

# *We Are All Connected*

## Aurora College's Reconciliation Journey



### Aurora College's Circle of Knowledge Holders' Thematic Summary Report

©Indigenous Consulting Services Inc., 2019

# Table of Contents

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS..... 1**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... 2**

**TERMINOLOGY..... 3**

**INTRODUCTION..... 4**

**PART 1: TRUTH BEFORE RECONCILIATION ..... 6**

**PART 2: INAUGURAL MEETING OUTCOMES ..... 9**

**PART 3: OUR REFLECTIONS.....18**

**PART 4: THE CIRCLE OF KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS' 10-YEAR VISION .....20**

**PART 5: CONCLUSION AND HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.....22**

**PART 6: MEET THE CIRCLE OF KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS.....24**

**APPENDIX A: INDIGENOUS EDUCATION PROTOCOL FOR COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES.....31**

**APPENDIX B: DELIVERABLES PRODUCED THROUGH THE PROJECT .....32**

**APPENDIX C: GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS .....33**

**REFERENCES.....40**

## Acknowledgements

The Circle of Knowledge Holders, the contributors of this project, acknowledge that Aurora College's three campuses, twenty-one Community Learning Centres, and other educational sites sit on the traditional territories of northern Indigenous nations who have resided here since Time Immemorial.<sup>1</sup>

Akaiicho Territory spans the southeastern Northwest Territories (NWT). In Thebacha (Fort Smith), the Office of the President, the Thebacha Campus, and the South Slave Research Centre sit on *Treaty 8* Territory (1899, with an adhesion in 1900), which is home to the Salt River First Nation, Smith Landing First Nation, and Northwest Territory Métis Nation.<sup>2</sup>

In Deníu Kúé (Fort Resolution), the Community Learning Centre sits on the traditional land of the Deníu Kúé First Nation and Métis Local peoples. Łutselk'e, home of the Dënesųłíné, also has a Community Learning Centre. The Fort Simpson Learning Centre sits on the traditional land of the Łíídłı Kúé go'ine people. Learning Centres in Ndilø and Tèzehda (Dettah) sit on Yellowknives Dene First Nation traditional territory. The North Slave Campus in Somba K'e (Yellowknife) sits on the traditional territory of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and is the home of the North Slave Métis Alliance. These are all *Treaty 8* communities, although Ndilø, Dettah, and Yellowknife are geographically situated within Treaty 11 boundaries. In 2000, the Akaiicho Territory Dene First Nations, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), and the Government of Canada completed the *Akaiicho Territory Dene First Nations Framework*.<sup>3</sup>

The Community Learning Centre in Zhahti Kúé (Fort Providence) sits on the traditional lands of the Deh Gah Gotie Dene and Fort Providence Métis Nation. Learning Centres in Xát'odehchee (Hay River) are on the traditional territory of the Kátłodeeche First Nation, lands which are also home to Métis people. Centres in Echaot'ıe Kúé (Fort Liard) sit on the traditional land of the Acho Dene First Nation.<sup>4</sup> Signatories to *Treaty 11* (1921, with an adhesion in 1922), these nations revisited their inherent rights in 2001.<sup>5</sup>

Community Learning Centres are located in the Tıçhø communities of Behchokø, Whatı, Wekweètı, and Gahmıti (Gamèti). Tıçhø peoples signed Treaty 11 and the *Tıçhø Land Claim and Self Government Agreement* in 2003.<sup>6</sup>

Aurora College Community Learning Centres also sit on traditional Indigenous and *Treaty 11* lands in Thtenáágó (Norman Wells), Tulıt'a, Délıné, and Rádeyılıkóé (Fort Good Hope). The *Sahtú Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* came into effect in 1993 and individual communities are currently pursuing self-government agreements.<sup>7</sup> Délıné was the first community to finalize self-governance in 2015 with the *Délıné Final Self-Government Agreement*.<sup>8</sup>

Inuvik's Aurora Campus and Aurora Research Institute sit on the traditional territories of the Dinjii Zhuh (Gwich'in) and Inuvialuit nations. In 1921, Dinjii Zhuh people entered into *Treaty 11* with the Crown although their Inuvialuit neighbours refused to consent to the same agreement.<sup>9</sup> Community Learning Centres in Tsiigehtshik (Tsiigehtchic) and Teet'ıt

Zheh (Fort McPherson) sit on Teet'it and Gwichyà Gwich'in homelands. The Gwich'in Tribal Council was created in communities in 1992 to implement the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement*.<sup>10</sup> The Learning Centre in Akłarvik (Aklavik) sits on shared Ehdiiat Gwich'in and Inuvialuit traditional territories. Learning Centres in Tuktuuyaqtuuq (Tuktoyaktuk) and Ulukhaktok are in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. The *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* was signed in 1984 and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, located in Inuvik, implements this agreement.<sup>11</sup>

Aurora College acknowledges that some northern Indigenous nations have been forcibly removed from their ancestral lands during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, notably due to residential schooling policies, new methods of resource management, the creation of new 'settlements,' and the emergence of the capitalist economy. Aurora College management and staff are grateful to be welcomed as northerners and guests of your cultures.

