

**Native Women's
Association of Canada**

2016 Annual Report

for the 42nd Annual General Assembly



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Respectfully submitted
September 23-24th, 2016
Gatineau, Québec



Words Before all Others

We recognize the sacred responsibilities that are entrusted in us to serve the Indigenous women across the country.

We come together to offer our sacred prayers to the Creator to perform our responsibilities as leaders.

We acknowledge the Algonquin traditional territory where our working office sits in Ottawa.

We acknowledge that our main office is on the territory of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in Akwesasne.

The image used throughout the Annual Report was produced by Maxine Noel to honour the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. All proceeds related to the sale of the image have been donated to NWAC to support our work around ending violence against Indigenous Women. NWAC acknowledges Maxine's incredible gifts and her talent and we will carry this responsibility forward in our work.



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Overview

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) was incorporated in 1974 and is one of the five officially recognized National Aboriginal Organizations (NAOs) whose purpose is to represent and speak at the national level, on behalf of Aboriginal women in Canada.

The NWAC is governed by a Board of Directors that includes the President of NWAC, the President or designate of each of the Provincial/Territorial Member Associations (PTMAs), as well as four (4) Elders and four (4) youth to represent the four (4) directions.

The President is the official spokesperson for NWAC and has the authority to act on behalf of the Board of Directors. She is elected for a three-year term.

The head office of NWAC is located in Akwesasne with a satellite office established in Ottawa, Ontario. There are approximately 12 full-time staff including an Executive Director and three Senior Managers. The key subject files being addressed by NWAC include: employment and labour, health, human rights and international affairs and environment, and addressing all forms of violence with a special focus on missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.



Mission

To help empower women by being involved in developing and changing legislation that affects them, and by involving them in the development and delivery of programs promoting equal opportunity for Aboriginal women.

Objectives

The objectives of the Native Women's Association of Canada are to:

- Be the national voice for Aboriginal women in Canada
- Address issues of concern to Aboriginal women
- Assist and promote common goals
- Promote equal opportunities for Aboriginal women
- Serve as a resource to Aboriginal women and the communities we live in
- Cultivate and teach the unique aspects of our cultural and historical traditions;
- Assist Aboriginal women's organizations
- Advance issues and concerns of Aboriginal women
- Promote Aboriginal women in leadership
- Link with other Aboriginal organizations with common goals

Vision

We have a vision of Aboriginal communities where all individuals have an opportunity to develop their talents in order to achieve their full potential. We see communities where all people can lead healthy lifestyles by maintaining balance in their spiritual, mental and physical health. We see Aboriginal communities where our children identify with their heritage and have pride in their culture. We see communities that seek to broaden their knowledge about things that affect them, as well as their relationship with the environment and the land. We see communities where all our people can learn our history and traditional ways, while attaining a high level of academic education within the broader society.

In order to accomplish this, we envision strong Aboriginal families that nurture their children to be proud of their background and comfortable in a predominantly non-Aboriginal environment. We imagine families where all Aboriginal people accept and exercise their responsibilities to contribute to a strong community.

We also envision an Aboriginal community that understands and respects the diversity and uniqueness of all Aboriginal Nations: a community that communicates and works in unity with all Aboriginal organizations to maintain solidarity and enhance the ability to exercise our Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We envision an Aboriginal community that assumes the responsibility of selecting leaders who will be role models for our youth and the following generations. We envision an Aboriginal community that determines how our natural resources are utilized and at the same time co-exist in cooperation with a society free of racism and discrimination.



President's Message

What a year 2015/2016 turned out to be!! This year will go down in the history books for sure; with a new Liberal government in place, the National inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), the support without reservation of the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, numerous invitations to consult with the Native Women's Association of Canada, the retirement of our Executive Director, and so much more. It was a pleasure and an honour to be a part of this along with all of our Provincial/Territorial Member Associations (PTMAs). Chi miigwetch to you all for the support and encouragement.

Following the 2015 annual general assembly, the women of the Native Women's Association of Canada continued advocating and advancing the rights of Indigenous women and girls alongside our allies, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Our voices were heard nationally and internationally.

On October 19, 2015 there was light at the end of the tunnel with a new federal government in power. The Liberal government made First Nation issues a priority, and especially with the announcement of a national inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Years of prayers and hope finally answered. The new government has made promises of funding to better the lives of Indigenous people across the country. The Liberal government has assured us that there will be a nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous people in Canada. Something NWAC has not seen for years.



Following the government's announcement of the inquiry into MMIWG, NWAC was working with our PTMAs to obtain from the grassroots what the inquiry should look like, who should lead it, how long the inquiry should take, what kind of answers they wanted. This was compiled in a report and presented to the three Ministers who were put in charge of designing the inquiry: Indigenous Affairs (Carolyn Bennett), Status of Women (Patti Hajdu), and Justice (Jody Wilson-Raybould). They even conducted their own research by visiting different regions across the country. A symposium was held in January at the University of Ottawa with specialists from around the world who had conducted similar inquiries, which the findings of this was also presented to the government. A national roundtable with the Premiers, Leaders of National Indigenous Organizations (NIOs), including NWAC, and family members was held in Winnipeg in February. August 3 the official announcement of the inquiry took place at the Museum of History where the five commissioners were presented along with the terms of reference for the inquiry. Following this announcement NWAC held a press conference with its allies.



This year also witnessed Canada's commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. What a victory for Indigenous People everywhere. We have rights that are equal to ALL other people, and rights that are different. We deserve to be respected as a unique people.

As the official spokesperson for NWAC, I was invited to many interviews, on radio, television, and in print. I was asked to participate on various panels, present as keynote speaker at conferences, and to take part on various advisory committees.

In March the Executive Director of NWAC, Claudette Dumont-Smith, resigned. The Board and staff were sad to see her leave. We appreciate the work she did and wish her well in her retirement. We did hire a replacement, however shortly after her starting date she realized that she was not a fit with the organization and decided to return to her legal practice. We do understand that this position is a very demanding one. For the interim we have Dan Peters as Senior Operations Director and Joan Riggs as Senior Policy Analyst. The Board of Directors have put out a second call for applications and are taking the time it needs to select the right candidate.

Although the National inquiry was at the forefront this year and took a lot of attention, this is not the only area of concern NWAC has. We are very much aware of the need for skills development and employment for our women, health and safety, education, violence prevention, environment, housing, clean drinking water, suicide prevention, etc. NWAC has programs and strategies that are on-going in these areas or are being developed into our strategic plans.

A big Migwetch to the managers and staff at the National Office. Their dedication, hard work and perseverance are what keep us on top of the game. Without them NWAC would not exist or be what it is today. We need people who are caring and loving to be able to work with the many challenges that our Indigenous women and girls face every day. You are awesome!!

Finally, going forward we have to ensure the commitment and promises the Liberal government has made, specifically to funding of various programs for our women and children. We will continue to be heard nationally and internationally as we raise our voices for rights and equality. We will continue to advocate for those who can't. We will continue to be seen as an equal with the NIOs. We will continue to walk with our heads held high because of who we are – strong Indigenous Women and Girls!!

In unity,
Dawn Harvard, PhD
President of the Native Women's Association



The Native Women's Association of Canada Board of Directors (2015-2016)

President Dawn Lavell-Harvard (2015)				
Province/Territory	President or Designate of the PTMA		Elders (4)	Youth (4)
Newfoundland/Labrador	Dorothy Wynne Catherine Halbot (July 2016)	East	Marilyn Francis (East) (2015)	Chenise Hache (East) (2015)
Prince Edward Island	Judy Clark (2010)			
Nova Scotia	Cheryl Maloney (2013)			
New Brunswick	Theresa Hart Perley (2016)			
Quebec	Viviane Michel (2013)	South	Elize Hartley (South) (2014)	Mariah Abotossaway (2015)
Ontario	Jo-Anne Thibodeau Audette (2015)			
Manitoba	Bernadette Smith (2015)	West	Judy Hughes (West) (2015)	Nikki Fraser (West) (2015)
Saskatchewan	Patricia Crowe (2016)			
Alberta	Ruth Kidder (2010)			
British Columbia	Francyne Joe (2015)			
Northwest Territories	Paulina Roche (2013)	North	Anne Modeste (North)	North vacant
Yukon	Doris Anderson (2015)			



Provincial/Territorial Member Associations and Annual Reports

British Columbia Native Women's Association

President: Francyne Joe	Tel: 250.554.4556 extension 211 Fax: 250.554.4573 Mailing Address: 144 Briar Avenue Kamloops, BC V2B 1C1
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BC Native Women's Association (BCNWA) 2015-16 Annual Report



In May 2016, the BCNWA held its elections at its annual AGM in Kamloops, BC and elected a new Board of Directors. Newly elected were: Francyne Joe, President; Sara Joseph, Vice-President; Gayle Frank-Bob, Secretary; Stacie Coutlee, Treasurer; Roberta Moses, Elder; Nikki Fraser, Youth; Deborah Canada, Director at Large; and Nadine Spence, Director at Large.

