

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

PotashCorp helps kids backpacking to school

Mom Bridget Linklater and Travis and Meya received some school supplies as the children prepare to attend St. Francis Cree immersion in Saskatoon. The backpacks were donated by PotashCorp and some of their suppliers to the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

(Photo by John Lagimodiere)



**By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News**

One thousand backpacks stuffed with school essentials were given out at the White Buffalo Youth Lodge to kick off back to school activities this August.

The program, sponsored by PotashCorp and some of their suppliers, has doubled the number of bags given out to all different types of community members.

“This is our third year of giving out backpacks at our carnival,”

said White Buffalo Youth Lodge Executive Director Heidi Gravelle of the event that drew a thousand people to a bouncy house and burger bonanza in the heart of the community.

“We do it to get the kids revved for back to school and to off set some costs for the families. Our community partnerships and the sponsorship of PotashCorp really make this happen.”

Bridget Linklater brought her two school aged children to the car-

nival. The backpack program couldn't have come at a better time.

“I didn't have any money for school supplies. This is his first time going to pre-kindergarten and she is in kindergarten,” said Linklater.

“They also wanted to get their faces painted. This is the first time I have been here at this event. It is actually pretty cool.

“It is a really good idea. The kids are really excited for back to school. Not even scared at all.”



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POWWOW WELCOME

Students at First Nations University and the University of Regina were welcomed back to class at the Tony Cote powwow. - Page 9



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The Gordon Oaks Red Bear Student Centre at the U of S is doing its part to make students feel comfortable. - Page 10



BATTER UP FOR CLASS

Kaley Ledoux has had an outstanding summer on the ball diamonds now it's time to get back to the books. - Page 13



HE'S NO TRICKSTER

Mike Gosselin isn't fooling around; his tale of a half human/half trickster is going into production. - Page 14



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A crew of young sailors had a great adventure sailing across the Atlantic this summer. - Page 15

Back to School Edition

Coming In October - Education & Role Models I Issue

RBC grant helps start La Ronge students off on the right foot

By Chelsea Laskowski
For Eagle Feather News

For years, Ron Woytowich has been applying for a Royal Bank of Canada grant that would allow him to buy back-to-school items for La Ronge-area kids. This despite him knowing it was a long shot since La Ronge doesn't even have an RBC outlet.

Applying for grants – and the rejection that often comes with it – is part and parcel with Woytowich's work at the Kikinahk Friendship Centre in La Ronge, so it didn't bother him when he applied for the RBC grant only to be turned down.

"I'm always looking for grants, that's just me," he said.

This year, though, applying for the RBC grant wasn't on Woytowich's mind until he received a phone call from RBC representative Patrick Dinsdale who encouraged him to sign up. By the end of August, Woytowich received word that not only had his application been granted but the \$11,200 grant would be able to provide school supplies for more than 300 children attending elementary school in the tri-community area. Gordon Denny Community School in Air Ronge, Pre-Cam Community School in La Ronge and Bell's Point Elementary on Lac La Ronge would all be recipients.

"I'm happy we got it. Putting it bluntly, the fact that RBC gave it to us even if they don't have an office here is pretty nice," Woytowich said.

Woytowich's original plan was to have Kikinahk's summer students make up backpack kits for the schoolkids and hand them out on the first day of classes. However, he said "we only had like three days from the day we got the cheque" until school started and the students had already finished their last day of work by then.



Some of the supplies provided by the RBC grant.
(Photo provided by Ron Woytowich)

After consulting with RBC and school principals on what school supplies were most needed and how to best distribute them, Woytowich then went to a long-time friend who manages a Staples in Saskatoon. The store generously packaged three identical pallets with more than \$11,200 in bulk notebooks, markers, pencils, scissors, rulers, looseleaf, and pencil cases to be picked up and delivered to the three schools.

"I went down with my truck to Saskatoon to get this stuff. He says 'your truck's not gonna work.' They had three full huge pallets, 4,500 pounds," Woytowich recalled.

"You wouldn't believe how much stuff they got."

They instead hired a transport truck, and teachers were ready to take the bulk items off their hands when school staff arrived the Friday before school started. On the first day of school, staff distributed the supplies to students "who are in desperate need of them," said

Principal Dawna Olsen at Pre-Cam Community School, and they'll be able to top up supplies for kids throughout the school year.

"Any of the new kids that have been arriving without any supplies, we've done them up a little backpack and sent them on their way with the new school supplies that have been donated so it's been wonderful for some of our new parents."

She said it's a huge help to have all kids start the school year on the same footing, regardless of any financial troubles or family troubles they face back home.

"It is hard for kids who come and they don't have anything," she said. "Sometimes it's because there's been a split in the family situation or maybe some conflict or many number of things that have happened through the summer.

"And so it's just one less trigger for them. It's already hard enough being the new kid."

Kikinahk ended up spending about \$500 on top of the grant to get everything in place, and Woytowich said many of the kids who will end up receiving the supplies have already been through the organization's Head-Start/PreK program for kids, which has helped 60 pre-school kids per year for almost 20 years.

"I can guarantee you that the kids have been through Kikinahk and it's just like we're helping them in their other grades now. It feels good you know. It's like a Christmas hamper. It's not for us, it's for the community, it feels good," he said.

This year, Tamara Roberts was sending off her five-year-old to Bells Point for the first time, and found out about the donation through a Facebook post and said "it's pretty good and helpful" to not have to get supplies for her daughter's first year of school.

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Todd Leibel, Director of Operations for Sobey's with Tanisha McCallum-Morin and Egadz Director Don Meikle. (Right) Because of supportive housing like Sweet Dreams, Cree Crain and Shelby LaRose are able to head back to school in the fall with the pressures of housing and daycare taken care of. (Photo by John Lagimodiere)

Sobey's delivers the groceries for hungry Egadz programs

**By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News**

Egadz is dedicated to providing services to mothers and their children and a couple of events in August have enhanced their ability to do just that.