Aurora College is grateful for the expertise on modern and historical treaties outlined, in part, above provided by GNWT, Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs.

Former Aurora College President, Jane Arychuk, was the Executive Project Sponsor for the Circle of Knowledge Holders and worked closely with the contributors. Bonita Nowell is the Northern Basic Adult Education (NABE) Program Manager and also served as the Project Manager for the Circle of Knowledge Holders. Bonita was a foundational leader in finding locating and developing this important project.

## Terminology

As there are diverse interpretations of Indigenous terminology, it was important to include a common understanding for the project.

The term Aboriginal, sanctioned by the Government of Canada in the 1982 *Constitution Act* reflects the administrative categories of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.<sup>12</sup> Indigenous Studies scholar Chris Andersen is critical of these designations and explains that their use alienates Indigenous collective self-awareness and legitimizes state intervention into the lives of Indigenous peoples.<sup>13</sup> Within the scholarly literature, it has become common practice in Canada to use "Indigenous" when referring to the first peoples of this land. This summary uses "Indigenous peoples," which is capitalized and pluralized to acknowledge the differences between the many, many Indigenous nations internationally, as well as their self-determination and sovereignty. Where possible, local, self-identifying names of cultural groups are used.<sup>14</sup> Indigenous readers know that the politics of recognition run far deeper than what is depicted here.

## Introduction

Central to Aurora College's educational mandate and philosophy is student success. Indeed, this is reflected in the College's current mission statement.

*Aurora College is focused on student success and is committed to supporting the development of our Northern society through excellence in training, education and research that is culturally sensitive and responsive to the people we serve.*

This commitment is reflected in Aurora College's andragogical approaches, its programming, and how College staff interact with students, either inside or outside the classroom.

This document reflects preliminary conversations that Aurora College management initiated with its partners: the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), the Gwich'in Tribal Council, Yukon College, Dene Nahjo, the Northwest Territory Métis Nation, and others. Central to these conversations was the question of how to better serve post-secondary students in the NWT and how to incorporate Indigenous knowledge institutionally and practically, in a good way. A working group was formed that included a wide variety of Aurora College staff and other interested parties mentioned above. This group is now known as the Circle of Knowledge Holders. During a series of two separate meetings, in Whitehorse and Fort Smith, Knowledge Holders asked hard questions, had in-depth conversations, and held their peers accountable on various topics related to reconciliation and indigenization.

Projects of indigenization have been at the forefront of public and institutional conversations in Canada, particularly since the launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) in 2008. Indeed, there is good work being undertaken nationwide. The Circle of Knowledge Holders approached this conversation with critical thought and careful consideration. Some of the questions that Knowledge Holders continue to ask include:

*What is 'indigenization'? What do we think it is? How can we best collaborate with all Indigenous nations in the NWT? What kind of long-term impact will indigenization have? Since Aurora College is a part of the territorial government, is indigenization possible?*

This document does not seek to provide answers, but rather to initiate a conversation about post-secondary education in the NWT, the role of Indigenous peoples and their cultures, and how the College can make changes, in a good way, that honour our ancestors, our students, and future generations of northerners.

Graphic Facilitator, Sam Bradd, documented the Knowledge Holders' ideas in a series of pictorial representations, demonstrating the hard work, reflections, and intense discussions that were held during the Whitehorse meetings. Readers will find these images throughout the document and then in Appendix C.

Aurora College's Northern Basic Adult Education (NABE) Program is the primary funding body of this initiative and supported the Circle of Knowledge Holders' meetings as well as the production of this document. NABE is a tri-territorial program funded by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and designed to improve access to basic skills upgrades. Fundamental to NABE's strategy and work plan is directly related to the work undertaken by the Circle of Knowledge Holders:

- Ensure the use of holistic, culturally appropriate Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE) curriculum and resources
- Provide the supports that students need to succeed
- Provide the supports that Adult Educators need to succeed
- Provide the program management and governance that supports the ALBE System needs for success
- Enhance partnerships to ensure the success and sustainability of NABE Program
- Maintain a pan-territorial approach to ensure continued collaboration
- Implement rigorous accountability and evaluation practices to ensure program success and sustainability<sup>15</sup>

Aurora College's desire to improve student services and better reflect Indigenous cultures and pedagogies are fundamentally connected. College staff felt privileged to learn from Knowledge Holders and be included in this work. Reflected in this document are the first steps that the College has taken to better serve our students and the North more broadly.

Appendix B provides a list of all eighteen project deliverables including this thematic summary report, *We Are All Connected*. Seventeen of these items are new resources for the College. This work will be used in the future to support and promote the development of an indigenization plan for Aurora College.

Since the Circle of Knowledge Holders' meetings, the *Aurora College Foundational Review* has been tabled in the Legislative Assembly, which outlined a number of landmark recommendations.<sup>16</sup> Northerners are currently engaged in important discussions about post-secondary education in the NWT and Aurora College looks forward to being a part of these conversations, particularly as our management and staff consider new ways to better serve the needs of northerners and re-imagine our relationships with Indigenous philosophies, pedagogies, and methodologies.