Anna Thomas, ASETS Program Coordinator, worked with the new BOD to keep the ASETS program running smoothly and ensuring the BCNWA funded as many clients as possible – she does a fantastic job for BCNWA and the women who utilise ASETS!

Over the past year, the Board has been busy ensuring the administrative side of operating a non-profit is in order as well as participating in various events around the province. Like many other PTMAs, we have limited staff and limited operating dollars, therefore the Board is 100% volunteer. We have been working to secure additional funding from the province and private sector and hope this will be successful later this year.

As always, partnerships are a key instrument when trying to work on different projects. BC has a number of Aboriginal organizations and while many are located in Vancouver, which is about 4 hours from Kamloops, there are a few others located within a 2-hour drive. The BCNWA Board have a diverse background and network and we utilise that the most when trying to publicise events.

The previous BCNWA Board had implemented 2 key events: an Aboriginal Day Fundraising Golf Tournament; and a Women of Distinction Gala. We will continue to host these events but are planning to add additional smaller events that help educate the communities about the issues that affect Aboriginal women and also include workshops that help with personal development that empower us. However, we also incorporated a Red Ribbon event and partnered with the local university for a Red Dress event this year.



There are a number of events, foremost the inquiry into MMIWG, that will require participation from our Board and members but we also understand that there are issues related to education, employment, violence against Aboriginal women, human rights, health, housing and more that cannot be overlooked.

We look forward to the upcoming year and to working with other PTMAs and NWAC on projects in 2016-17!

Kukstemc!
Francyne Joe, BCNWA President

The Native Women's Association of the North West Territories

President: Paulina Roche	Tel: 867.873.5509 Fax: 867.873.3152 Toll-Free: 1.866.459.1114 Web: www.nativewomensnwt.com 4902 50 Ave 4902 50 Ave, Yellowknife, NT X1A 3R7
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NWT Report

It has been a busy year for NWA – NWT. The Association worked on many projects and 3 of them will be outlined in this report which relate to the upcoming Inquiry. NWA – NWT continue to work on developing partnerships with the various organizations and government bodies along with increasing services and supports to our respective regions and communities.

Pre-Inquiry to the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls

The engagement meeting was held over two days with the first day being a preparation day. Before the pre-inquiry began the families and loved ones participated in an orientation session and a sharing circle was organized where they were able to share their personal stories associated with the violence and sorrow they have experienced with the missing and murdered loved ones. The effects of this violence upon families and communities were discussed as well as what the journey towards healing could look like.

The second day was dedicated to how the inquiry should be designed. The day opened and closed with traditional ceremonies, including explanations about the signification of these ceremonies for the guests who attended. Drumming was performed and welcoming speeches were held. Those in attendance acknowledged and honoured the women and girls who were murdered and who are still missing. Prayers were also offered for those most affected by these tragedies.



The Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs and her parliamentary secretary heard about the effects of this violence on the families of victims and their communities. Participants in the Yellowknife session mentioned the importance of making sure that families are involved throughout the design of the inquiry.

Who attended?

Approximately 100 survivors, families and loved ones of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls from across the NWT attended the pre-inquiry meeting, as well as staff from the Native Women's Association of the NWT and Yellowknife Victims Services. Also in attendance were:

- The Hon. Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs,
- Yvonne Jones, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs,
- Michael McLeod, Member of Canadian Parliament representing the Northwest Territories.

Officials from Indigenous and Northern Affairs were present throughout the day. Elders and mental health support workers were present to provide a safe and supportive environment for discussions.

Leadership and participation

Two questions were asked about who should lead and who should take part in the inquiry. The views on leadership included the need to have:

- A panel or committee with regional representation, particularly to represent northern regions,
- Clear leadership role and a strong voice assigned to Indigenous peoples,
- Proper representation of the diversity of Indigenous peoples and communities,
- A key role given to an educated Indigenous woman who has adequate experience, both professionally and personally,
- Someone with lived experience of having to deal with the murder or disappearance of a loved one,
- A capacity to incorporate Indigenous knowledge,
- Independence from Government and from political organizations but with support from both, Indigenous and Northern Affairs as the lead federal department going forward,
- Open communications so that relevant information is shared with the appropriate level of government,
- Representation of the families, including the creation of a parents' committee,
- Representation from front-line services.

Participants identified the key issues the Inquiry must address if it is to produce recommendations for specific actions. These issues include:

- Policing, considering both the positive aspects of the work they do and the elements that could be improved,
- Particular attention required on the issue of communications and relationship between police services and communities,
- Mental health and addictions, particularly the adequacy of treatment,
- Issues tied to the appropriate funding of local and culturally appropriate counselling programs



- and services,
- Poverty and homelessness,
 - Including different methods of inquiry to reflect the complexity of the issues behind violence,
 - The availability of counseling for people who are prone to violence as well as for the victims, and families of victims,
 - Regional differences and particular geographic realities of remote and northern communities in Canada,
 - The Child Welfare system,
 - Systemic sexism and the lack of women involved in policing,
 - Racism (including systemic), cultural ignorance and discrimination in accessing services.

As well as discussing the questions listed in the discussion guide, participants were invited to share other comments and views on the design of the inquiry. These include:

- The inquiry should allow families and loved ones to achieve some level of closure. This would involve investigating further the unsolved cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls through closed private hearings.
- Make sure that families and loved ones can have access to information on the cases which concern them.
- The inquiry should consider establishing a northern office to better represent these regions and reflect on their input.
- The inquiry needs to create regional centers where data can be gathered, interpreted and kept.
- Responsible parties should be kept informed and should take action now rather than wait until a final report is written.

The inquiry should address issues with legislation, including the *Indian Act*.

Native Women's Association of Canada

Speak your mind about the Inquiry Northwest Territories Consultation Summary Report

March 22, 2016

There were 22 First Nations, Inuit and Metis women who participated in the pre-Inquiry gathering sponsored by NWAC to gather input into the mandate and design of the Inquiry into murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). Of those in attendance at the March 22, 2016 meeting in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories nine were First Nations, seven were Inuit, and five were Metis. Two of the participants were family members who were directly affected by this national tragedy.

Both the background information and follow-up questions supplied by the NWAC were presented to the participants for discussion and feedback. The meeting was facilitated and responses were documented by flip chart and by a note-taker. Many of the participants were concerned about the tight timelines on turnaround for the consultation. They were also concerned about wording and assumptions contained in the background information and questions. In spite of that participants were able to review the documents in their entirety and provide recommendations for follow-up by NWAC.

Participants expected the Inquiry would be led by a panel of First Nations, Inuit and Metis women and that it would be national in scope to address multi-jurisdictional issues. They also recommended the



Inquiry establish an advisory council of family members and Indigenous women who can provide insights into contributing factors. Participants determined that the Inquiry mandate would be to address systemic issues and resolve individual cases that families bring forward regardless of the status of the case. It would also be to hold leaders, governments and authorities including police accountable and identify steps that would prevent deaths and disappearances of Indigenous women in the future. Healing and justice may be an outcome, but not the mandate of the Inquiry. Participants concluded it would not be appropriate for anyone other than family members and loved ones to determine what justice and healing would look like.

Participants declared that governments across the board had failed to implement recommendations from past Inquiries and were not to be trusted with follow-up on the MMIWG Inquiry. They recommended the MMIWG Inquiry be kept separate from previous investigative initiatives for two reasons: a) They didn't want the focus on MMIWG to shift in priority or get lost in a mix of other agendas; and b) they didn't want governments to use a "quick win" strategy to bolster a position that systemic change had already occurred and so their work was done. Participants also wanted the Inquiry pursue every avenue of investigation regardless of the potential for witnesses to "lawyer up".

Participants recommended financial and counselling resources be immediately set aside for the children of MMIWG and be made readily available to family members and Indigenous women whether or not they chose to participate in the Inquiry process. They concluded that reinstating the disbanded Aboriginal Healing Foundation would divert too many resources to rebuilding the infrastructure and recommended that existing on-the-ground options like NWAC be considered as a service delivery mechanism for counselling and support.

Participants recommended that the experience of violence and sexual violence against Indigenous women and girls be documented, including identifying the sources of such violence (family, state, stranger etc). They also recommended that the Inquiry have a Law Lodge that would permit discussion of Indigenous law and knowledge, both as a way of informing the process and procedure of the Inquiry and also so as to develop Indigenous law approaches and analytical tools with which to address the issues of violence and sexual violence against Indigenous women and girls. And finally, participants determined that a number of topics needed to be studied e.g. impacts of child welfare, socio-economic status of Indigenous women, police investigative practices etc.

Beaded Hearts



Beaded Hearts is a movement that honours the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in the Northwest Territories and acknowledges the ongoing grief of their family and friends.



Beaded Hearts pays respect to the shortened time of the murdered sisters, mothers, daughters, cousins, aunts, grandmothers, friends and wives on this earth. It also serves as a reminder that they are loved and not forgotten, as are the Indigenous women and girls who are missing. The Beaded Hearts offers an opportunity for communities across the North to work toward solutions that will reduce violence and make a difference in the lives of Indigenous women and girls.

