council

12TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan – Finance and Resources AVP/Directors

13TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to Presidents Executive Council – Council Chairs

21ST Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan University Council

25TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan Provosts Advisory Committee

26TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan Teaching, Learning, and Academic Resources Committee of Council

JUNE

18TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan University Council

19TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan Alumni Advisory Board

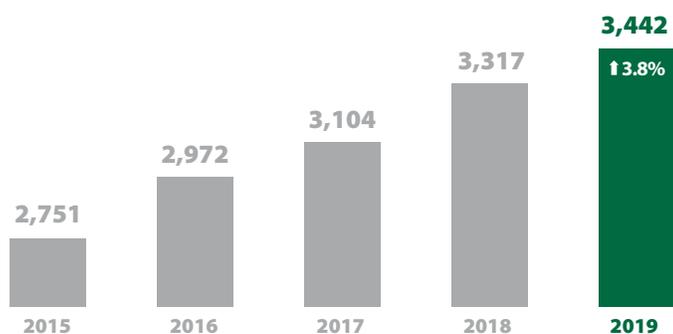
JULY

7TH Indigenous Strategy presentation to University of Saskatchewan Board of Governors

OCTOBER

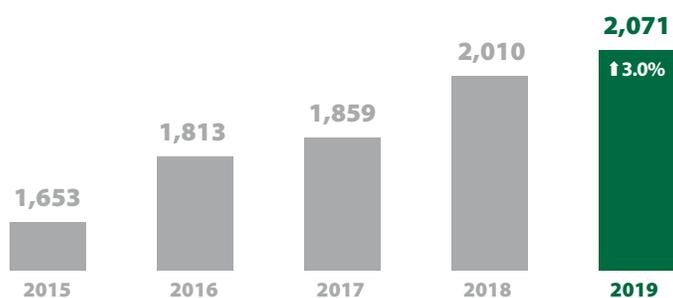
18TH University of Saskatchewan Senate (motion to accept gift)

INDIGENOUS STUDENT FACTS & FIGURES



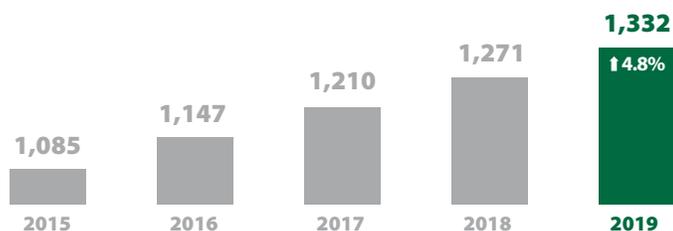
INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

Undergraduate | **3,089** | ↑5.5%
 Grad Students | **311** | ↓6.6%
 Non-degree | **18** | ↓41.9%
 Med Residents | **24** | →0%



FIRST NATIONS STUDENTS

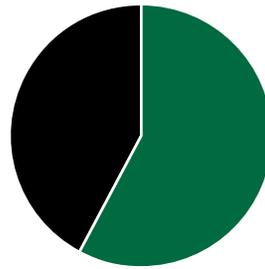
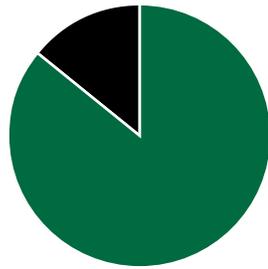
Undergraduate | **1,878** | ↑4.9%
 Grad Students | **180** | ↓11.3%
 Non-degree | **7** | ↓30%
 Med Residents | **6** | ↓14.3%



MÉTIS STUDENTS

Undergraduate | **1,174** | ↑6.2%
 Grad Students | **129** | ↑0.8%
 Non-degree | **11** | ↓47.6%
 Med Residents | **18** | ↑5.9%

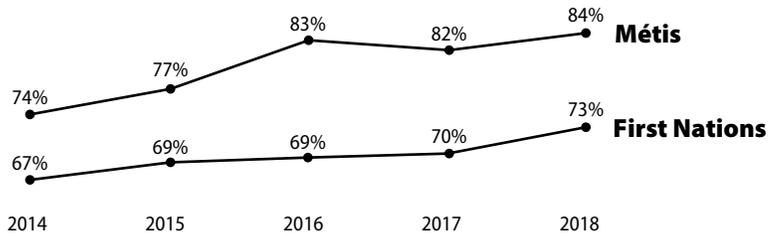
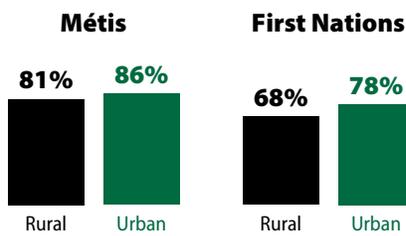
STUDENT ORIGIN