They announced the grand opening of several new childcare spaces at the Sweet Dreams Early Learning Centre and they also received a donation from Sobey's to provide food for the youth that use their facilities. With these developments, more mothers will be able to pursue their educational and career dreams.

Don Meikle is the executive director of Egadz, an organization that has become very successful at housing people and helping them turn their lives around. Sweet Dreams, part of their My Home Program that offers housing to at risk youth, is another one of their success stories.

"I always say it takes a village to raise a child," said Meikle during ceremonies to open the new childcare spaces.

"It is because people and businesses like Northridge Homes and Colleen and Wally Mah and Conexus Credit Union that we can make this happen."

The Sweet Dreams home was built through an innovative funding program called a social impact bond where a private business or person finances the project and then gets their money back from government once it is proven the project saved the government money. The return on this project in human capital has been amazing.

"Through Sweet Dreams we have helped 31 moms and 48 children and none of those moms or children have come back into the care of the government," said Meikle. "By keeping 22 kids out of care we can save the government \$1 million. The taxpayers win, but most importantly this is about people."

Mayor Charlie Clark expressed his support for Egadz and its programs.

"We always ask, how do we break the cycle of marginalization. People

need support and stable places to live," said Clark.

"Egadz has a clear and intuitive understanding of those needs."

Shelby LaRose lives at Sweet Dreams and she credits the home and the support of the Egadz family in turning her life around.

"I was struggling with addictions and was told that I would have to leave the house and lose my son or else go into treatment," said LaRose.

"Now I am working and financially independent and I have my two-year-old son. The impact of being off assistance is amazing and I am excited to go back to school in the fall to upgrade."

On top of housing so many people, Egadz has to help feed them and the many youth that come to their drop-in centre. They just received a boost from Sobey's in the form of a \$6,300 donation for food at Egadz.

"We feed about 40 youth every day and we have a garden the youth work in but we never have enough food. It was a real blessing when we received the call from Sobey's about the donation. We are very grateful," said Meikle.

Tanisha McCallum Morin is another Egadz youth and she is contributing to the program in her own way. She spent a day volunteering giving away ice cream for Sobey's as part of a fundraiser.

Her volunteer work found her getting an opportunity to pay forward a \$500 donation. She chose Egadz.

"I am in the My Home program and I thought I could give back to them for helping me come so far," said Tanisha.

"I moved in when I was 14 and I am still there and now I just graduated Grade 12. I am looking forward to going back for upgrading. I hope this money can help buy lots of food."

Meikle is eternally grateful for the community support they receive. It is something that is critical to the success of Egadz and the youth.

"We could have 50,000 programs out there but nothing will change. We

need to provide these youth with opportunity and the chance to share the

Saskatchewan advantage," said Meikle. "We need to let them taste success."



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The New Year has begun!

And the cycle has begun.

Ever since my children became school aged, my New Year's Day isn't January 1. It is whatever date the government sets as the first day of school that really turns my calendar.

It is the true start of a cycle that Saskatchewanians can really wrap their heads around. There is no big change on January 1. It is still cold, dark and winter.

On the first day of school however, there is excitement, new beginnings and challenges.

And the fact that the school now has the kids for a better part of the day to deal with that often-soul sucking behaviour of a teenager after weeks of summer vacation (I'm bored! Can we get slurpees? He started it! She started it! I hate you! Can I have

money! What is this rash? Sound familiar?) is such a relief.

That is the time I become so very grateful to have the teachers responsible for teaching, inspiring and disciplining my children.

Now don't get me wrong. I love my kids and I try to teach, inspire and discipline them to the best of my ability. But man, it is hard and tiring. So, the help from the school system is a welcome respite from the pressures of parenting.

That's why I try my best to support

my children's schools and our teachers. They do our job and more for ten months of the year for our kids. So, I volunteer to speak in class and with teachers and last year even coached high school curling. (yes I did that ... we didn't win much, but lots of kids curled and had fun and that's what it is all about). I was asked to coach because there weren't any teachers available to take on the extra curricular activities.

Our schools are short of resources.

students. Knew what was happening in their lives and helped guide them through classes and most importantly, life. They are gone now.

Add on top of that, average class sizes of close to 30 students and you have teachers that are stressed with class and curriculum management, let alone acting as a confidant and social worker. I can see why teachers get burned out.

On-reserve, the challenges are bigger. In a chronically under-funded system, reserve schools need all the help they can get.

Prime Minister Trudeau has pledged to unplug that money and to fund the schools at par with the mainstream. It has been very slow in coming, but those in the know tell us that movement is happening in the education portfolio.

Let's hope that's true. But if the government isn't



How many parents shed a tear when their little ones went off for their first day of school this year? Always a tender and sometimes joyful moment. And these two lucky youngsters got to hang out with STC mascot

Journey at the annual carnival and backpack giveaway.

(Photos by John Lagimodiere)

Recent provincial budget cuts have seen a loss of resources for our most vulnerable. Aboriginal support workers have been cut in a division in Saskatoon.

These folks were the one on one contact with Aboriginal students.

These employees were the direct support for students and teachers. Support workers checked in on



doing it, who does the responsibility fall on?

That is why it is incumbent on the community and us as parents to help shoulder the load. Many businesses put their money where their mouth is. They sponsor buildings on campus. They donate school supplies and backpacks to folks in need. They take partnership schools and invest resources locally. That helps so much.

But really, the rubber hits the road with us as parents. It is up to us to feed our kids well.

Make sure they do their homework every night. We have to inspire them to read (Words on paper. In a book. Not YouTube or on a screen. A real. Live. Book.).

We have to be involved and aware of what is happening in that school on a weekly basis. We have to support the teachers. And if you are seeing gaps in the system, we have to work with the school to fix them.

If that means lobbying government or changing how we vote so be it. But that takes time. Sometimes the solution can come from the parent's knowledge, network or just plain old volunteer time. That school is our school and we should do our best to make it the best.

Even despite the lack of resources, our schools pull off amazing things to bring in the students and make them at home. Welcome back powwows. Hair cuts and proper clothes supplied. Lunch programs. Elder supports. Cultural programming like never before (more on language please!). Personal sacrifice of time and money. They do amazing things, but they need our help.