Everyone in the Northwest Territories is invited to bead a 2" wide by 2" long heart that will be placed on a tapestry for display at the Native Women's Association NWT and at Inquiry hearings and events.

Respectfully,
Paulina Roche
President, Native Women's Association of the NWT.

Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council

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Yukon Region Report

Greetings!

My name is Doris Anderson and I am the President of the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council (YAWC). In January 2016 I was elected by my peers. Prior to being elected to serve as president, I served as the Vice-President of YAWC so I have been able to see our work and the impact of a new government.

I have been involved with Indigenous women's organization since the early 80's. My beginning was with Indigenous women fighting for their status rights that were taken away. I was absolutely taken with the Elders of the day like Mary Two Axe Early and listening to Sandra Lovelace...and so many amazing women from Yukon.

In the last year I have been involved in the MMIWG movement that has since resulted in the MMIWG Inquiry that was being asked for by the families. This action has included a Yukon Roundtable prior to the National Roundtable. At the end of the day, what the families wanted from these Roundtables has resulted in the Inquiry.



Alberta Aboriginal Women's Society

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Alberta Region Report

Tansi Sisters, Grandmothers, Youth, Elders and Delegates of the Four Directions. Greetings and best wishes from the Alberta Aboriginal Women's Society, Board of Directors, and all the members across Alberta.

We would also like to welcome all the PTMA's to the Native Women's Association of Canada AGA.

We are happy to be here for in the spiritual world our grandmothers have treasured the immensity of the land to come together in unity to share our experiences and to explore new roads towards attaining a common destiny. As sisters we are the first educators of humanity as leaders as families and communities let us work together as one to reach a common goal.



We are appreciative of the chance we each have as women in our communities to enhance the educational opportunities for all our Aboriginal women. Each of us here realize that education is the key to a successful future within our communities, our people and their families. The majority of our women need to be prepared to compete in the increasingly skilled, and knowledge base economy of the future.

The need for the ASETS Program is a clear indicator that the employment for our women is vital. We believe in fighting to keep this program alive to enhance and enrich the lives of these women who are willing to work as hard as is necessary to bring hope to their families' lives and to enrich their community by bringing back their skills. This also provides encouragement to the other members who otherwise might just see the future as hopeless. Our people realize the need. This hope is necessary as without it they will give up due to lack of funding and guidance. Alberta Aboriginal Women's Society is pleased to be the mechanism that helps these women reach their goals and be successful.



Alberta Aboriginal Women's Society is proud to be a part of Native Women's Association of Canada. This unites all our provinces together and help to make Aboriginal Women in our country stronger, united and a force to bring the change so needed.

We have been busy this last year especially with the pipeline issues. We have been actively involved in the Amisk Hydroelectric Project, which is a project that proposes to put a 330 megawatt facility on the Peace River in Northern Alberta. I have been involved as an elder in the Consultations regarding the effects of this project on the Traditional Lands that will be effected by this project.

Clear Stream is an oil and gas company from the US that has entered into Canada. They are involved in cleaning up oil and transporting it. Again we deal with them and attend meetings as well to ensure our Traditional Lands are protected.

We have also been working closely with Native Counselling Services to provide any assistance we can since we are often dealing with women who need education In order to make a better life for themselves and their families.

We have several other projects we have been involved in such as Trans Canada and Shell. In light of our economy the focus has been on the big industry that keeps moving forward.

In Aboriginal Unity
Ruth Kidder
President



Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation

President: Judy Hughes	Tel.306-783-1228 Fax: 306-783-1771 East Broadway Business Centre 89 Broadway Street East Yorkton S3N 0L1 Mailing Address: Box 1174 Yorkton Saskatchewan S3N 2X3
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Saskatchewan Region Report



Tanshi, Hello, NWAC Delegates. We are pleased to present a few of the highlights for the fiscal year of April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016.

The Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation (SAWCC) is a not-for-profit organization celebrating twelve (12) years of service to families in Saskatchewan.

Our affiliation as a provincial-territorial membership association (PTMA) of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) provides a vehicle for SAWCC to express the voices of Saskatchewan Indigenous women in international, federal and Indigenous government policy and program initiatives. SAWCC takes a leadership role in responding to and addressing issues of concern and interest to Indigenous women, their families and their environment in the areas of education, employment, economic opportunities, advocacy, research and resource sharing.

Some of the major initiatives we have provided are (1) education and training funding, (2) programs to increase safety and reduce crime, (3) healing and support programs and services, and (4) life skills and employment training. In addition, we deliver presentations and workshops on bridging Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationships toward economic and social responsibility.

We continue to be involved in many initiatives and strategies in one form or another – either as a committee member, community member, consultant, technician and/or participant. Our office provided assistance to more than **600 inquiries** ranging from individual and family support to educational funding, domestic violence, sexual assault, and community engagement. The highest inquiries were for presentations and information on the issues of violence against Aboriginal women and girls, assistance in dealing with issues arising with the RCMP and police services, and funding requests for education, training and living allowance through the ASETS program.



As part of our capacity building and community engagement, SAWCC provides volunteer administrative and other supports to non-profit organizations and delivers presentations at several events across Saskatchewan, Canada and internationally, utilizing our Elders Circle and Youth Representative where possible.

The **Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)** is renewed every April with an agreement with our national office, the Native Women's Association of Canada. There were close to 100 contacts made to our office requesting funds. Recipients can apply for funds to further their education, enhance their business or provide employment opportunities. In addition, the ASETS Coordinator provides client assessment and case management to all clients. As part of our economic opportunities strategy, we assist businesses and organizations with employee referrals and recruitment.

Research Projects

The final report on the 'Independent Assessment Process for Indian Residential School Compensation: Who Benefits?' was released in April by Dr. Cindy Hanson, University of Regina, and Judy Hughes, Community Researcher, who presented the findings at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Draft Justice Framework to Address Violence against Aboriginal Women and Girls

SAWCC has been actively engaged in providing input for drafting this very important framework. Several meetings were held across Saskatchewan and SAWCC continues to work on the drafting of this framework with the Government of Saskatchewan, Ministry of Justice and several other community groups. This draft justice framework is intended to help federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) justice officials, Aboriginal organizations and groups, and other partners work together to address the critical issue of eliminating violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

Annual Missing Persons Week

SAWCC contributes to the Annual Missing Persons Week activities by staffing a Display Table at the provincial opening in Regina, participating in media interviews as well as holding a Missing Persons Open House in different locations across Saskatchewan. Information and prevention materials were presented on various ways that people go missing such as high risk lifestyles, child abductions, accidents, mental disorders and runaways.

Pre-Inquiry After Care Meetings re National Inquiry on MMIWG (Justice Canada)

Pre-Inquiry Design Phase Meetings re National Inquiry on MMIWG (NWAC)

Locations: Ile-a-la-Crosse, Mistawasis FN, Pine River, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, Yorkton
SAWCC provided dedicated after care support services to families of missing and/or murdered Indigenous women following their participation at the Saskatchewan Pre-Inquiry Design Phase meetings. Families received access to traditional healing and elders, sweats, and culturally responsive supports and practices. In addition, there were facilitated interactive awareness and educational sessions on understanding traumatic events, learning stress reduction techniques and artistic creativity. SAWCC facilitated 7 pre-inquiry design phase meetings with its membership and constituency to assist the Federal Government and NWAC to "develop an approach to, and a mandate for, a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls".



Youth Empowerment

Youth members are working to secure funding to enhance youth capacity that will provide opportunities to learn skills and gain experience in leadership, health, positive lifestyles and economic development. They will discuss and advocate issues of relevance to youth today as they relate to their work with SAWCC.

We acknowledge and thank Justice Canada; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Social Services; Ministry of Government Relations; Indigenous Peoples Centre for Health Research; Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority and the Native Women’s Association for their generous support of our annual initiatives.

Submitted by: Judy Hughes

Manitoba Moon Voices Inc.

<p><i>President:</i> Bernadette Smith</p>	<p>Tel: 204.942.1828 2-715 Main Street Winnipeg, MB R3B 3N7</p>
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Manitoba Region Report



**MANITOBA
MOON VOICES INC.**

Incorporated Since July 2012

**ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR NWAC AGA
Period April 1, 2015 – August 31, 2016**



In the coming year as we gain greater capacity we will continue to reach the goals in our mission: “To build a strong connection among Indigenous women, organizations and allies across Manitoba supporting a collaborative voice in support of each other while also delivering responsive, effective, and valued research, education, access to resource sharing, and advocacy at the local, provincial, national and international levels.”



1. Governance and Administration

- May 23, 2015 MMVI held its first Annual General Assembly, electing a 7 member Board of Directors.
- A 3 year (2016 – 2019) Strategic Plan was developed and shared with membership at the second Annual General Assembly held in June 2016. The priorities identified reflect the important issues, opportunities and key focus areas, that when addressed will allow the organization to flourish.
- From 2016 - 2019 MMVI will strategically focus efforts around the following priorities: Indigenous Women's Leadership; Issues arising from Child Welfare and the issues of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls.
- Completed implementation of promotional plan for membership recruitment. Membership recruitment efforts to date 343 - verified memberships as of March 31, 2016.
- Hired Executive Director, ASETS program Coordinator.