Saskatchewan | 86%
Out of province | 14%

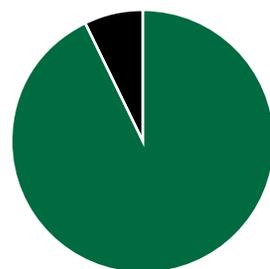
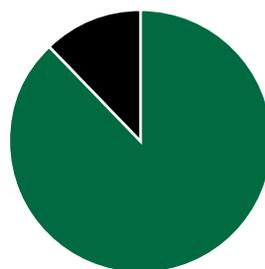
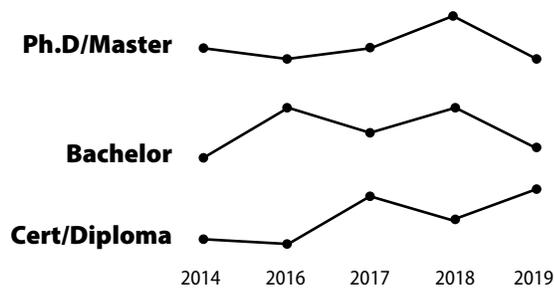
Urban | 58%
Rural | 42%

RETENTION



CONVOCATION 2019

498 Qualifications Awarded | ↓ 4.8%



Undergrad | 12%

Grad Students | 7.2%

WISE PRACTICES

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

The following list presents additional examples of wise practices implemented by the University—in many cases, in collaboration with Indigenous community organizations, student bodies, staff and faculty—to realize its commitment to Indigenization.

- Integration of Indigenous knowledges and experiences directly into the learning charter.
- Creation of an Indigenous Voices Program (through the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning) that is led by Indigenous leaders who are dedicated to creating a shared space for dialogue, learning, and collaborative action to catalyze individual and systemic change at USask related to Indigenization, reconciliation, and decolonization.
- Establishment of an Indigenous Learning Activities Fund—a University-accessible fund to support student learning activities in the classroom or beyond that involves Indigenous *kēhtē-ayak* (Elders), Knowledge Keepers, and/or community leaders. This support is provided for Experiential Learning opportunities that engage learners purposefully in direct experience, focused reflection, and authentic assessment in order to increase knowledge, develop skills and strategies, clarify values, and apply prior learning.
- Creation of Experiential Learning Opportunities for Indigenous students or with Indigenous communities/organizations. USask has been a lead for the development of Experiential Indigenous programs and courses for over 50 years. For example, the University established the Indian and Northern Education Program in 1961, the Indian and Northern Curriculum Resources Centre in 1964, Cree language courses in 1968, and Native Law in 1973. Since then, our capacity and progress in supporting the Indigenous Peoples of Saskatchewan has grown extensively and resulted in the significant number of Indigenous faculty, staff, students, and community who are regularly consulted in our program and curriculum development and design. We use a combination of joint development with an Indigenous community or organization, joint delivery with an Indigenous post-secondary institution, oversight or consultation with Indigenous Elders or Old Ones (which includes Knowledge Keepers and community leaders and organizations). Currently, we offer over 170 courses that focus on learning outcomes tied to Indigenous knowledges and experience grounded in Indigenous world views.
- Formation of Building Bridges, a partnership between the Aboriginal Students' Centre and the International Student and Study Abroad Centre that provides programming with a focus on Indigenous and international relations and cultural understanding.

OVPIE

The following list presents additional examples of wise practices implemented by the Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement.

- Development of an Oracy fund—a financial system that recognizes the cultural gifting aspects of Indigenous research.
- Integration of fundamental and systemic changes to Indigenize standards for promotion and tenure.
- Hosted 3rd Annual *māmowi āsohētētān* Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum.
- Formation of a committee on Anti-racism and Anti-oppression education and research.
- Establishment of MOUs with Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations, Prince Albert Grand Council, the Saskatoon Tribal Council, and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan

COLLEGES/UNITS

The following list presents additional examples of wise practices implemented by Colleges/Units—in many cases, in collaboration with Indigenous community organizations, student bodies, staff and faculty—to realize its commitment to Indigenization.