Education is the most important thing we can offer our children. You should be involved.

The teachers and our kids need us.

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Polytechnic and Saskatoon Tribal Council focus on Indigenous Food Security

Saskatchewan Polytechnic and Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC) signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding recently that will enhance training and applied research for Indigenous food sovereignty, research the potential for new horticulture programs, and identify key industrial and funding partners to support the initiative.

“Partnering with STC on this important food sovereignty project demonstrates our commitment to the Indigenous communities we serve,” says Dr. Anne Neufeld, Sask Polytech provost and vice president, Academic.

“Working together on this initiative will enable us to provide students with enhanced learning and applied research opportunities that will result in innovative, sustainable models for Indigenous food sovereignty.”

Projects could include new programs that provide certification for students interested in rural and urban horticulture systems.



Left to right, back row: Saskatoon Tribal Council Vice Chief Mark Arcand, Polytechnic staff Kevin Rogers (Director, Applied Research and Innovation), Dennis Johnson (Vice-President, Strategy and Business Development), Jason Seright (Director, Indigenous Strategy), Jamie Hilts (Dean, School of Mining, Energy and Manufacturing and School of Natural Resources and Built Environment) Front: Tribal Chief Felix Thomas, Saskatoon Tribal Council, Susan Blum (Associate Vice-President, Applied Research and Innovation)

Other opportunities include training in the design, construction and operation of horticultural facilities or development of community-based food production systems using Indigenous plant species.

“This (memorandum of understanding) is an example of how our on-going partnerships provide the initial steps to creating and engaging in new opportunities for our community and members,” says Tribal Chief Felix Thomas, Saskatoon Tribal Council.

“This MOU is the first step in engaging our membership in new vocations and roles that they otherwise would have overlooked.”

SheriBenson Member of Parliament
Saskatoon West
Sheri.Benson@parl.gc.ca // 306-975-6555

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From Truth to Reconciliation
SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGIES

Back to school has special meaning for Indigenous students

Here I am again, another school year has arrived, except this year I am starting Law School.

Every year it seems there is always something dysfunctional going on in my personal life that makes it hard to focus and concentrate on school.

That is just it, school has been my outlet, my focus when things are too chaotic in my personal life.

I find some peace in focusing on my school work and reward when my hard work pays off and I receive good grades.

Education is the key to many doors in this world.

Now that I have gone on to post-secondary to further my education, I definitely understand a lot more about the world/society and the history of my own people.

It is really sad how little I did know about my own people before I started post-secondary.

Education does not only help you discover the world we live in but it also helps you discover who you are and the place in this world that you fit in.

If you have a passion for helping people, through writing, being a nurse, a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, a

social worker, whatever it is that drives you to do better and be better, do that.

First day of post-secondary for me, I registered late and had no clue what to take or what I was getting myself into. I enrolled in everything Indigenous studies and my first textbook, *Visions of the Heart*, changed my life.

One of the first names and scholars in this book was Patricia Monture. She was an advocate, an Indigenous Mohawk lawyer with a strong voice for our Indigenous peoples.

She was also my friend's mother – who have both passed on now – and this is another reason why I hold such passion in my heart for what I am trying to do.

I was then able to gear all my classes towards Indigenous issues and research work Monture had done and the more I researched, the more inspired I became.

No matter what class it was I was able to relate it to my own lived experience and all that I have been

through and have witnessed friends and family go through.

This lived experience mixed with learned knowledge through reading books and scholarly articles set off light bulb after light bulb in my brain and learning became addicting.

I later became a mother during my post-secondary education and being a mother and student is not easy but it is not impossible.

After I became a mother I gave up all my old ways and I have never looked back. I am now four+ years sober and starting law school at my dream school.

It is a surreal feeling, but I would of never of got here without my daughters who changed my world.

I choose sobriety and choosing to only try my best to not pass a life of dysfunction onto them.

I am determined to keep learning and growing.

My next goal, once I survive law school, is to take the time to learn my

Dakota language and do my best to pass it onto my children.

Just as a degree takes many years and a lot of hard work and dedication, so does revitalizing Indigenous language, culture, oral history and ways.

There is very little time for that in a world that makes it a struggle just to survive.

The reality is that our mother earth needs us to wake up.

We have the power to create change as long as enough people tap into their potential and true selves and become the change they want to see in this world.

Nothing is easy and nothing comes easy but I believe in our people, and my ancestors did not die for nothing.

It is up to us now to pick up those books and learn all that we can in hope that we can leave our children with something money cannot buy, a world that is not dead just because of the greed of the way a capitalistic society world runs now.

The only way to fight back is to just do your best to be a good person while you are here, guests on mother earth because it is her who breathes life and sustains all.



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Gabriel Dumont Institute invests in adult education expansion in La Loche

By Julie Ann Wriston
Of Eagle Feather News

Growth and expansion are the words that fill the meeting rooms at the Gabriel Dumont Institute these days. An exciting new expansion project is nearing completion in the Northern community of La Loche.

This is the first time in the 37-year history of the institute that GDI has received capital funding to increase its capacity in delivering culturally appropriate skills programming.

The federal funding is allocated through the Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund, and is intended to enhance and modernize research facilities on campuses across the country and improve the environmental sustainability of those facilities.

The Strategic Investment Fund administered through the Provincial Advanced Education Employment and Labour Ministry has created the opportunity to add significant classroom space and a new skills development area that will allow for practical programming in trades driven areas like construction and scaffolding.

The GDI team works closely with industry to determine relevant programming based on actual market needs

Vice-Chair for GDI, Glenn Pratt, is encouraged to see efforts made to support education outcomes in Northern Saskatchewan.

“The Gabriel Dumont Institute has provided 445 adult basic education seats in La Loche since 2010. As a result of the federal funding, an improved and expanded GDI La Loche Centre will provide capacity for increased enrolment in employer-driven skills training programs, helping the Institute to fully meet its skills and training mandate in the community of La Loche.”