## Part 1: Truth Before Reconciliation

This section provides a brief history of the College and Adult Education in the NWT. As Aurora College moves forward in its reconciliation journey, it is important to reflect on past policies and practices.

### A Brief History of Aurora College and Adult Education in the North

Since Time Immemorial, there have been incredibly diverse and sophisticated Indigenous societies in what is now the NWT. Education was not parceled into age-related categories, but was a life-long pursuit often delivered according to age, social setting, need, and personality. Oral histories and knowledge were especially important since they connected people to the earliest days of the land, while underscoring the significance of human-spirit-environmental relationships.<sup>17</sup> Indigenous parents and caregivers prioritized participation over verbal explanations and valued a high engagement with and interconnectedness to the land. Central to Indigenous cultures in the North was the idea that *we are all connected*. Recognizing that our relationships with the land, the spiritual world, animals, and neighbouring Indigenous nations were significant, our ancestors lived according to Indigenous laws that united us all.

As a result of Canadian colonial policies and missionization strategies, the first residential school opened north of the sixtieth parallel in 1867. The Grey Nuns of Montréal established Sacred Heart Indian Residential School in Fort Providence. More than two decades passed before the Anglican residential school in Hay River, St. Peter's, opened and St. Joseph's Indian Residential School in Fort Resolution followed in 1903. These early schools profoundly touched the lives of northern Indigenous children. Although northern families were interested in having their children educated according to western customs, they could not foresee the dangerous colonial policies that sought to dismantle Indigenous families, customs, and economies.

Over the next six decades, despite their concerns and protests, Indigenous northerners witnessed an expanding network of Indian Residential Schools, large and small hostels, and receiving and group homes. Church-managed, government-owned institutions opened across the North, from Inuvik to Iqaluit to Yellowknife. Over many decades, generations of children were removed from their families and some travelled thousands of kilometers to attend state schooling. Sometimes, although uncommon, Indigenous families found ways around the *Indian Act*, the *Family Allowance Act*, and the *NWT School Ordinance* (all of which demanded mandatory student attendance) and kept their children at home for an Indigenous upbringing.<sup>18</sup> The majority of children, however, attended some form of residential schooling until at least the third quarter of the twentieth century, when a massive campaign to open territorial day schools was initiated. Remarkably, student testimonies and narratives focus on the uplifting experiences. Although residential school policies were designed to fracture families, Indigenous children were ingenious in finding coping mechanisms that allowed them a sense of unity. Sharing a bed with an older sister, speaking Indigenous languages in secret, and forming lifelong friendships comprise a few positive memories for students when they were separated from their families, customs, and ancestral lands.

Adult education in northern communities followed a similar trajectory as day and residential schools, although notably less invasive. Education programs were designed to assimilate Indigenous northerners, remove them from land-based economies, and prepare them for a growing capitalistic economy in the NWT. By the late 1950s, adults as old as twenty-two or twenty-three sometimes resided at Grollier, Stringer, and Akaitcho Halls to upgrade their skills or learn vocational crafts and trades. As adult education campaigns grew and expanded to more communities, community adult education centres were constructed. As such, some Indigenous northerners remained close to their families while they underwent training, but the intent among educators remained the same: to assimilate Indigenous northerners in the burgeoning Canadian capitalistic economy.

Until 1969, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) had controlled schooling in the NWT since 1955, with minimal input from the NWT Council.<sup>19</sup> By 1969, however, the power over schooling shifted to the territorial government. In 1974, the GNWT sought to further develop adult education programs and contracted Frontier College. Aurora College today is linked to the creation of a Heavy Equipment Operator course in 1968 at Fox Holes, in the Fort Smith region. A year later, the Adult Vocational Training Centre (AVTC) opened in Fort Smith and the course at Fox Holes was relocated there. During the 1970s, the AVTC enjoyed considerable success with its student graduation rates and the variety of courses it offered.<sup>20</sup>

During the 1960s and 1970s, Indigenous northerners asserted their sovereign rights as in a variety of different ways. By 1966, the federal government undertook a review of the North's political development, with the central aim of dividing the NWT into two separate political entities, the NWT and the proposed territory of Nunavut.<sup>21</sup> The federal government appointed the Advisory Commission on the Development of the Government in the NWT, led by Alfred Carrothers, Dean of Law at the University of Western Ontario. The Commission travelled to various northern communities for public hearings, while reviewing current governance structures, recommending political, economic, and social changes that supported development, and observing Indigenous ways of life.<sup>22</sup> The Commission afforded Indigenous northerners the opportunity to speak publically in a national context. "Agitating for some say in their destiny," residents emphasized the importance of local autonomy in decisions related to schooling.<sup>23</sup>