AGRICULTURE AND BIORESOURCES

- Continued success of the Kanawayihetaytan Askiy (KA; let us take care of the land) Program, which is focused on providing a broad range of topic areas specific to the management of lands and resources (including examining basic environmental, legal and economic aspects of land and resource management in Indigenous communities). In 2020, AgBio welcomed 17 new students to the program.
- Partners of the International Student-Led Arctic Monitoring and Research coalition, which provides both northern and southern high school students the opportunity to be fully engaged in hands-on research on wildlife and habitat along the Hudson Bay coast.
- Collaborating closely with many Indigenous communities across Canada, engaging in research projects from the southern prairies to the high Arctic. For example, in collaboration with Protein Industries Canada, Nutrien, and Indigenous Works Canada, we are looking at product and market opportunities for Indigenous communities to participate more fully in the agri-food sector.



ARTS AND SCIENCE

- [Indigenous Learning Requirements](#) for all Arts and Science students, including land-based experiential learning and historical knowledge transmission
- Trish Monture Centre for Student Success – [Indigenous Student Advising](#) and programming: [Indigenous Student Achievement Pathways](#), Indigenous Student [STEM Pathways](#), and [STEM Accelerator Certificate](#)
- Wide array of Indigenous-focused [degree](#) and [certificate](#) programs
- [Dr. Allyson Stevenson](#) became inaugural Gabriel Dumont Chair in Métis Studies
- [Dr. Angela Jaime](#) became Vice-Dean Indigenous
- Established “[Dimensions in Diversity](#)” lecture series and discussion groups
- Canada Research Chair Michelle Johnson-Jennings works with [land-based healing](#)
- Prof. Simon Lambert provides [expertise](#) on disaster risk reduction for Indigenous communities
- *anohc kipasikônow/we rise/niipawi* [art project](#) makes spaces on campus to infuse Indigenous Ways of Knowing and culture
- [Nutrien Kamskénow](#) program provided 700 home science kits to Saskatoon school children
- A&S alumna [Ruth Cuthand](#) won the Governor General’s Award in Visual and Media Arts and did beading sessions with students, faculty and staff

WISE PRACTICES

DENTISTRY

- Leading reconciliation in the dental profession and being an institution of first choice for Indigenous students, staff, and faculty.
- Confronting historic injustices and inequities regarding Indigenous oral health and access to services, and to engaging with Indigenous communities to better meet the oral health care needs and preferences of Indigenous people.
- Incorporating traditional ways of knowing into our educational programming, and to recruiting applicants that reflect the cultural diversity of Saskatchewan's population by allocating a minimum of 17% of available seats in the admission of Indigenous students.



EDUCATION

- ITEP has instituted the wāhkōhtowin Professional Development School model for field experience conceptualized from nēhiyaw māmitonēyicikan, or Cree thought and philosophy. Partners have been able to acquire SSHRC funding to research this innovative model for offering teacher education premised on fostering Indigenous identity to support teaching practice and learning
- Creation of a new Language Teacher Education Program (LTEP) route with Cree and French streams that responds to the needs of practicing professionals in immersion, bilingual and core settings. Applications are being accepted for the inaugural intake in Fall 2021.
- Establishment of Indigenous Land-Based Education Cohort MED, Educational Foundations. This course-based MED offers courses with an intensive land-based field focus. Students enrol in graduate level courses framed within an Indigenous paradigm of relational ethics and accountability taught primarily by Indigenous faculty.



EDWARDS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

- COMM 347 - Indigenous Business in Canada. There has been a curriculum change as part of the undergraduate Bachelor of Commerce degree program in the Edwards School of Business. Indigenous Business in Canada (formerly Aboriginal Business in Canada) has been renamed and will become a core course beginning in the 2021-2022 academic year. Significant changes were also made to the structure of the course in a thoughtful and consultative way. The addition of the course to our core offerings and the name change reflects an approach to reconciliation in business and the classroom.
- Case development. Saskatchewan is rich in Indigenous business stories. We are working with case writers to develop a collection of Indigenous focused business cases that will be used in core COMM courses. Thus far, two are near completion and four more are in development.
- Executive Education - Finance for the Non-Financial Manager. There are sponsored seats for First Nations representatives in this Executive Education program.