Research Coordinator James Oloo attributes the success in acquiring the funding to other fundraising initiatives GDI participated in.

“The Veterans monument, for example, was an opportunity for us to learn a lot about what is possible, how to endure the process and see through to a final result.”

Over a decade ago GDI became the only post secondary institute to take up permanent residence with a campus in the La Loche. Located right in the heart of the community, the GDI building has undergone several renovation

projects to transform and repurpose the old RCMP barracks into a centre of learning.

“We are committed to being a beacon for the community in providing a place where individuals can feel good about who they are and the quality of learning that they are receiving through our programs and services,” says Cory McDougall Director of Finance and Operations for GDI.

The expansion project contributed to many positive spin-off outcomes for the community as well in the areas of sourcing local contractors to execute on aspects of the build. GDI also utilized a construction worker preparation program that allowed for training to be delivered to prepare local people in the project.

“A number of our students were able to take part in this project, contributing to a real sense of community pride in this initiative,” added McDougall.

The GDI team works closely with industry to determine relevant programming based on actual market needs. Over the past two years, the GDI La Loche Centre has had a total enrolment of 146 (97 in Adult Basic Education and 20 in various skills training programs including two clients in the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project).

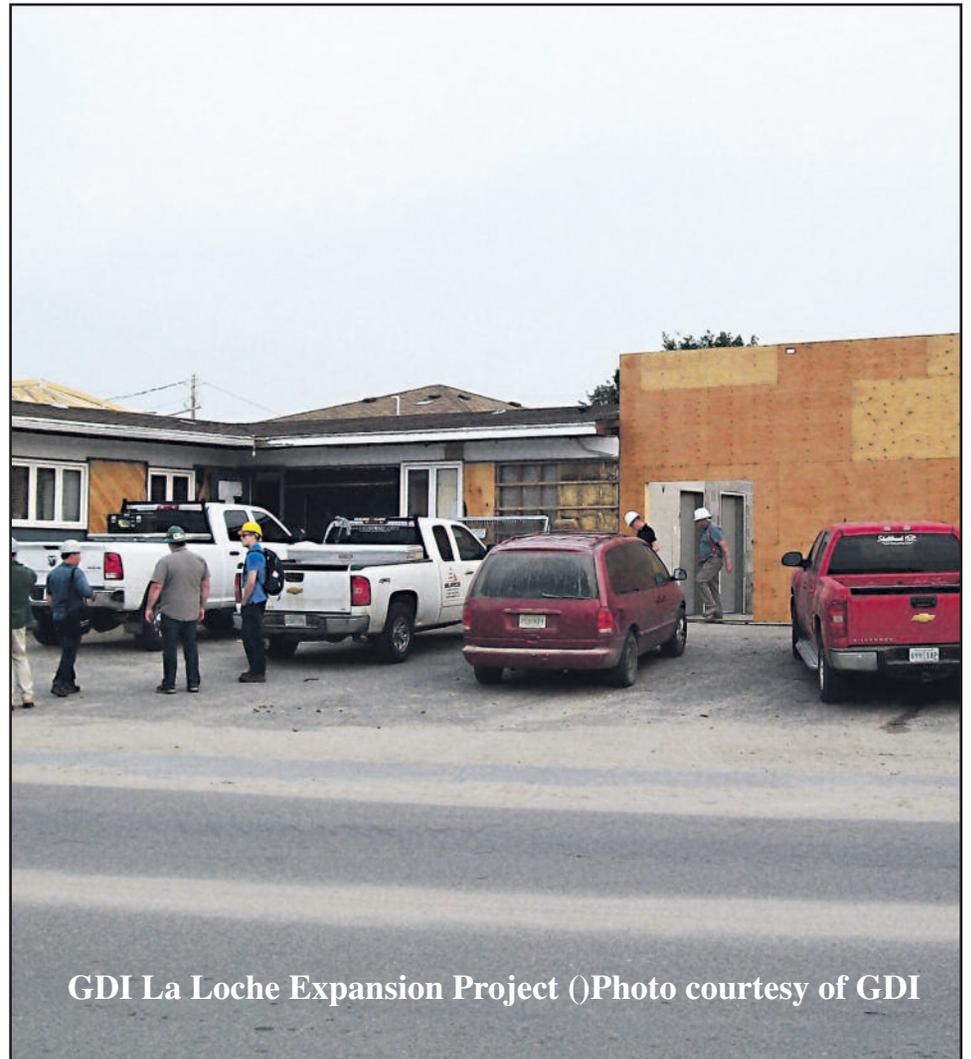
During the same period, the Institute funded 80 Métis people in La Loche to enable them get knowledge and skills that would make them more competitive whether they transition to higher education or the labour market. Among the funded clients, 30 got jobs, 27 went for further education, and two started their own businesses.

The La Loche expansion is scheduled for completion by the end of 2017 with programming to begin in full swing January 2018. A complete list of program offerings will be posted in the GDI website.

“We have already started our fall season for Adult Basic Education off-site and are excited to move further into stable additional programming in the New Year,” said McDougall

The expansions won't stop there. GDI continues to grow its footprint in Saskatchewan. The institute recently received positive support for zoning changes from the City of Saskatoon to begin the process of creating a state of the art Centre of Excellence.

“We keep in mind to remember where we've come from as a learning institution and remain humble as we grow into the future,” said McDougall.



GDI La Loche Expansion Project (Photo courtesy of GDI)

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For questions about the Conference, please email wicहितowinyxe@gmail.com or call AFCS at (306) 955-0762

Keynote Speakers:

Shelagh Rogers

Shelagh Rogers is the host and producer of the CBC Radio Program The Next Chapter. She was an Honorary Witness for the TRC. Over the years, she has worked as a journalist on flagship programs such as Morningside, Sounds Like Canada, and This Morning. In September 2011, Shelagh was named an Officer of the Order of Canada.



Ry Moran

Ry Moran is the first Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR). A proud member of the Métis Nation, he worked for the TRC, founded YellowTilt Productions, hosted international television programs, and more.