The public hearings of the Berger Inquiry in 1975 and 1976 were perceived by territorial government's Department of Education as "the last opportunity to offer Dene and Inuit an alternative in terms of the influence and control they have the right to expect over their lives generally, and the education of their children, in particular."<sup>24</sup> Commissioned by the Liberal Government under the direction of Pierre Elliott Trudeau (with Jean Chrétien at DIAND's helm), the inquiry investigated the potential ramifications of the construction of a pipeline in the Mackenzie Valley. Public hearings provided critical spaces for parents and community members to unite and share ideas about how their relationships, economies, and lifestyles would be drastically altered should the pipeline be approved. In Lac La Martre, Isadore Zoe proclaimed,

Education departments, such as the big high people in education departments, will not let us Dene people control our own education in our own community. In the past all our children have learned in school is cutting up the papers and looking at the



movies. And we would like to have control of this education in Lac La Marte in order to show them what is best for them. We would like them being taught in two ways, from our generation like which the White people have learned in school and also in the Dene ways of life.<sup>25</sup>

Gwichyà Gwich'in parent Nap Norbert of Tsiigehtchic called the system in Inuvik “a rotten education system,” underscoring something that many had long suspected: “The young people are caught in between two cultures, their ancestor’s way of life or technical ways of a white man. Which way do they do go?”<sup>26</sup> Although Indigenous-state relations appeared fractured, Indigenous northerners united during this time of uncertainty.

In 1980, responding to widespread public discontent on issues related to schooling, the Legislative Assembly established the Special Committee on Education. NWT Commissioner Stuart Hodgson appointed this committee to examine northern education and redefine the main objectives to better reflect the wishes of northerners.<sup>27</sup> The Committee was comprised of NWT Council Members Lena Pedersen, the first woman elected to the Council, Dr. Louis-Edmond Hamelin, Bryan Pearson, and James Rabesca.<sup>28</sup> Holding forty-three public hearings in thirty-four northern communities and hearing the testimony of more than 1500 people, they found “widespread frustration, dissatisfaction and disappointment with a system fundamentally assimilationist.”<sup>29</sup> Again, northerners demonstrated that they were “connected” by their shared frustration with the educational system. The result of their labour and critical feedback was the publication of *Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories*.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, the Executive Council of the GNWT approved policy changes that allowed AVTC in Fort Smith to become a college.<sup>31</sup>

This was an exciting new direction for post-secondary education in the NWT. In 1986, territorial legislation allowed for the creation of Arctic College: campuses now included Fort Smith, Cambridge Bay, and Iqaluit. Over the next decade, additional Arctic College campuses opened in Yellowknife, Inuvik, and Rankin Inlet. At the same time, local Community Learning Centres were beginning to dot the North.

Although the Carrothers’ Commission thirty years earlier had decided that the NWT should remain geographically intact according to the *Northwest Territories Act* of 1905, the political climate during the 1990s shifted. Anticipating a territorial division, the GNWT created two different college systems to serve both the Eastern and Western Arctic. Arctic College facilitated post-secondary development for Inuit and settler Canadians in the east and Aurora College focused its efforts on the considerable population of Dene, Métis, Dinjii Zhuh, Inuvialuit, and non-Indigenous students in the west. Meanwhile, Grollier Hall remained open until 1996.

Despite this division, and the subsequent entry of Nunavut into Confederation, northerners have always demonstrated their tendency to relate to each other; their desire to be hospitable and friendly peoples; their connectedness with each other, no matter how tenuous conditions may be or how far geography appears to decide us.

## Part 2: Inaugural Meeting Outcomes

This section provides a summary from four presenters on reconciliation and indigenization along with emerging themes that were captured during and after each presentation. The presentations guided the group and helped connect Knowledge Holders with academic theories, lived experiences, and provocative insights.

- Former President Jane Arychuk, “A President’s Journey”
- Tosh Southwick, “Reconciliation and the Yukon College Experience”
- Sarah Rosolen, “Indigenizing: Some Initiatives Happening in Post-Secondary Institutions Across the Country”
- Dr. Angela James, “Shaping Influences of ‘A Capable Person’”

### Ms. Jane Arychuk, the Former President’s Perspective and Key Points

The former President opened the meeting with a heartfelt presentation that outlined her contributions to education in the NWT over the last thirty-five years. After working as a teacher and then principal in Fort Providence, the former President continued her career in Ndilo and later completed a Master’s degree. She began a new position at Aurora College in 2002 as the Campus Director, Yellowknife North Slave Campus and came to the College with the following questions:

- Is the College honouring the identities and diversities of students?
- Is the College reflecting the cultural values and beliefs of students in our programs?
- Is the College involving students in experiences that are engaging them in the learning process?
- Is the College providing the needed supports for students to be successful?