2. Communications and Programming

- Participated in over 50 community events and met with organizations profiling MMVI, creating networks and initiating relationships to consider future partnerships on issues affecting indigenous women in Manitoba.
- Received funding for Aboriginal Skills Employment and Training Strategy (ASETS) through Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) for 2015-2016 and again in 2016-2017.
- In 2015 – 2016: 8 of 8 ASETS participants graduated from their program(s). Graduates were Indigenous Women from various regions of Manitoba including: 3 Northern, 1 Interlake; 3 Southern; 1 out of Province.
- In 2016 – 2017 funding included supports for: short term programs; required documentation; and childcare (focus being on removing barriers to employment). Currently, funding has been extended to 3 participants for longer-term (up to one year) programs. The number of applications received far outweighs the amount of funding available.

3. Information and advocacy Supports

- Child welfare information/supports,
- Training and employment information - Winnipeg/urban locations, Northern communities and Reserves,
- Volunteer requests,
- Support services for health-related issues - dealing with trauma/IRS, addictions, depression/suicide, sexual exploitation, homelessness,
- Issues affecting murdered and missing indigenous women and girls - family participation in political meetings, supports for memorial recognition (family feasts, spiritual supports e.g. headstone, counselling, Elder/Traditional, public events),
- Launched website and Facebook page. Continued development and expansion of communications strategy,
- Completed a Leadership Guidebook, currently working on implementation and promotion plan for delivery to Indigenous women's groups across the province.

Respectfully Submitted by: Manitoba Moon Voices Board of Directors



Ontario Native Women’s Association

<p>President: Dr. Dawn Lavell-Harvard</p>	<p>Tel: 807.623.3442 Toll-Free: 1.800.667.0816 Fax: 807.623.1104 Web: www.onwa.ca</p> <p>Mailing Address: #15 – 684 City Road Fort William First Nation, ON P7J 1K3</p> <p>Satellite Office and Courier Address: 380 Ray Boulevard Thunder Bay, ON P7B 4E6</p>
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Ontario Region Report

The Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) is a not for profit organization that was established in 1971 to empower and support Aboriginal women and their families throughout the province of Ontario. ONWA is committed to being the voice of Aboriginal women in Ontario and to building relationships with all levels of government and other organizations to ensure all Aboriginal women and their families will live free from social and economic distress; to promote their sacred roles as valued and respected members in the community; and to preserve their culture, language and heritage.



ONWA delivers culturally based programs and services to Aboriginal women and their families regardless of their status or locality. ONWA as an organization is a provincial network of Aboriginal women governed by a Board of Directors - all working together to achieve equality and justice for Aboriginal women, their families and communities. Our VISION is to be a unified voice for equity, equality and justice for Aboriginal women through cultural restoration within and across Nations. The Mandate of the Ontario Native Women's Association is to address violence against Aboriginal women and empower and support all Aboriginal women and their families through research, advocacy, policy development and programs that focus on local, regional and provincial activities.

ONWA continues to lead on addressing family violence, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, and sex trafficking.

Family Well-Being

As a result of ONWA’s leadership and Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women (2007), governments have begun to work with us and our partners to address violence against Indigenous women. *Walking Together: Ontario’s Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous*



Women (2016) outlines the Ontario government's commitment of \$100 million over 3 years to supporting children/youth/families, community safety, policing/justice, prevention/awareness, leadership and improved data/research. From this strategy, the Family Well-Being Program will provide funding to create wholistic and wrap-around services for Indigenous women, children, youth and their families. ONWA's submission to the Family Well-Being Proposal expands on our Strategic Framework (2016-2019) which emphasizes the importance of addressing links between Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls, and the challenges of the Child Welfare system, while empowering women at the center of the family. Our submission to the Family Well-Being program through the Ministry of Children and Youth (MCYS) emphasizes a preventative and wholistic approach to services provision in ways that address both the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in child welfare as well as the impacts of violence against Indigenous women. Providing safe spaces and services for Indigenous mothers to maintain their own family wellbeing is the focus of this work.

Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy (OICYS):

ONWA continues to participate as a lead Indigenous organization in the design and implementation of the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy (OICYS) along with our partners from the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO), the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) as well as the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). ONWA's approach has profound implications for provincial policy making by articulating vital links between Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women and navigating child and youth services with Indigenous mothers and their families at the center of the conversation. ONWA continues to reinforce the importance of Jordan's Principle and the best interests of the child, in order to ensure that safety, health and culture are provided at all times for Indigenous children and youth. We have also contributed to Child and Family Services Act legislative amendments toward enhancing culturally based services and service choice for Indigenous children and youth. As a result of ONWA's participation at this table, Indigenous mothers and supporting mothers in their relationships with their children and youth, remain central to the conversation. ONWA's culturally rooted, gender based analysis will also result in key outcome measurement criteria within the OICYS when it eventually rolls out. The OICYS's outcome measurement component will tie funding criteria to the overall wellbeing of Indigenous mothers, their children and youth, and to a culturally based approach that ensures family and community unity and care.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG):

After many years of effort by Indigenous women's organizations, families and other advocates, the federal government is now moving forward with a national Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). ONWA's leadership and analysts have attended, observed and documented the MMIWG Pre-Inquiry Consultation Sessions hosted by the federal government beginning in December 2015 through to March 2016. As well, ONWA attended the 2nd National Roundtable on MMIWG held in Winnipeg Manitoba. ONWA also hosted several MMIWG Pre-Inquiry Traditional Healing Supports Sessions throughout the province of Ontario in order to assist those family members and loved ones affected by the Pre-Inquiry consultations.

Now that the national Inquiry has been formally launched, ONWA will be taking the lead in supporting families across the province through its MMIWG Family Support Program. This program will have Indigenous women leading on issues that directly affect them and build their capacity towards self-determination. The program focuses on provincial coordination and communication and will create a supportive network for survivors, family members and loved ones of Missing and Murdered Indigenous



Women and Girls through the coordination of trauma-informed services that are culturally relevant and through the establishment of an accessible, safe network of community resources readily available to all those affected by violence. ONWA will inform, connect and engage individuals and families from across the province with this safe network of supportive services to reduce the rate and incident of re-traumatization.

Femmes Autochtones du Quebec (FAQ)/ Quebec Native Women's Association Inc.

President: Viviane Michel	Tel: 450.632.0088 Toll-Free: 1.800.363.0322 Fax: 450.632.9280 Web: www.faq-qnw.org Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1989 Kahnawake, QC J0L 1B0 Courier Address: Business Complex River Road Main Floor, Suite 118 Kahnawake, QC J0L 1B0
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Quebec Region Report

To be posted on website when available

New Brunswick – Indigenous Women's Association of the Maliseet and Mi'qmaq Territory

President: Theresa Hart Perley	Indigenous Women's Association of the Maliseet and Mi'qmaq Territory
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To be posted on website when available



Nova Scotia Native Women's Association

<i>President:</i> Cheryl Maloney	Tel: 902.893.7402 52 Martin Crescent, Truro, Nova Scotia B2N 6N7
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Nova Scotia Region Report

To be posted on website when available

Aboriginal Women's Association of PEI

<i>President:</i> Judy Clark	Tel: 902.831.3059 Fax: 902.831.3027 15 Eagle Feather Trail, PEI
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PEI Region Report 2015-2016

Kwe', AWAPEI's year has been filled with many events and activities and this report recaps some of them.

The PEI Government along with Mi'kmaq Tribal Council of PEI supported and co-presented with AWAPEI in the First Nation Community information sessions for on and off reserve on the "**Family Homes on Reserve and Matrimonial Interest or Rights Act**". This also led to a new the PEI Emergency Protection Order, and the meetings of the Chief Justices of the Supreme Court and the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of PEI. First information session was held off reserve at our AWAPEI AGM in November 2015.

AWAPEI hosted, along with PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the PEI Public Library Service, a Study Group on Canada's Truth & Reconciliation Commission at the Confederation Centre Public Library – 12 sessions were held from February to May 2016 at noontime. This was open to everyone, to reflect on the history and legacy of Residential Schools in Canada and on the TRC's 94 Calls of Action for reconciliation. It was well attend by the settlers of PEI.

Mi'kmaq Family Resource Centre, which AWAPEI sponsors and is funded by the Community Action Program for Children and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program through Public Health Agency of Canada, in Agreement with the Province of PEI, has been open and helping off reserve Aboriginal families for over 20 years. It also operates the off reserve Headstart Program and a place of welcome for the community.



Other highlights: Our ASETS, funded by NWAC had many successful Clients funded in Education, Training and Employment areas; The AWAPEI's- FASD project has been funded for the past 8 years from Health Canada, working together with our First Nations Wellness Centre, on Reserve.