Ashley Callingbull

Ashley Callingbull is a 25 year old Cree First Nation woman from the Enoch Cree Nation. She is dedicated to her culture and people, takes pride in her volunteer work with elders and youth. Ashley is a model, actor, and activist. She won the Mrs. Universe title in 2015, and was a contestant of Amazing Race Canada in 2016. Ashley is also a spokesperson and model for the Nike N7 organization.



#WICHTOWIN2017



Annual Tony Cote powwow welcomes students back to class at FNUiv and U of R

By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News

Students at the First Nations University of Canada (FNUiv) started the school year hearing the sounds of drums and powwow dancing. The institution hosted the Tony Cote Welcome Back powwow on the front lawn during the first week of classes.

Fraser Heathen, president of the FNUiv Student Association, said the Tony Cote Welcome Back powwow is an annual event held at the beginning of the school year to welcome new and returning students. The timing of this year's powwow was changed to coincide with the University of Regina's welcome week events.

"We figured it would be a good strategy to help bring a good breath of fresh air into the institution right off the hop when school starts," he said. "It helps establish relationships between the executive, the student association, the student body, the faculty and also members of the U of R student's union."

FNUiv elder helper Roland Kaye said this is the ninth year the university has organized this annual event at the start of the fall semester. He added the event originated from Isadore Pelletier, Ken Goodwill and Velma Goodfeather – all elders of the university who have passed on.

"(They) suggested to do something for our returning and new students," Kaye said. "It's to make them feel welcomed and to feel proud (to) showcase their culture."

Jolene Creely is a third-year Indian Communication Arts (INCA) student at FNUiv and she has been dancing at the powwow for three years now and said it's an event that she looks forward to every start of the school year.

"It's a place to come together ... especially for new students," she said. "They have a sense of home. It's good for them to meet new people. That's what this institute is about, having not only First Nations people but



Third-year INCA FNUiv student Jolene Creely has been attending the annual Tony Cote Welcome Back powwow for the past few years. This year Creely danced in the red dress jingle special where they danced to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women. Photo by Jeanelle Mandes.

also non-Indigenous people to experience what our culture is like and what it sounds like."

Creely said she likes that FNUiv renamed the powwow after one of the founding institution elders, Tony Cote.

"It's nice to see how they honoured Tony with the important role he has with the institution," she said. "He's always here every year and watching all the

dancers looking all happy."

Creely also danced in the red dress special to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women along with other dance specials and categories where many spectators including elder Tony Cote, university students and staff, local elementary students, U of R day-care children, dignitaries and community members watched with pride.

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Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre helps U of S students adjust

By NC Raine
For Eagle Feather News

For both new and returning students, integrating into a university environment can be an intimidating endeavour.

The Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre aims to provide support to students with a special emphasis on meeting the needs of Aboriginal students.

The 1,884-square meter building, designed by Metis and Blackfoot architect Douglas Cardinal, is centrally located at the University of Saskatchewan campus and is unmissable with its exterior design featuring a “fin wall” that resembles a blanket sheltering the building.

The Centre works to enhance First Nations, Metis, and Inuit student success by bringing together teaching, traditions, and cultures of the people of Saskatchewan. In addition to the variety of programs and supports offered, the centre functions as a hub for on-campus Indigenous engagement and events.

“For a lot of students, it’s about making a cultural transition to the University – which is a community onto itself,” said Graeme Joseph, Team Leader of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Success at the Aboriginal Students Centre.

“Some of the students are separated from family and friends for the first time, and deal with loneliness. So we do a lot of community building – different activities and supports often in a group format

that allows students to create supportive relationships,” said Joseph.

Supports and programs offered are vast, including workshops and tutoring, social events, Elder services, pipe ceremonies and sweats, among others.

A welcome barbecue will be held for first year students on Sept. 13, as well as check-ins for first years throughout the year, ensuring the new students feel connected.

“Campus is a big place,” says Joseph. “We encourage Aboriginal students to come (to the Centre) because we are a service dedicated specially for them. We have an understand of the unique challenge that the Aboriginal students face.”

Dallas Fiddler is a fourth-year political science student at the University of Saskatchewan who is one of the many directly benefitting from the Centre.

“When coming to a big campus in a big city, in can be quite scary. It’s almost culture shock for some,” said Fiddler. “Having the Aboriginal Student Centre provides that close community and make it easier transition into larger city life.”

Research shows that up to 70 per cent of first year students will experience some sort of homesickness in their early days at university. The Centre hopes to provide that sense of community that many students miss.

“Campus can be a pretty isolating place, especially as an Indigenous stu-

dent,” says Dallas Pelly, education student.

“To be able to come to a place, feel welcome, and access some of these services here is really important. Mainstays like soup and bannock every Wednesday creates a really cool place to come and gather.”

willing to talk about a lot of issues we’re facing. This is a great central place to make that happen,” says Pelly.

So, for those uneasy about their transition to university, or simply looking for support, fellow students advise simply to get involved.

“My advice to new students is to



Dallas Pelly, Rollin Baldhead, Dallas Fiddler in front of Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre during orientation week at the University of Saskatchewan.

(Photo by NC Raine)

The centrality of the building also serves as an important symbol of reconciliation, progress and a more welcoming campus, says Pelly.

“The building is a focal point in our university. Just knowing the University is pushing reconciliation this year, I’ve met a lot of non-Indigenous people who are

reach out and ask for help.

“There’s people that come to this centre that have walked the path before you,” says Rollin Baldhead, education student.

“They could be a future role model or source of support. So reach out. You’ll find help here.”

Congratulations!

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Brandon Roy

Dannielle Tracy Brewster

Cody Madarash

Tashia Bird

Lana Burton

Sydney Kuppenbender

Asagewin Carriere

AREVA is pleased to award its northern scholarships to nine recipients from the communities of Air Ronge, Beauval, Cumberland House, Denare Beach, Deschambault Lake, Île-à-la-Crosse, La Loche, and La Ronge.

We wish this year’s recipients continued success in their studies and bright futures ahead!