The former President stated that there are currently twenty more questions that need to be added to this list. Some of these touched on:

- Reflection of ongoing changing values
- Development of a new mission statement
- Further implementation of Indigenous Education Protocol for College and Institutes<sup>32</sup>
- Grappling with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s *94 Calls to Action*, particularly nos. 11, 16, 62, and 65, which state

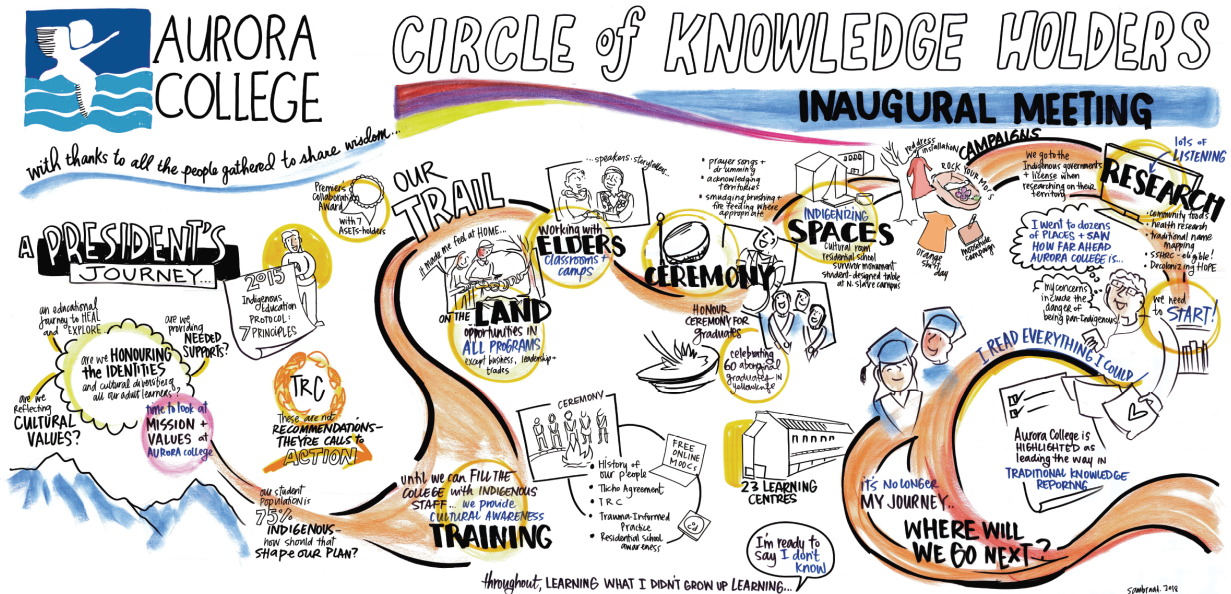
11. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.

16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.

62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

- i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
- iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
- iv. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.

65. We call upon the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.<sup>33</sup>



The former President highlighted the valuable work that Aurora College has previously undertaken. These projects included: adding Indigenous media to library collections; offering courses on Indigenous history; facilitating on-the-land camps; featuring NABE success stories; hosting Indigenous visitors on campuses; offering residential school awareness sessions for staff; implementing ceremonial protocols into events; supporting a celebration for Indigenous graduates at the Yellowknife/North Slave campus; creating

Indigenous spaces on campuses; and participating in national Indigenous events. According to the former President, Aurora College has been at the forefront of incorporating Indigenous practices, on-the-land curriculum, and culturally sensitive practices at an institutional level for several years.<sup>34</sup>

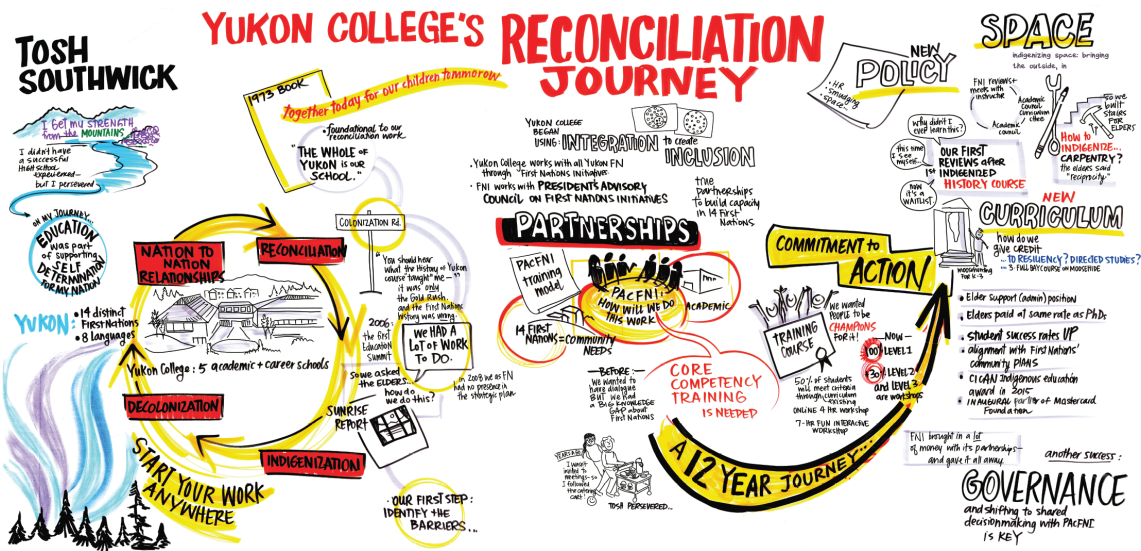
Despite these successes, the former President felt that Aurora College was not working within its full potential to create equal opportunities for all of its students. This was supported by a workplace assessment in January 2017 that recommended increased efforts around indigenization.<sup>35</sup>

### **Ms. Tosh Southwick, “Yukon College’s Journey”**

From Kluane country, Ms. Southwick emphasized the importance of family, her relationship with the land (the strength she derives from the mountains, specifically), and the challenges that Indigenous northerners endure when seeking higher education. After obtaining her post-secondary education while raising a young family, she joined Yukon College in 2008 as the Director of First Nation Initiatives.