ENGINEERING

- Creation of our vision, sōhkēyimowin, to provide meaningful access to engineering for Indigenous peoples, in building and maintaining respectful relationships with Indigenous communities. Our aspirations provide a strategic framework that celebrates and shares Indigenous ways of knowing as an integral part of teaching, learning and research.
- sōhkēyimowin: “A traditional value that means you have a goal, you are going to try hard, you will succeed” – Helen Garvin
- Continuation of the Engineering Access Program ensuring that Indigenous students can achieve and become aspiring engineers.
- Continuation of the Indigenous Student Ambassador Program ensures that peer networking is co-created by our Indigenous engineering students.
- Continuation of Sci-Fi Camps, the programming brings learning to communities across northern Saskatchewan and has successfully reached more than 1009 Indigenous youth in 2020. The College of Engineering looks forward to the next generation of STEM leaders.



JOHNSON-SHOYAMA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

- Creation of a term faculty lecturer position at the JSGS-USask campus to teach courses with a focus on Indigenous governance, leadership, and entrepreneurship (among other subjects) and develop case studies with Indigenous content. Dr. Kurtis Boyer was recruited and is from Southern Saskatchewan. He was born into a Michif family, with roots in the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Band and the Red River of Manitoba. In late 2020, JSGS launched the recruitment of a without-term Indigenous Lecturer at the USask campus and a term Indigenous Lecturer at the U of R campus, both of which are vital to advance EDI goals.
- Approval granted from the Planning and Priorities Committee to develop a for-credit graduate certificate in Indigenous Governance and Nation Building. In tandem, JSGS will propose an admissions process designed to attract into its programs Indigenous leaders with lived experiences that will be considered instead of an undergraduate degree.
- Creation of new programming for Indigenous organizations and content about Indigenous peoples and delivery of both this new and also existing programs (such as the Indigenous Leadership Program, offered in partnership with the First Nations University of Canada) through online platforms to continue to provide important governance training during the COVID-19 pandemic.



KINESIOLOGY

- Development of one of Canada’s first undergraduate kinesiology courses in Indigenous wellness: KIN 306.3: Introduction to Indigenous Wellness
- \$1.07M CIHR-funded (over five years) project for Dr. Heather Foulds to assess the benefits of Métis jigging to cardiovascular health and well-being.
- Elder Roland Duquette led a ceremony to open a new meeting area in the Ron and Jane Graham Sport Science and Health Centre at Merlis Belsher Place, designed for use as a ceremonial space for kinesiology research and practice with Indigenous communities.

WISE PRACTICES

LAW

- The Indigenous Law Centre (formerly the Native Law Centre) in the College of Law, is expanding its role. It has built a foundation to facilitate access to legal education for Indigenous peoples and to promote the development of the law and the legal system in Canada in ways which better accommodate the advancement of Indigenous peoples and communities. The centre will now increase its focus to disseminate information concerning Indigenous peoples laws through expanded offerings with the college.
- Implementation of Indigenous Learning Requirements. The college requires that all JD students are required to take a first-year Indigenous law course,

kwayeskastasowin, in its first year mandatory offerings. Upper year courses also contain Indigenous law course electives. The college and the Indigenous Law Centre are also building on their Indigenous offerings to enhance learning for Indigenous students, including: expanded credited trans-systemic law course offerings, land-based learning opportunities, the potential of a graduate program in Indigenous law, involving more traditional teachers in course delivery, an expansion of web-based courses, as well as creating new programming for those students interested in becoming paralegals.



MEDICINE

- The Indigenous Admissions Pathway to Medicine provides a broad range of support for applicants and Indigenous learners, including a supportive experience throughout all our processes. We welcome feedback and input from stakeholders to ensure it continues to be one of the most successful programs in Canada, graduating 100 Indigenous medical students to date. The proposed Indigenous Admissions Circle will provide Indigenous applicants a more holistic file review through an Indigenous lens.
- Curriculum improvements and offerings include: taking part in the College of Nursing and the Saskatoon Anti-Racist Network pilot of online anti-racist modules that will be reviewed, improved and offered more broadly to students, faculty and staff; a na-

tionally awarded online Indigenous wellness course developed and offered in partnership with First Nations and Métis groups that has been completed by thousands of individuals in our college, university, across the province and beyond; Indigenous health electives offered to all USask medical students through the Indigenous coordinator's office.

- Northern Medical Services (NMS), a division of the college, promotes cultural competency in health care, education and research, working closely with tribal councils and communities serving a population that is more than 85% Indigenous in a geographical area about the size of the Yukon Territory. NMS provides experiential learning to more than 55 medical students and residents every year.