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Cook-Searson currently serves as the President of Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership, the band's economic development initiative whose ventures include group insurance, environmental services, engineering services, mining, utility project management, catering, trucking, and a golf course. With its focus on long-term sustainable businesses, Kitsaki examines many potential business opportunities that meet appropriate profitability, risk, and employment criteria.



Early bird tickets available until September 11. Register online:

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Construction Worker 101 has students building a solid future

By Julie Ann Wriston
For Eagle Feather News

While many post secondary students take a break over the summer months, Chris Krug-Iron, Michael Netmaker and Janelle Sutherland enrolled as summer interns with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations to gain practical experience and take part in hands-on learning.

For these three, a presentation from Your Choice Homes/Construction Worker 101 made choosing an initiative easy.

“It immediately came down to stories about the housing crisis across Canada,” recalls Chris Krug-Iron, from Canoe Lake First Nation.

“Knowing that there are displaced people, overcrowding and terrible living conditions that impact the health and well-being for people living on reserve, this was an obvious match for me and my placement within the health and social development department with the FSIN. My first impulse was to bring this back to my own community.

“I called my mom to ask what the housing situation was like at home, and the next day I was given the chance to speak with my Chief about the project.”

Construction 101 is an innovate initiative utilizing an education model that transfers skills and construction training capacity to students, with a state of the art home made available for communities as a final product.

Jay Noel, spokesperson for Construction 101 sees each housing blueprint as an opportunity for a curriculum.

“We’re thinking outside the box to address several issues facing First Nations communities today including housing, education, employment and economic development. We want to go beyond just building a structure and leave valuable skills that can open doors for the

youth in each community we serve.”

Each of the interns quickly recognized the potential of the project seeing the positive outcomes for their home communities. Michael Netmaker presented at home in Big River First Nation.

“This was my first experience preparing for and presenting to my Chief and Council. I think it’s important to show the First Nation side of this project, and that (as an intern) I believe in the potential benefits for communities that participate. I was able to see the expressions on their faces and hear them say this is something that is needed.”

Netmaker commented that he wished there was a program like it when he was going through high school.

“This gives young people something to do, it offers hope and opens doors to real opportunities. It creates the space for students, teachers and parents to build close relationships with a hands-on project that creates a sense of pride.”

Direct intern involvement has fostered deeper value in the spirit, intent and merit of the Construction 101 program. Their unique insights helped shape the direction going forward. Janelle Sutherland was a strong contributor to the intern team.

“The three of us has the same roles which included surveys, research, putting together proposals. My own personal role was to make a presentation that included the social aspect as well as the positive impacts the Construction Worker 101 Program could provide to the youth and their communities.”

Individually, each intern gained confidence in networking, presenting and connecting to upper levels of various organizations. Sutherland found the experience valuable.

“I learned a lot about the business side of things. This program gave me the opportunity to gain knowledge



Construction 101 student Carter Ross Strongquill with FSIN Intern Students Janelle Sutherland, Chris Krug-Iron and Michael Netmaker. (Photo by Nathan Raine)

of what goes on in the business aspect.”

For Sutherland, it was a summer well spent.

“I learned that I truly do have a passion for wanting to help people and to be involved in positive projects that can make a difference for First Nation youth. It makes me feel humble that I got to be a part of something that can give youth the confidence, experience and determination to continue their education and career journey.

“I want to be that person who believes in them even if they don’t believe in themselves.”

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Award winning ball player gears up for back to school

By Angela Hill
For Eagle Feather News

After a successful year on the ball diamond, Kailey Ledoux is gearing up for school.

The 14-year-old won the best pitcher award at the U14 Girls Canadian Fast-Pitch Championship in Toronto this summer.

“I was very shocked, I didn’t really think it was real,” Ledoux said she was surprised.

“There was a lot of very good pitchers there.”

The award was a trophy, a glass box with a 3-D figure of a girl batting.

Saskatoon Phantom teammates Bryn Bohman and Madison Glynn also netted awards. Boham for best first baseman and Glynn, the tournaments most valuable player.

“It was really cool because we all work hard and when we don’t have team practices we go out and call each other to the diamond and practice with each other,” Ledoux said.

She likes to see the improvement hard work can bring. This work ethic is going from the game to her Grade 9 classroom.

“Success isn’t given, it’s always earned,” she said. “If you don’t work hard, then you are not going to get anywhere.”

Ledoux says it can be tough to balance sports and school, but says she gets homework done and then goes on to get as much training time in as possible.

This message of hard work in school also comes from her parents.

“We stress to all the kids that if you have a plan to go to post secondary, colleges or universities, your



2017 U14 Girls Canadian Championship all-star awards: From left: Kailey Ledoux-pitcher, Madison Glynn-MVP and Bryn Bohmann, first base.

marks are going to have to be decent,” said dad and coach, Clint Ledoux.

All the Ledoux siblings Kailey, Kyra, 17, Kelsey, 11, and Karson, 8, play sports, baseball, fastball and hockey, just like their dad.

“When the kids were little they ended up following me pretty much, to the diamonds and the rinks, so that’s all they knew,” he said.

While backyard competition is fierce – Kailey tells a story of a soccer game that ends with the ball go-

ing over a fence – the sisters and brother are there to support each other at games.

“All my family members play hockey and ball, so I guess it’s just a family thing. From the time I could walk I was playing these sports with my family,” she said.

“We all go to every game we can make it to, of course we have the sports we play so we can’t always make it to all the games, but we make it to as many as we can.”

Contract offer for

CULTURAL ADVISOR/ELDER SERVICES PRINCE ALBERT CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

The Prince Albert Provincial Correctional Centre is looking for a motivated, energetic and flexible individual who can facilitate Cultural/Spiritual/ Programming to offenders at the Centre. Resumes will be accepted until October 6th, 2017.

Advisors/Elders will attend to the cultural and spiritual needs of offenders at the Centre.