Ms. Southwick emphasized that settler Canadians are a fundamental part of efforts around reconciliation. Citing the foundational 1973 document *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*, she explained how all children – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – will benefit from blossoming partnerships and elevated conversations about education in our communities.<sup>36</sup>

Ms. Southwick delved into Yukon College’s experiences around reconciliation and indigenization: how they began, what they prioritized, and what they have achieved. Seeking the voices of Elders, staff travelled to Yukon communities and consulted on various questions, such as the size of the College, how they can better serve Indigenous students, and how to gravitate to models of inclusion.<sup>37</sup> Further steps included hosting an education summit, establishing the First Nations Initiatives Department and the President’s Advisory Council on First Nation Initiatives, incorporating Indigenous recommendations into Yukon College’s Strategic Plan, and implementing a new training model for staff and students. For Ms. Southwick and Yukon College management, a “model of true partnership” was key to their success.

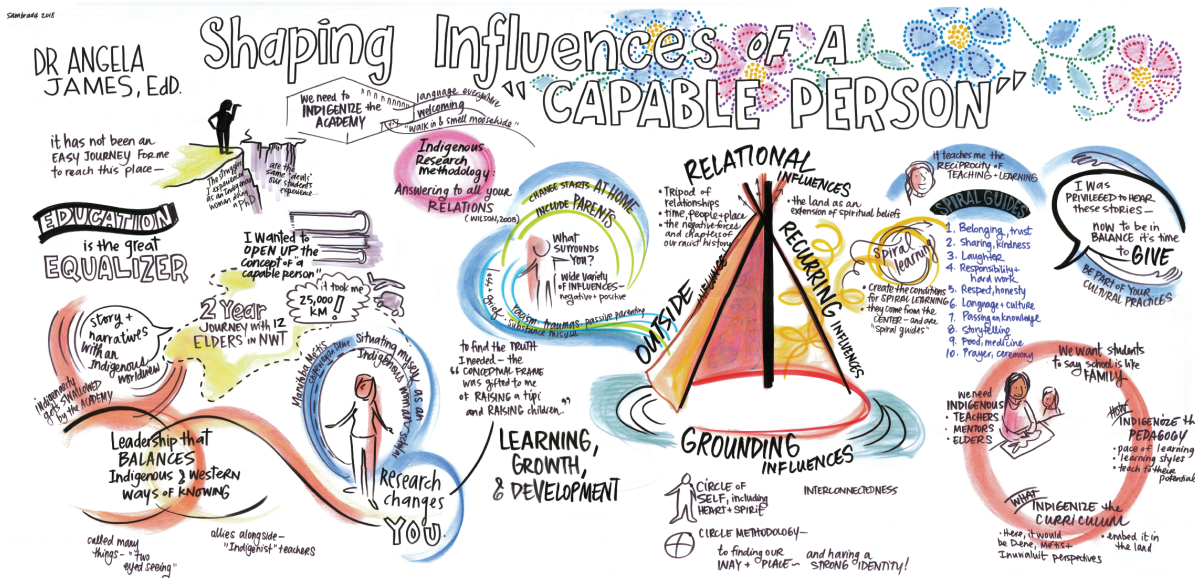


“Education has gotten us unto this mess, and education will get us out.”

– Hon. Senator Murray Sinclair

## Dr. Angela James, “The Shaping Influences of ‘A Capable Person’: A Narrative Research of Elders’ Stories of Raising Children to Inform Aboriginal Education in the Northwest Territories”

Dr. James began her presentation with a ceremony based on cyclical approaches to teaching and learning. Through the use of tobacco and personal relationships with the land, she explained, “when you take, you have to give back again.”



Based on her doctoral research, Dr. James shared her process of attempting to combine Indigenous and western concepts into “the capable person.” Incorporating understandings around the spiral aspect of learning, she noted ten different spiritual guides that Elders use;

a few included using our languages, acting with respect and honesty, and transmitting cultural knowledge.