AWAPEI also partners with a number of PEI Agencies: University of PEI and Native Council of PEI with Powwows and the Mass Blanket Exercise, which was held in conjunction with the National day across Canada; Project with RCMP – “VOICES” – Victims of Incident Can Eventually Speak project; PEI Business Women’s Association – Mentoring Project; Urban Partnership Proposal 2015 – 2016 Employment areas open to everyone; Mi’kmaq Confederacy of PEI and PEI Government Justice Program and Indian Residential School Program.

Our Sisters In Spirit October 4th Vigil, which was held in the city of Charlottetown, had many dignitaries, families and friends attend. Missing Murder Indigenous Women and Girls: their family members attended a regional event in Halifax, NS and National Roundtable and National Healing event in Winnipeg, Man.

The Canadian Government and Canadian embassies invited me to attend the VII Continental Meeting of the Indigenous Women of the Americas. I also presented to the Aboriginal Women in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala on Aboriginal women’s Issues in Canada and I also attend a powerful ceremony with Aboriginal women of the Americas.

Judy Clark, President

Newfoundland Native Women’s Association

<i>President:</i> Dorothy George (until June 2016)	Tel: (709) 789-3430 Fax: (709) 789-2207
Cathy Halbot (after June, 2016)	P.O. Box 22 Benoits Cove, NL A0L 1A0

Newfoundland Region Report 2015-2016

Greetings to all affiliated PTMA Members of the Native Women’s Association of Canada, to the Staff, the President and Executive Members of the NNWAC. 2015-2016 has been a busy year for the NNWA as we have delivered the ASETS program as a member of the NWAC. This has been a rewarding, and, yet, this has been challenging in trying to serve the indigenous women of our Province.

For our Association, Co-sponsoring has had major drawbacks in our delivering of this Program. In this current year we are looking at various other means of delivering the ASETS program to reach a maximum number of indigenous Women from this Province who need training and or an improvement of their skills, so as to become employable.



In the Local scene we have been very active with the Provincial Women's Advisory Council as a member, and have enjoyed the participation of being an active member of this Council.

The NNWA does have an Indigenous Kit, that we do make available to our members, who wish to borrow this kit, so that it can be used to help our younger children, try to better understand how our Ancestors lived in the past and how they held the Land and all of Nature, as Gifts, to be respected and looked after for future generations.

In our Community we do have an older 2 story building that is similar to a Heritage House, which has been taken over by the Town of Humber Arm South and is opened throughout the summer months for visitors. This Building has no electricity and has many of the original items, which has been donated by residents, which show items that were used by home owners. We are extremely proud that one of the rooms is set up as an "indigenous room" with many donated indigenous items, being given to this house, to be viewed by visitors, from indigenous people, within the various surrounding Community.

We did have a Session with the MMIW Project, which we felt, allowed our indigenous women try to understand the hurt, pain and extreme devastation this has caused to many indigenous families. This Workshop helped many understand that while this has been ongoing, that it has not yet been resolved, and, it is still continuing today, however, with the current Federal Liberal Government we see their Promise of their Commitment to the Indigenous Women through an Inquiry being delivered and acted upon.

Hopefully this will be the Inquiry to end the massive pain and destruction for our indigenous women for the future generations. May this Inquiry find the solutions needed, so that all indigenous women and their families can live in peace and harmony with each other and that there will be no other MMIW.

We at this time wish to say a heart filled Thank You to our former President, Dorothy George, who has been the sitting President since the NNWA became an affiliate member of the NNWAC.

We do wish to say a heart filled Thank You to our current President, Ms. Cathy Halbot, and wish her great success as she takes over the Leadership of the NNWA and the role of the NWAC member for Newfoundland and Labrador.



The National Office



Executive Director's Report (August 2015-March 2016)



In March of 2016, Claudette Dumont-Smith retired as the Executive Director of NWAC. NWAC wants to acknowledge the incredible contribution that Claudette provided to the NWAC.

The report below is a summary of her reports before her retirement.

The Executive Director is the senior staff position within the Native Women's Association of Canada and is responsible for the management and direction of the operations of the organization. This includes the management of all office operations, approving all communications material and media releases, providing support and direction to the management team and overseeing all NWAC projects.

In addition to carrying out these responsibilities, below you will find some highlights of the activities and events that the Executive Director completed during this period.

The Executive Director was on annual leave until August 18. When she returned, most of the remainder of the month was spent in preparing for Roundtable 2016 and organizing the October 4 Vigil. The Executive Director also began the dialogue with Maxine Noel on the donation of the "Not Forgotten" artwork to benefit MMIW. There were also outreach and fundraising meetings.

Planning continued for Roundtable 2016 with follow-up teleconferences with NIO's and the NWT. There were more meetings and organizing for the October 4 Vigil, as well continuing the dialogue with Maxine Noel on the artwork donation. There was an Executive Council teleconference and a general staff meeting. She also met with CUPE to discuss a fundraising concert for MMIW and was a participant at the Family Gathering hosted by the Manitoba government in Winnipeg. The Executive Director attended the Community Advisory Council of the Waakebinees-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health and met with Dr. Malcolm King, Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health to discuss the PEKE five-year project. There were also outreach and fundraising meetings and interviews for the Executive Assistant.

The Executive Director attended the October 4 Vigil that was well attended with over 150 participants on Parliament Hill and convened a post-event staff meeting to review the event. The Executive Director attended meetings at Western University on research into domestic violence and met with the Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime and the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP. Planning continued for Roundtable 2016 and there was an Executive Council teleconference and meetings with the NWAC president. The Executive Director had meetings with potential NWAC donors and attended the Harvest Moon event at Wabano where Sophie Trudeau was a guest speaker. There were media requests and the Executive Director attended a rally to support the Indigenous women in Val-d'Or.



There were many important meetings in November including ones with the President of the National Association of Friendship Centres and the AFN National Chief. There were preliminary discussions with Minister Caroline Bennett regarding the MMIW Inquiry and planning continued for Roundtable 2016. The CUPE fundraising concert for MMIW was held on November 15 and 6,000 people attended. There was also planning and coordination work for the NWAC Board of Directors meeting in December. The Executive Director completed reports for OFIFC and Elections Canada and had communications with New Brunswick women's group. There were media requests including one from Sweden on MMIW and a teleconference on a socio-economic plan for Indigenous women. Planning and coordination work was also carried out for the NWAC Board of Directors meeting in December.

In December the Executive Director attended the NWAC Board of Directors meeting and many political meetings were convened including with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Letters were sent to new Ministers congratulating them on their appointments and subsequent meetings were convened with Ministers Carolyn Bennett, Jody Wilson-Raybould and Patty Hajdu regarding the MMIW Inquiry. Planning for Roundtable 2016 continued and there were meetings with Amnesty International, and the President of the Congress of Aboriginal People. Planning began for the International Symposium to be held January 30-31 in Ottawa and the Executive Director attended a special Health Conference in Ottawa.

In January the Executive Director met with Kim Pate, Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies to talk about the issue of the high numbers of Indigenous women and girls who are incarcerated in federal and provincial institutions. There were meetings with Amnesty International to prepare the report on Canada's response to the United Nations, and with Status of Women Canada about funding proposals. There were also meetings with the RCMP to discuss matters of mutual concern and with lawyer Mary Eberts to talk about the MMIW pre-Inquiry. There were additional meetings with the Foreign Affairs Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and with representatives of the Disabled Women's Network. She also met with Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak and with a major fundraiser, Susan Jackson. She continued planning work on Roundtable 2016 and attended the International Symposium January 30-31 in Ottawa.

The Executive Director attended Roundtable 2016 in Winnipeg February 24-26. She also attended a two-day Matrimonial Real Property meeting in Gatineau and the Aboriginal Nurses Annual Conference in Montreal. Meetings included ones with Status of Women and Aboriginal Affairs officials regarding funding proposals. Work continued on the pre-Inquiry with additional meetings with Mary Eberts, and there were also outreach and fundraising meetings. There were internal meetings with an IT consultant, an Executive Council meeting and a staff retreat on February 12.

At the end of March, 2016, Claudette Dumont-Smith left NWAC.



Senior Management Supplementary Report (April 2016- September 2016)

As the Board of Directors has been searching for a new Executive Director to replace Claudette Dumont-Smith, Dan Peters and Joan Riggs have been performing some of the key Executive Director functions since May 2016. Based on the good guidance of the Board of Directors in May 2016, a number of key priorities were identified, in addition to our program work.

Indigenous Women's Governance

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in Article 18, makes it clear that Indigenous women have the right to decision who will represent us.

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

“Who is Indigenous?” has become an important question that is being explored in a number of forums including the Daniels case. An equally important question is who represents Indigenous women in Canada. We respectfully recognize that Indigenous women make that decision for themselves and we are committed to working with Pauktutit, who represent Inuit women; the Women of the Métis Nation, who represent many Métis women; and the Women's Council of the Assembly of the First Nation who represent First Nation women living on reserve.

In the next year there are important conversations to have with Indigenous organizations and with the federal government so that we all represent what Indigenous women are asking for in a wide number of issues.