Cultural Advisors/Elders selected will have a working knowledge and / or expertise in the delivery of the following areas: Teaching in the area of traditional ceremonies including but not limited to the sweat lodge and Pipe Ceremonies, understanding the cultural practices of First Nations and Métis people, providing individual counseling and sharing circles to offenders. You will act as a resource to the Cultural/Community Coordinator and Centre staff to increase understanding and sensitivity of the First Nation Culture, traditions, spirituality, practices and beliefs.

Cultural Advisors/Elders shall provide services to a maximum of 30 hours per week at a rate of \$30.00 per hour. Service agreements can be picked up at the Prince Albert Correctional Centre.

Advisors/Elders must obtain a Criminal Record Check (Vulnerable Sector) prior to being awarded this contract and obey all rules and regulations while at the Centre.

Send resumes to:

JULIE REID, DEPUTY DIRECTOR PROGRAMS
PRINCE ALBERT CORRECTIONAL CENTRE
3021-1ST AVE W, PRINCE ALBERT, SK, S6V 4T5

Resumes will be opened in public at the above address at 1:00 p.m. October 9th, 2017.

Parties wishing to view the facility or requiring further clarification to assist in their submission can contact the Deputy Director Programs at (306) 953-3006.



BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT

POSITION: Member of Board of Directors (2 director positions)

The Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation Inc. (SIEF) is accepting applications from individuals who are interested in serving as a member of the Board of Directors. We are currently recruiting two individuals to serve.

ATTRIBUTES:

The successful candidates will have demonstrated expertise in at least one of the following competencies:

- a. risk assessment and management, particularly for a financing organization;
- b. financial skills including the knowledge of best lending practices and the ability to understand business plans and financial projections;
- c. a lawyer with relevant experience;
- d. a human resource professional, or
- e. an existing entrepreneur with start-up experience.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- a. Applicants must be residents of Saskatchewan.
- b. Applicants shall have a strong understanding of the Saskatchewan First Nations business environment, economic landscape, challenges and issues along with First Nations culture and values.
- c. An individual is not eligible if they have been convicted of an indictable offence that would result in them being unable to be bonded.

TERM: Three (3) year term in accordance with Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation Inc. Bylaws.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: September 25, 2017

SIEF is committed to good governance in a non-political environment. For a further description of SIEF with background information and financial statements, please visit www.sief.sk.ca.

If you are interested in applying for this position, please send a letter describing how your experience is relevant to the areas of expertise described above along with your resume to:

SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN EQUITY FOUNDATION INC.

202A Joseph Okemasis Drive, Saskatoon SK, S7N 1B1

Email: tbrodziak@sief.sk.ca Telephone: 306-955-8570 Fax: 306-373-4969

Gosselin's personal script features multiple graduations

By John Lagimodiere
Of Eagle Feather News

After 40 hours of nationally and internationally broadcast television content as a writer and director over the last ten years, you'd think Mike Gosselin has seen it all in the ebb and flow world of production.

A former columnist at Eagle Feather News, Gosselin has gone on to write on award-winning shows like *Cashing In*, *Rabbit Fall*, *Wapos Bay* and *Blackstone*. He's directed 11 episodes of *Solstice Concerts* and was able to work with Buffy St. Marie, Ashely MacIsaac, Sierra Noble, Brett Kissel and Don Amero.

He's written dialogue for screen legends such as Gordon Tootoosis, Tantoo Cardinal, Eric Shweig, Tio Horn, Lorne Cardinal and even Scott Thompson of *The Kids in the Hall*.

But Gosselin is the first to admit he goes back to school every time he works on a project.

"The thing I love most about working in TV is constantly discovering how much I don't know about the business. Whether it's pitching a great idea five minutes too late or realizing the hard work starts after the script is done, I'm continuously learning new skills and figuring out how to adapt to the market."

His latest back to school adventure comes in the form of *Wynter*, an hour long supernatural 'dramaction' series he created six years ago. It's about a street nurse who discovers it's her destiny to defeat an evil race of tricksters intent on wiping out humans.

"I had this idea for a show about tricksters, beings that have fascinated me since I was kid. When I started chatting with my support network, we quickly wondered what if some tricksters decided they didn't want to teach humans lessons anymore? What if they wanted to take the planet back for themselves?"



Mike Gosselin is excited to see his words come to life.

The result was *Wynter*, a half human/half trickster hybrid and the only one with enough power to defeat the evil tricksters. The project was developed by APTN, who recently greenlit the pilot for production.

According to Gosselin, that's when the real schooling started – he had suddenly graduated to the role of producer.

"I was lucky enough to be mentored by my partners at Animiki-See Digital Production, which includes

figuring out how to finance the overall project. The network licenses some production funds and you have to find the rest."

"It's much trickier than one might think."

Gosselin credits his partners at Animiki-See, Vanessa Loewen, Desiree Single and Ashley Hirt, for their commendable work with such a newby when it comes to producing.

"I often felt like I wasn't contributing because they were so on everything. Endless forms, signatures, budgets, emails, phone calls. It's actually surreal how much effort goes into producing a TV show from a business affairs perspective."

Gosselin says "of course" when asked if it's all worth it and is currently reaping the rewards of such a long journey to production. Aside from finding an excellent crew, the *Wynter* team is now starting to cast the show. They intend to shoot in Winnipeg this fall.

"One of my favourite parts of the process is seeing actors bring the characters to life, even in auditions. Words I've written and stared at and changed and changed back and stared at for six years finally have a voice. It's really cool."

When pressed to leak some details about the show, most notably who will play *Wynter*, Gosselin remains tight-lipped.

"I shall not divulge, as much as I'd like to. But everyone involved is going to make sure the show is awesome."

The pay-off is, if the pilot is well executed, a series order is the next step.

"My writing cohort Trevor Cameron and I have written eight additional episodes. If we get the word, we're ready to go to series."