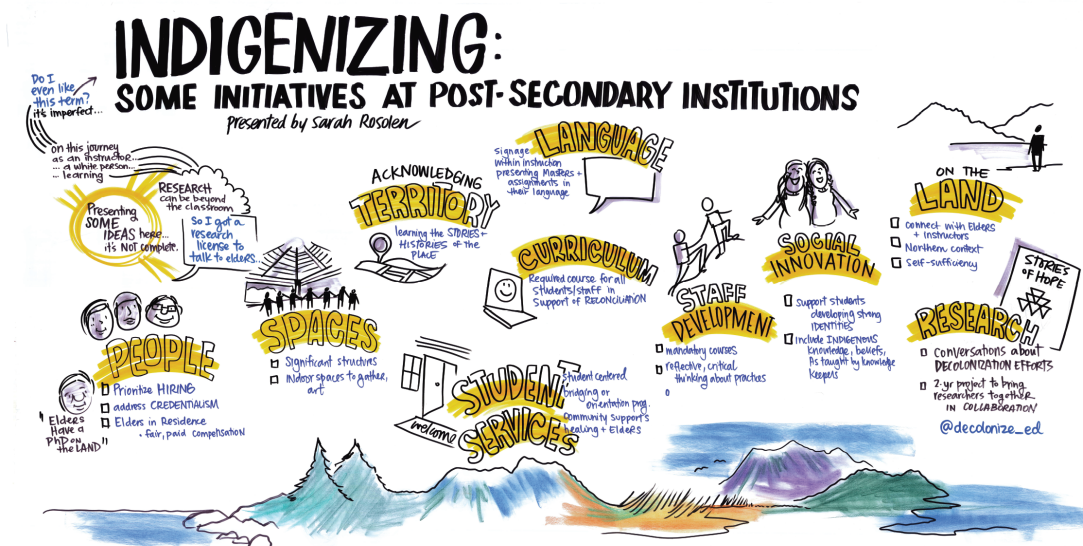
Dr. James highlighted other key points for Knowledge Holders that were relevant to Aurora College’s journey to reconciliation. Incorporating Indigenous knowledge into everyday practices, indigenizing post-secondary learning institutions with sensory tools, critically analyzing existing curriculum and andragogy, and expanding formal learning environments to the land are critical to this project.

### Ms. Sarah Rosolen, “Post-Secondary Institutions’ Journeys”

Ms. Rosolen, the College’s Manager of the South Slave Research Centre, shared her experience as a non-Indigenous woman originally from Ottawa. Now deeply committed to reconciliation, she noted that learning about systemic racism and the inequities that Indigenous people continue to experience was challenging: “It was the hardest course to confront my own perceptions. I love that it is still continuing, we’re not always doing it right, but I do take input and listen and try.” Ms. Rosolen emphasized that for newcomers to the North, learning is an ongoing exercise; sometimes people will make mistakes, but welcoming input and listening are key tools on the journey of reconciliation.

Ms. Rosolen researched the ways in which other institutions are supporting Indigenous learners, making learning centres more welcoming, and addressing the TRC’s 94 Calls to Action.<sup>38</sup> Sarah discussed a number of different and innovative ideas, some of which included:

- Hiring Indigenous teachers and Elders in classrooms and residences
- Reassessing academic credentials and qualifications, particularly when hiring Elders
- Revising spaces to include Indigenous art, medicine gardens, culture rooms, etc.
- Implementing mandatory curriculum for Indigenous Studies
- Reforming staff and management training practices
- Encouraging new research through Tri-Council funding (e.g. *Stories of Hope*<sup>39</sup>)

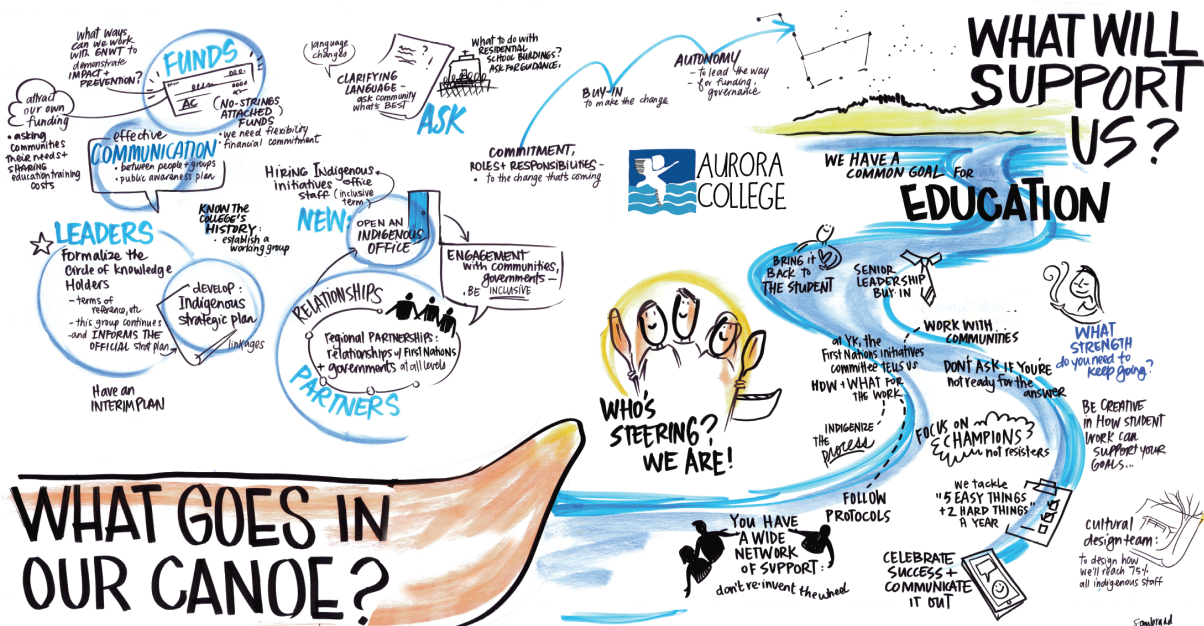


## Emerging Themes

Throughout the four presentations and the dialogue that followed, a number of emerging themes became evident. The text below summarizes the development and rationale of the Knowledge Holders' most innovative and important themes.