Supporting the Provincial and Territorial Indigenous Women's Organizations

NWAC lost 60% of our core funding during the years of the Harper government. Currently, NWAC receives no federal funding for the work we do in addressing the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. While we are recognized as one of the five official organizations to represent Indigenous people at the federal level, we receive the least amount of funding. NWAC has been working to remedy this situation.

At the same time, there are provincial and territorial Aboriginal organizations that receive no funding or only project funding from their respective governments. At the Council of the Federations in Whitehorse, the President raised this issue with all of the Premiers. The office did a follow-up letter asking for funding to be provided and meetings be held with their provincial/territorial Indigenous women's organization.



Responding to Federal Government Initiatives

As part of the cuts to funding over the last 10 years, NWAC lost much of our capacity to develop and respond to policy. That has not slowed us down but we have had to be very strategic. Below are the many requests that we have received between May and September. The ones that we have responded to are noted:

- 1. Gender Based Strategy on Violence Against Women:** The President has attended numerous consultations and is sitting on the Advisory Committee. NWAC is submitting a paper to respond to the consultation.
- 2. Descheneaux decision and ending sex discrimination in the *Indian Act*:** The federal government has to respond to the Descheneaux decision by February of 2017. They have initiated a consultation process that we are coordinating with delegates from the AGA. There is a plan to do a Phase 2 and a more in-depth process on sex discrimination in the *Indian Act* and we will ensure that NWAC is engaged in that process.
- 3. Urban Aboriginal Strategy:** The Urban Aboriginal strategy is an opportunity for funding to be provided to urban Indigenous women's organizations to address issues of concern. Consultations were done across the country in late summer, early September and NWAC will be submitting a report in late September.
- 4. National Housing Strategy:** A consultation process has been launched around a National Housing Strategy. NWAC is participating in this process and is preparing a paper of factors to consider in the strategy.
- 5. Education, INAC:** INAC is interested in NWAC doing a number of research projects. They are also doing a consultation process on education that we will be working with them on to ensure that Indigenous women's voices are heard.
- 6. Early Childhood Development:** There will be an engagement process around where ECD fits into employment and social development. We have had discussions **with the government** around engagement through the PTMAs.
- 7. Indigenous Youth Council:** The Government of Canada has established an Indigenous Youth Council. One of NWAC Youth Board members is sitting at the Youth Council.
- 8. INAC Shelter selection committee:** There is finally funding for a number of new VAW shelters on First Nations through INAC's Family Violence Prevention Program. A staff person from NWAC has been selected to sit on that committee.
- 9. Climate Change and the Environment:** We have secured funding for an Environmental Project Officer for this fiscal year to support the development of our capacity to work on this issue. A paper is being prepared to support the national consultations. We attended the Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change meeting and provided them with a paper as part of their consultation.



10. **National Roundtable on Flexible Work Arrangements:** NWAC submitted our thoughts for their deliberations. As the issue was specific to the federal public service, we offered some insights into where Indigenous women fit in the federal public service, including barriers faced and solutions.
11. **Task Force on Marijuana Legalization and Regulation:** We have been asked to engage and to sit on an advisory table. We are monitoring this file at this time through the Health Manager.
12. **Accessibility:** The Ministry of Sport and Persons with Disabilities has launched consultations on the Government of Canada accessibility legislation. We have sent out the information to the PTMAs and are in the process of preparing a paper.
13. **Proposals:** The managers, over this time, have written over 10 proposals to do small pieces of work and increase our capacity to address the needs of Indigenous women through consultation, research, policy and programs.

Throughout this period the staff of NWAC have been exceptional and we have been honoured to work with them.

Joan Riggs and Dan Peters

From Sisters in Spirit to A National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

A major milestone was reached this year. Eleven years ago NWAC started Sisters in Spirit and after years of advocacy and lobbying efforts with the federal government, the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was launched. NWAC participated in the pre-Inquiry and submitted a paper based on the consultations. We prepared our 10 expectations on what the Inquiry needs to include to ensure that the families and survivors are respected and supported. These 10 points were what we used in our media communications and meetings with the Minister's office.



On August 3rd, the government announced the terms of reference and the five Commissioners: Chief Commissioner the Honourable Marion Buller (Port Coquitlam), and Commissioners Michèle Audette (Montreal), Qajaq Robinson (Ottawa), Marilyn Poitras (Regina) and Brian Eyolfson (Toronto).



As part of that day, the Native Women’s Association organized a press conference, also at the Museum of Canadian History, with all of the other National Indigenous organizations and our key partners from the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA), Amnesty International, the Canadian Labour Congress and KAIROS. The President of NWAC and our BC Youth Representative, Nikki Fraser, were our speakers.



Key Work at NWAC

Violence Prevention & Safety (VPS) Annual Report

Prepared by: Gail Gallagher – Senior Manager, Violence Prevention & Safety

The Violence Prevention & Safety (VPS) department covers a wide area of files related to violence prevention and the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. This has been an extremely busy year, as the VPS Manager is required to sit on multiple committees in order to address all of these issues effectively. Currently, the VPS staff exists of two administrative staff, one Research Assistant and the Senior Manager who keeps up to date on relevant issues in domestic violence, research and violence prevention strategies. Volunteers continue to provide the necessary backup support and complete research as required to assist the VPS Senior Manager and staff.

NWAC is best positioned to undertake work in violence prevention on behalf of and for Aboriginal women and girls. NWAC, with funding from Status of Women Canada (SWC), has been instrumental in building awareness and leading social change in violence prevention and awareness through the Sisters in Spirit (SIS) and the Evidence to Action (ETA I & II) projects. These past projects, SIS in particular, have been instrumental in identifying and framing the issue and creating actions and responses to address it.



While both projects aimed at ending extreme violence, with one heavily focused on identifying root causes and missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, Project PEACE aims solely at promoting safety, violence prevention and solution-based approaches for Aboriginal women and girls through engagement processes.

The Project PEACE acronym represents Prevention, Education, Action, Change and Evaluation through which personal safety nets can be created to provide the foundation of safety, which once established will support and build momentum towards a continuum of actions leading to greater economic stability and a decrease in poverty.

This past year, the Violence Prevention & Safety department has completed over 30 focus groups in the following four (4) regions: North, South, West and East. Two separate urban focus groups were held for Aboriginal women and girls and Aboriginal men and boys, as well as two separate rural focus groups. This past year, National surveys were completed for both Aboriginal women and men to ask about their opinions of issues of violence and safety experienced by Aboriginal women and girls. National webinars were held in which participants reviewed the survey results and outcomes from focus group discussions. Finally, the VPS Senior Manager is continuing work towards development of two toolkits, one designed specifically for Aboriginal women and girls and one for Aboriginal men and boys, in order to address issues of violence and perceptions of safety experienced by Aboriginal women and girls. An external evaluator was also hired this year, in order to evaluate these two toolkits once they are completed within the next 3 months.



The final Project PEACE deliverable is to develop two toolkits. The Project PEACE tool aims to support Aboriginal women and girls in achieving their personal and professional life goals and ambitions by empowering service providers and Aboriginal men and women.

The Violence Prevention & Safety Manager was involved in all aspects of the planning of the February 27th, 2016 2nd National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls, held in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

VPS Manager also attended some of the following events/conferences.

1. Edmonton Spirits in Spirit Conference
2. Proposal Grant Writing Workshop
3. Building A Bigger Wave: Toronto Domestic Violence Coordinating Committees in Ontario
4. Faceless Dolls Workshop Speaker, Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School

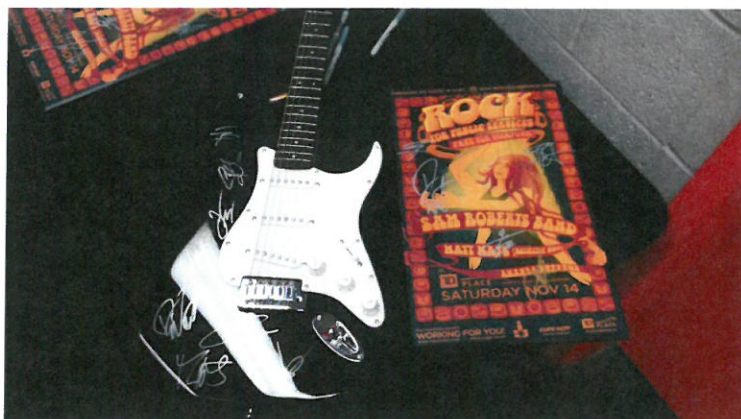


5. MMIWG Speaker engagement, University of Ottawa MMIWG Panel & film screening *Finding Dawn"
6. FAFIA/ NWAC Symposium: National Inquiry Recommendations
7. Have A Heart Day: Parliament Hill, Cindy Blackstock
8. Pathways to Reconciliation Conference
9. TRC Final Summary Report Presentation
10. Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 'Rock for Public Services' MMIWG Fundraiser
11. National Roundtable Status of Women Canada, *Preventing Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls re: Proposed Federal Strategy Against Gender-Based Violence Engagement Plan.*
12. National Roundtable Status of Women Canada, *Working Together: Supporting the Safety and Well-Being of Survivors and Families re: Proposed Federal Strategy Against Gender-Based Violence Engagement Plan.*
13. Faceless Dolls Speaking Engagement, Brockville, Ontario

Through attendance at these conferences, we have worked on developing more awareness of MMIWG, increasing our networks and contacts.