NURSING

- Integration of the principles of the wāhkōhtowin (we are all related) model into all aspects of the college culture, and processes. The model was created by the Saskatchewan Indigenous Research Chair in Nursing. Guided by these principles, we have revised our strategic priorities regarding Indigenization to create actionable goals.
- Development of an anti-racism education partnership between the Saskatoon Anti-Racism Network, internationally renowned anti-racism scholars Dr. Verna St. Denis and Dr. Sheelah McLean and the Saskatchewan Indigenous Research Chair in Nursing
- has created an opportunity to offer faculty and staff anti-racism education on a large scale in the College of Nursing, the USask Health Sciences and beyond.
- Embrace and support diversity in the healthcare workforce by responding to TRC call 23 (i, ii, iii). The USask College of Nursing has the largest percentage (20.1%) of self-declared Indigenous nursing students in the country. Forty percent of those students study in Prince Albert, Île-à-la-Crosse or La Ronge. To date, our program has graduated 35 RNs and seven graduate nurses who first studied and now practice in the north.



PHARMACY AND NUTRITION

- Providing students a series of opportunities in various communities throughout Saskatchewan and beyond to gain hands-on experience and develop skills in cultural competency.
- Pharmacy students receive a half-day seminar during orientation on topics related to Truth and Reconciliation.
- Supporting an education equity program to maintain and increase the number of Indigenous students.



SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

- Supporting Indigenous participation in the economy: All SENS non-thesis master's programs are offered online, improving access to professional education for non-traditional students including those from Indigenous, northern, and remote communities.
- SENS' new Master of Energy Security program is unique in Canada and has secured significant private sector and First Nations endorsement and funding.
- Partnered with James Smith Cree Nation, Yellow Quill First Nation, Cumberland House Cree Nation, the Northern Village of Cumberland House, and Métis Local #42 on a project funded by Environment Climate Change Canada's Lake Winnipeg Basin Program.
- Decolonizing research practices – researching with nature rather than simply about nature; researching with nature as active participant rather than simply about nature as object to be studied; researching with the 'more-than-human' natural world (rather than on nature as an object); researching with the natural world as subject, rather than as object with no sentience or agency.

WISE PRACTICES

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

- Establishing new required courses in Indigenous Public Health, and expanding community-engaged research with Indigenous communities regarding Indigenous health promotion.
- Launch of six new co-led projects through Global

Water Futures—the world’s largest university led freshwater research program—that integrates Indigenous partners from across Canada to address urgent and growing water quality issues for Indigenous communities.



WESTERN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

- Development of Canada’s first program to increase access to veterinary training for Indigenous students, through allocation of two positions each year in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) Program, for admission of Indigenous students from western provinces and the territories, and through provision of a donor-funded award for the Indigenous student coming into each first year of the DVM program with the highest admission score.
- Creation of Community Engaged Veterinary Service in a northern Saskatchewan community. Veterinary services are provided in partnership with the community, and community-engaged and reciprocal learning opportunities are incorporated, empha-

sizing the importance of relationship building and reciprocity when working with and for Indigenous communities. These experiences support our learner’s ability to engage in culturally safe veterinary practice upon graduation.

- Creation of annual programming and projects proposed by the WCVM community (students, staff and/or faculty) for activities pertaining to Truth and Reconciliation. Supported by the WCVM Indigenous and Reconciliation Engagement Fund, this program has fostered activities such as beading sessions, blanket exercises, visits from Indigenous artists/speakers, and the design and distribution of WCVM-based orange t-shirts.

NEXT STEPS

For the OVPIE, we look forward to the ceremonial launch of the Indigenous Strategy, to create and implement accountability measures that will ensure that this gift to the university lives and is clearly evident at USask.

We will continue to support and develop capacity for all units on campus to learn about and realize meaningful expressions of Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation in their spaces. We will work towards making USask a safe and welcoming post-secondary institution for Indigenous peoples, and uphold the agreements that the university has made with Indigenous organizations and communities. I look forward to seeing the Building Intercultural Resilience Mentorship Program unfold this next year, which is a program that will connect Indigenous high school students from two Saskatoon Public high schools with our students on campus. These kinds of bridges are important. Gitchi-miigwetch for all your support.

Photo: Drum group Buffalo Boy performing at a Convocation ceremony.