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Arts Board Deadlines

The Saskatchewan Arts Board announces the following deadlines for applications to programs that support the work of Saskatchewan artists and arts organizations:

Independent Artists
October 1

Indigenous Pathways Initiative
October 15

SaskFestivals – Project*
October 15

Access Copyright Foundation Grants – Events
November 1

Artists in Schools – Projects*
November 1

For applications, visit: saskartsboard.ca

APPLICATIONS AND SUPPORT MATERIAL MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE THE DEADLINE DATE UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

(306) 787-4056 (Regina)
(306) 964-1155 (Saskatoon)
(800) 667-7526 (Toll-free)
grants@saskartsboard.ca
saskartsboard.ca

*Funded through the financial assistance of SaskCulture Inc., thanks to funding from Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.



cultivating
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Sailing the Atlantic a surreal experience

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

Indigenous youth across Canada had a lifetime experience sailing across the Atlantic Ocean in a tall ship throughout the month of August.

The shipping expedition, called Msit No'kmaq: All My Relations, was a first-time initiative where 45 Indigenous youth from across Canada and Northwest Territories had the chance to be sailors. The sailors left Halifax on August 1 and sailed across to LeHavre, France on a ship called Gulden Leeuw.

"We learned all the ship stuff like how to set the sails, do all the knots, we did navigation and the steering and we (also) cleaned the ship," said facilitator Cheryl Bear.

"We came up with programs to do while we were on the ship."

Bear, from the Flying Dust First Nation, was invited by the founder and CEO Pytor Hodgson of Three Things Consulting, an Indigenous owned company from Kingston, Ontario that helps with youth engagement and community program development in collaboration with non-government organizations in every province and territory across the nation.

"He asked me if I wanted to go and I said no twice (but) he kept asking me," she said.

"I'm really glad I went because it was very life changing."

At first, Bear was seasick but it didn't take her long to enjoy the exciting ocean life where they saw dolphins along with a moon fish, whales, jel-

lyfish, an octopus, a shark and a sea turtle. Bear said it was one of the most memorable experiences she's ever had.

"I never had an interest to go on the ocean," she said, "When the opportunity presented itself, I was scared because it's the ocean and I don't know what's in there."

Part of the expectations for the sailors was to walk the red road throughout the trip by incorporating the programs created by the facilitators and the Three Things Consulting company. One program that Bear introduced to everyone on the ship was called the 46th Warrior where sailors reflected on who they thought would benefit from the sailing trip, if the person has passed on or stuck in addictions.

None of the sailors had Internet or cell services sailing across the ocean so they entertained themselves through conversations from reconciliation to how the Europeans came to Canada.

"All the conversations were deep. It was nice to see everyone making connections and building friendships," she said.

Elisha Merasty, 18, from Flying Dust First Nation was one of the youth that attended the sailing trip. She said it was an experience that she is still trying to process in her mind.

"It felt real surreal to me," she said. "It was amazing. I never thought I would be able to do something like that."

Merasty said the most memorable part of the trip was making new friends on the ship and seeing the ocean wildlife.

"I had only seen dolphins in movies but was excited when I saw a dolphin," Merasty said.

"Being in the middle of the ocean, it didn't feel real to me because stuff like that doesn't happen to normal people."

The Regional Chief for Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, Morley Googoo, and who also holds the education portfolio for the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) had the idea to send 45 Indigenous youth to France. The participants sailed on the tall ship on August 1 and arrived in France on August 24.



(Above) Cheryl Bear from the Flying Dust First Nation was one of the facilitators of the sailing expedition called Msit No'kmaq: All My Relations. (Photo by Cheryl Bear) (Right) Elisha Merasty, 18, was picked amongst 40 other Indigenous youth who embarked on a sailing journey from Halifax to France throughout the month of August. (Photo by Elisha Merasty)

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WILLIE SYLVESTER

Ironworker

"I LOVE THE CHALLENGE of it....
There are more buildings to be put up and
more workers needed. I'd like to see more
young people get involved [in the trade]."



Willie Sylvester: The Iron Man

Willie Sylvester says he has always embraced a challenge. It's one of the big reasons he has enjoyed his career as an ironworker over the past 30 years.

An ironworker erects (or dismantles) the structural steel framework of pre-engineered metal buildings, single and multi-story buildings, mines, stadiums, arenas, hospitals, towers, wind turbines, bridges, etc.

"I love the challenge of it," Sylvester said. "The job has played a huge part in my life and it's helped put bread and butter on my table."

Sylvester was born in Michel Village. He first learned about ironworking while he was employed in the northern mines in the early 1980s. He had an opportunity to pick up the trade and learn on the job.

"Back then, the focus was hands-on learning," he said. "I definitely had some great mentors along the way. One of the main things they taught me was to work safe and go home safe. It was something that really stuck with me."

Over the years, Sylvester has been involved in the construction of powerhouses in the Coronach and Estevan areas, while also working on the Husky Lloydminster Refinery. Sylvester has helped build and rebuild the majority of potash mines in the province and also worked in the northern uranium mines. In addition, he has had the opportunity to work on various job sites across Canada.

"It was amazing getting to travel around the country and meeting some great people from different provinces," he said. "One thing I noticed was that people often did things differently from province to province. Some of their practices were different than I was used to, but in the end the results always came out the same."

Since he started off in the trade, Sylvester has been a member of Saskatchewan Ironworkers Local 771. Asked to describe his experiences with the union, Sylvester chose the word "phenomenal."

"As a member of the union, I've had access to amazing benefits, from health benefits to a strong pension. By being a member of the union, I've also never been short of work opportunities," Sylvester said. "I've had more confidence heading onto a job site with the union behind me."

Sylvester would definitely encourage the next generation to become involved in trades. In the case of ironworking, he feels youth involvement is imperative to the future of the trade.

"The trade I'm involved in is not exactly a budding one," he said. "There are more buildings to be put up and more workers needed. I'd like to see more young people get more involved."

When he's not working, Sylvester calls Buffalo Narrows home. He said he finds it hard to sit still.

"I do lots of stuff at home when I'm not working," he said. "I've got some pretty good hobbies: fishing, boating, quadding, snowmobiling and working in my shop. I like to keep busy. I also enjoy spending time with my family."



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Lyle W Daniels

Labour Development Strategist

Saskatchewan Building Trades Council

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"AS A MEMBER OF THE UNION,
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