VPS Manager also participated and contributed to the following committees:

- National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls 2016
**(Sub-Committee: Canada-wide Awareness and Prevention Campaign on MMIWG)
- RCMP ongoing monthly meetings: 1 per month with NWAC President Dawn Harvard, NWAC Executive Director and Gail Gallagher, Senior Manager, VPS. RCMP staff includes: Dawn Metallic, Corporal - National Aboriginal Policing Services and Shirley Cuillierrier, Chief Superintendent, National Aboriginal Policing and Crime Prevention Services. The meetings were held to discuss our mutual files and our partnership.
- RCMP - NIOs Joint Meeting with the RCMP staff from the National Aboriginal Policing Services, Ottawa, Ontario
- Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking (OCEHT) monthly evening meetings
- Partnership Project with Carleton VAW Hub Project staff, Anna-Lee Straatman and Diana Majury.
- Globe & Mail Advisory Committee MMIWG
- CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees) - 'Rock the Public Service' fundraising concert that featured Sam Roberts and raised over \$12,000.00 for NWAC. Gail Gallagher sat on the planning committee for this concert and CUPE is discussing whether NWAC will be the recipient of this year's CUPE 2016 fundraising again.



Upcoming Committees:

- DAWN (DisAbled Women's Network) National Advisory Committee to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities/Deaf Women.
- CMHC-INAC Housing - INAC's Family Violence Prevention Program committee being formed in partnership between CMHC and INAC (with respect to the construction of five new emergency women's shelters on reserves).
- CUPE Child Care Roundtable, Ottawa Westin Hotel.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Database

Volunteer Danielle Aubrey continues to work on and add to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls database on a weekly basis. The VPS department gets frequent queries and requests for NWAC's MMIWG statistics and numbers.



Activating Social Change Through Awareness and New Tool Generation Project

The VPS team also developed the Facilitator's Toolkit for Phase II 'Activating Social Change Through Awareness and New Tool Generation Project'. This project was funded by the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and was a one year project which began Dec 2015 and ended March 2016, due to



late funds received from INAC. The main goal was to develop a Facilitator's Guide which will build on the 'You Are Not Alone' Toolkit. Currently, this toolkit is in the final approval stages before being sent for printing.

Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention (CDHPIVP)

In October 2015, the VPS Senior Manager became responsible for the Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention (CDHPIVP) Initiative with a Vulnerable Populations Partnership Agreement with Western University, London, Ontario. Natasha Lagarde, University of Ottawa Masters of Arts student, was hired as a Research Assistant to work with Gail Senior Manager, VPS on this project.

Natasha is working on developing a Domestic Homicide National Database: funded by SSHRC (2015-2020), a five-year project which recognizes that domestic homicide is a form of gender-based violence rooted in historical patterns of inequality, exclusion and discrimination. Currently, Natasha is at the stage of completing a grey literature review and annotated bibliography.

Carleton University Partnership

This past year, the VPS Manager hired a master's student who completed Phase II of the Carleton VAW Hub Project), NWAC database final report.

Proposals Written and Submitted for 2016-17 Funding

1. Indigenous Cyber Bullying Prevention & Awareness Project
2. Phase III Activating Social Change: Train the Trainer



Labour Market Development (LMD) -- Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) Annual Report

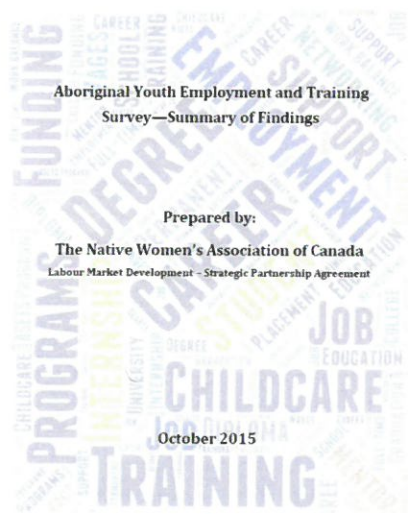
Prepared by: Beverly Blanchard – Senior Manager, Strategic Policy, Partnership and Planning

Although under the departmental umbrella of LMD, the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) is a separate unit that works closely with the ASETS program.

SPA supports labour market programming for Indigenous women by:

- Identifying barriers and opportunities to Indigenous women's participation in the labour market;
- Actively seeking out partnerships through networking at tradeshow and conferences;
- Participating and developing engagement sessions to ensure that the voice of Indigenous women is heard; and
- Developing policy and/or position papers to advance Indigenous women's priorities, needs, and knowledge of the labour market.

This past year, the SPA program provided funding for a two day ASETS Coordinator workshop in Winnipeg. We also provided funding for three ASETS Sub-agreement site visits by the LMD Outreach Coordinator.



In the area of research, in the fall of 2015 LMD-SPA finalized the youth employment and training survey report. In the spring 2016, we launched the Indigenous women employment and training survey. To date over 300 Indigenous women have responded to our call to participate in this survey.

The SPA program also contributed and where necessary participated in Board/Project Committee and AGAs.

LMD ASETS and SPA staff also attended some of the following tradeshow and conferences.

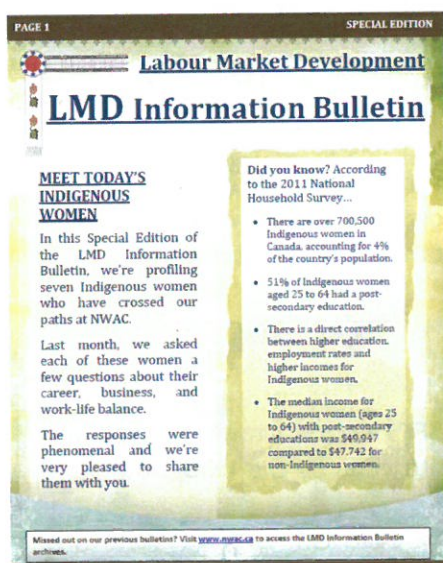
1. Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association (CAMA)
2. Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF) Symposium
3. CANDO
4. Circle of Philanthropy's All My Relations Gathering
5. NWAC's Indigenous Women's Business Entrepreneurship Network Conference (AWBEN)
6. Indigenous Financial Officers Association (AFOA)
7. Prospector and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC);
8. Northern Lights Festival and Tradeshow

Through attendance at these conferences, we have worked on the brokering of partnerships, and have increased the number of companies and organizations in our database to over 200.

LMD-SPA staff also participated and contributed to the following committees:



- Mining Information Human Resource (MiHR) Council Gender and Immigration Committee
- MiHR Indigenous Validation Study
- CAF's Promising Practices for Indigenous Apprentices
- PDAC's Deliberate Dialogue on Women and Mining

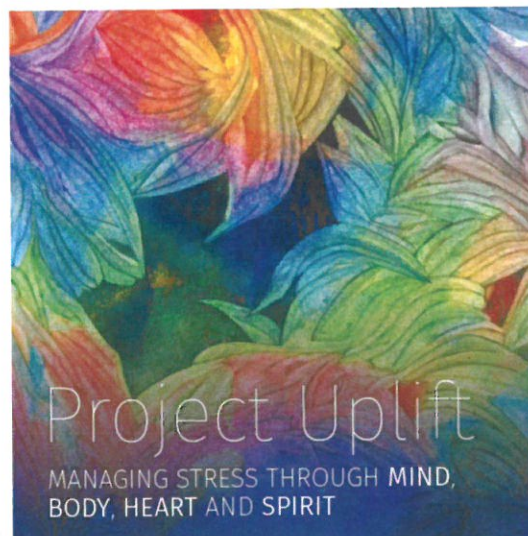


Labour Market Development (LMD) Information Bulletin

We continued to develop and distribute the LMD Information Bulletin on a quarterly basis. This year we added a Special Edition Bulletin in which we showcased 7 Indigenous women. This newsletter is distributed to PTMAs, government and private sector partners.

Project Uplift

The SPA team also designed and delivered Project Uplift. This project was funded by the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and provides Indigenous women with techniques for managing stress. A total of 7 workshops were delivered to Indigenous women.



Environment

In February of this year, the LMD-SPA team also became responsible for an environment project. The purpose of the survey was to gain an understanding of the issues Aboriginal women face with respect to the use of traditional knowledge and to seek their views and input on best practices and mechanisms relating to accessing and utilizing genetic resources and traditional knowledge. The method of delivery was through face-to-face and telephone interviews, email and on-line through fluid survey. The research employed the snowball technique by requesting contact with additional Aboriginal women within their circles who could be interviewed. Additional contacts were reached through social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. The report was completed and submitted to Environment and Climate Change Canada in April 2016.