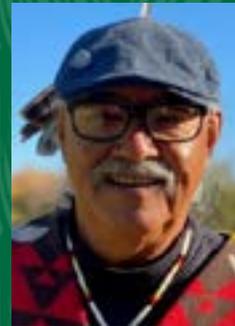


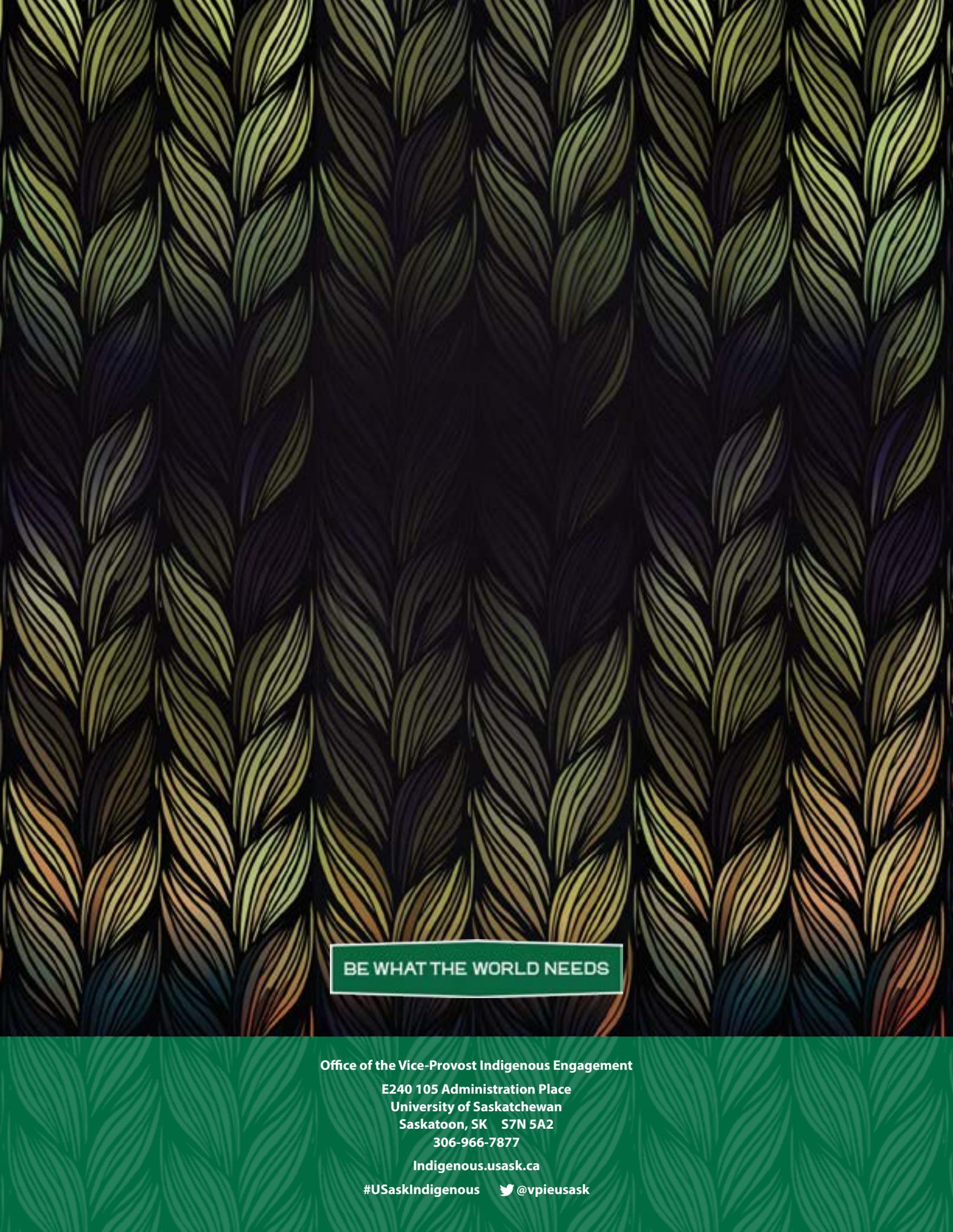
Over these recent years the kēhtē-ayak (the Elders) have worked tirelessly with graciousness and generosity to use their knowledge and wisdom for the Indigenous strategy. It is their hope that mutual sharing and the acquisition of western and Indigenous education will be a harmonious and beneficial undertaking. It is the responsibility for all those involved to take into consideration future generations and the respect of “all of our relations” when they consider how best to braid this strategy together.

kēhtē-aya (Elder) Louise Halfe, Sky Dancer

Indigenization, we can't do it without the land. We have to respect the land as if it were a teacher. It's not just a subject area. It has to be respected as a credit.

Traditional Knowledge Keeper Eugene Arcand





BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

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