Proposals Written and Submitted for 2016-17 Funding

1. Phase Two-Project Uplift Train the Trainer Toolkit
2. Improving Indigenous Women's Decision-making in Economic Development Projects
3. Extending the Dialogue-Indigenous Women and the Mining Sector
4. Interactive Entrepreneurship Toolkit
5. Indigenous Youth and Economic Literacy



6. Nation-Building: Rebuilding Our Vision and Our Voice
7. The Voice of Indigenous Women and the New Accessibility Legislation

Upcoming Priorities - SPA

The SPA team will continue identify and seek out opportunities to improve Indigenous women's well-being and employment/training opportunities.

Labour Market Development (LMD) – Aboriginal Skills Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) Annual Report

Prepared by: Dan Peters – Senior Operations Director

NWAC's ASETS had an exceptional year both at Head Office and at the Sub-Agreement level. ASETS works within the 3 pillars that ESDC has set out.

- Accountability and results
- Demand Driven Skills; and
- Partnerships

This past year, ASETS provided support to 253 clients with the following results:

- Employed - 121
- Returned to school - 44
- Unemployed but available for work – 14
- No longer in the workforce – 5

It should be noted that of the 253 clients not all of them completed in the 2015/2016 fiscal year, and many are set to complete in the 2016/2017 fiscal year.



NWAC continues to use the Spirit of Cooperation (SOC) document which is in the same format as and operates identically to an MOU. In the 2015/2016 fiscal year, NWAC held 12 SOC's and 5 MOU's with employers, sector councils, and education and training institutes. It should be noted that there was a substantial increase in sub-agreement partnerships which helped NWAC deliver more skills training opportunities to Indigenous women with the limited budget most PTMA's have.



Communication was the key to NWAC's ASETS success with in person and teleconference engagement with National Coordinators which helped address and improve the client cycle from receiving the client application to client intake to final follow up for results entry.

NWAC also spent its entire budget with extremely strong partnerships and client interventions on in-demand occupations. New Gold is an example of an excellent partnership that garnered 7 Indigenous women employment with a starting wage of \$45,000 - \$55,000/year in an area where unemployment was extremely high.

Aboriginal Women's Business Entrepreneurship Network (AWBEN)

AWBEN has been successful in fulfilling our mandate to Inspire, Educate and Empower women.

Inspire

- Inspirational videos of Aboriginal women entrepreneurs sharing their advice on core business skills,
- Aboriginal women entrepreneur speakers,
- Showcasing AWBEN network businesses (e.g. AWBEN grant winners) on social media.

Educate

- AWBEN Mentee/Mentor circles,
- AWBEN Boot Camp for 11 women from 5 regions within Canada,
- AWBEN 3rd annual Conference with 65 participants learning from experts on the following topics: how to finance a business, working with a mentor, the importance of work-life balance and tools to achieve it, how to market and brand a business, lesson learned from established indigenous women entrepreneurs,
- 15 videos produced on core business and entrepreneurship skills launched on the NWAC website as a resource,
- Hosting of a 1-800 Hotline to address entrepreneurship questions and creation of a Frequently Asked Questions online resource.

Empower

- Giving Aboriginal women entrepreneurs a space to vocalize their business dreams,
- Giving Aboriginal women the tools to achieve their business goals,
- Giving Aboriginal women encouragement via social media.





AWBEN's success was also made possible with the additional stream of the Centre for Social Innovation and Acceleration (CSIA) project. This enabled NWAC to set social enterprise and innovation as a foundation that will make AWBEN and the Indigenous women entrepreneurs poised for success. The deliverables of the project will allow NWAC to move forward in 2016/2017 with a network of experienced social entrepreneurs to find ways to support Indigenous women entrepreneurs and also find ways for sustainable growth.



NWAC Pathways PEKE (Pathways Partner for Engagement & Knowledge Exchange)

Prepared by: Amy J. Nahwegahbow, Senior Project Manager

NWAC is currently funded as a Partner for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange (PEKE) by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) under the Pathways to Health Equity for Aboriginal Peoples Initiative to engage in health research in four priority areas: suicide prevention, tuberculosis, diabetes/obesity, and oral health. The NWAC PEKE will operate until 2019.

The vision of the NWAC PEKE is to improve the health and well-being of Aboriginal women, families, and communities through health research, knowledge exchange, and action. The NWAC PEKE collaborates with research teams, community members and academic researchers to incorporate Aboriginal ways of knowing. We also help facilitate a gendered perspective and analysis in their research project to ensure equitable results in improving health conditions for both genders. The objectives are to:

- 1) Promote gender equality and empower Aboriginal women to participate in health research.
- 2) Link and facilitate interactions between the Implementation Research Teams and the Research and Training Chairs with Aboriginal communities, policy makers and partners.
- 3) Facilitate the scale-up of interventions across communities and translating the findings into policies and improved health.



NWAC PEKE Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee provides advice and guidance on the development and implementation of work-related activities of the NWAC PEKE. The Committee is made up of Aboriginal health professionals, community representatives, women, youth, and Elders. It also includes representatives from our partnering organizations including the Indigenous Peoples' Assembly of Canada (IPAC), the Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association (CINA), and the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association (NADA). Throughout the year, the NWAC PEKE Advisory Committee has provided valuable input on activities such as an environmental scan of priority partnerships; health factsheets; branding; needs assessment on the health research priorities of Aboriginal women; issue paper on gender and race based inequities and Aboriginal women's health; and the Communications and Knowledge Translation Plans.



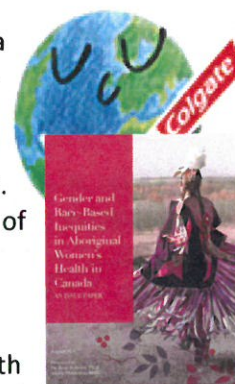
Back Row (left to right): Wanda Gabriel, Erica Hurley, Mariah Abbotssaway, Chenise Hache, Brenda Simon, Audrey Marshall, Ada Roberts, Jim Devoe, Patricia Boutilier.
Front Row (left to right): Amy Nahwegahbow, Marina Bailey, Tim Yearington, Marilyn Francis, Tania Dick, Kari-Dawn Wuttunee.

Institutional Eligibility for the Administration of CIHR Grant and Award Funds

In March 2016, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) granted institutional eligibility for the administration of grant and awards funds to the NWAC. NWAC is now able to apply directly for CIHR health research funding opportunities and hold research grant and award funds. This is an important step in facilitating community-driven health research. With this new designation, Aboriginal communities can collaborate with NWAC to engage in Aboriginal women's health research that is of interest and a priority to them.

Partnerships

The NWAC PEKE has been working with Colgate-Palmolive Inc. to establish a relationship and partnership. We have helped facilitate connections between Colgate-Palmolive, Health Authorities, and other community organizations, to donate and disseminate tooth-brushes and oral health resources to help raise awareness and promote oral health among Aboriginal families, mothers and children across Canada. We will be seeking additional partnerships that support the goals and objectives of Pathways and the NWAC PEKE.



Resources

The NWAC PEKE recently completed an issue paper on Gender and Race-Based Health Inequities and Aboriginal Women. This paper examines the historical, cultural, and social factors contributing to the health inequities experienced by Indigenous women in Canada. We have also developed four fact sheets in collaboration with research team and Aboriginal experts on mental health, tuberculosis, diabetes/obesity, and oral health to educate and raise awareness of the gender differences in health. The fact sheets are accessible online in both official languages.





Funding Proposals Submitted

As an eligible institution for CIHR research funds, the NWAC PEKE, in partnership with Indigenous health researchers and community members, has submitted a funding proposal to develop a culturally safe and appropriate care model to reduce caregiver stress and build caregiver capacity in the area of dementia in Indigenous communities.

Additionally, we submitted a Letter of Intent to the Public Health Agency of Canada for their HIV Hep C Community Action Fund. Our proposed project, in partnership with Correctional Service Canada and Indigenous health experts, would address the high rates of HIV and HCV infection, and other STBBIs among Indigenous women living in federal women's institutions across Canada. The project will identify and reduce the barriers to accessing existing resources, community supports, services, and health care, and create culturally competent gender specific resources and supports to supplement existing services when needed. We also submitted a proposal to a CIHR funding call to host a learning circle with Aboriginal women in federal institutions to establish partnerships.

Upcoming Priorities 2016-17

The NWAC PEKE will be developing a series of webinars on ethical conduct for health research with Aboriginal communities. These webinars will promote respectful and meaningful engagement between researchers and communities while promoting community-based research protocols, Aboriginal ways of knowing, and community self-determination over research.

We will also be creating a database of health researchers, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who engage in health research with Aboriginal populations in Canada. This database will help facilitate linkages between researchers and communities to support community-driven research priorities. As a requirement to maintain institutional eligibility to administer grant and awards funds, the NWAC PEKE will be seeking feedback and approval on an NWAC Research Ethics Policy and Research Application Process. In 2017, the NWAC PEKE will be hosting the 3rd CIHR Pathways Annual Gathering. Although the location has yet to be approved, we are proposing to hold the event in Whitehorse, Yukon.