### A River Journey

In her presentation, Tosh Southwick compared Yukon College's experiences and accomplishments to the idea of a "river journey." Acknowledging the twists and turns of the river, as well as the barriers and challenges that will come along the way, Aurora College is ready to begin its own river journey. The Knowledge Holders agreed that a river was a suitable metaphor for Aurora College's path to indigenization. As such, they worked to "load the canoe" with the appropriate tools needed for this long and complicated project.



### Formalizing the Circle of Knowledge Holders

There was unanimous agreement on formalizing a body of knowledge holders that will guide Aurora College in this process of indigenization and establish a Terms of Reference document.<sup>40</sup> Based on structures of Indigenous governance, a regionally representation of Indigenous northerners will comprise the majority of this group. Knowledge Holders suggested this be called the "President's Indigenous Advisory Group." Given the absence of organized Métis and Inuit nations in the Yukon, Yukon College's Indigenous advisory board is called the President's Advisory Committee on First Nation Initiatives (PACFNI).<sup>41</sup>

### The Centrality of Indigenous Knowledge

Due to the ongoing legacy and trauma of colonialism, particularly residential schools, many Indigenous languages in the NWT are endangered. Aurora College has the potential to be among the first academic institutions in Canada to support the resurgence of northern

Indigenous languages. Sarah Rosolen identified other important factors in incorporating Indigenous knowledge into Aurora College programming, design, and pedagogy, including signage, greetings and communication, curriculum, and instruction. Knowledge Holders asserted that Aurora College had the potential to be at the forefront of Indigenous language revitalization in Canada.

### **“By the North and for the North”: Guidance from Communities and Nations**

The philosophy of “by the North and for the North” was central for both the former President and Tosh Southwick. This concept emerged on the morning of the first day and remained an running theme throughout subsequent conversations. All agreed that “by the North and for the North” will be the College’s first priority to incorporate and prioritize northern Indigenous knowledge over policies and perspectives of southern researchers and decision makers.

### **Visioning a Different Relationship with the Territorial Government**

Separating Aurora College from ECE and the GNWT more broadly will allow the College to grow and develop autonomously. Part of this vision included allowing College administrators greater control over structural decisions and change. Furthermore, decentralization will facilitate new, innovative conversations about Aurora College’s commitment to research and academic freedom and the ability to reshape their relationship with Indigenous nations and communities. For instance, the former President discussed funding and appointing national research chairs on northern research. Dēneze Nakehk’ō, Greta Sittichinli, and Crystal Gail Fraser further suggested that transforming Aurora College into a university is a worthy idea for consideration.

### **Changes in Leadership and Training/Hiring Practices**

Knowledge Holders agreed that more Indigenous educators were needed at Aurora College. Knowledge Holders valued the idea of Aurora College employees – at every level – better representing both the student body, but also all communities in the NWT. Mentoring Indigenous people into positions of leadership, including grooming a suitable Indigenous candidate for the position of President, was one suggestion.

Furthermore, Knowledge Holders recommended that Elders be hired into various positions, including as an Elder-in-Residence. Dr. Angela James noted that the inclusion of Elders should reflect meaningful participation in classes, ceremonies, activities, and staff development. In order to successfully implement a campaign to hire Elders, hiring credentials will be reviewed and on-the-land degrees recognized.

### **Fostering a Workplace Culture of Deep Self Reflection**

The idea of reconciliation in the workplace was a key concept. Tosh Southwick shared her perspectives of how to develop a workplace and culture that was friendly to deep-seated change. Challenges often begin with people who are misinformed or simply unsure. Mandatory in-service staff and student training were suggested as ways to tackle this problem. The former President pointed to previous initiatives to better equip staff and



students, such as inviting Indigenous experts Francois Paulette, Ted Blondin, and Jennifer Hunt-Poitras to College campuses. Aurora College has also previously offered special awareness training sessions on residential schools and intergenerational trauma, although these programs are not ongoing. Knowledge Holders suggested other activities that Aurora College could undertake to better develop working relationships, such as improved communication exercises between campuses, being honest and upfront with each other, and working every day to become better colleagues on a personal level.

### **An Evolving Mandate through a Living Mission Statement**

The former President invited the Circle of Knowledge Holders to consider Aurora College's current mission statement (found in the Introduction of this document). Given that the statement has not been updated for several years, she identified this as an important consideration. Although it was not discussed extensively, Knowledge Holders contended that the proposed "President's Indigenous Advisory Group" should be involved in this endeavour.

### **Institutional and Personal Commitment to Reconciliation**

For Dr. Angela James, a capable person brings "leadership that balances the Western and Indigenous ways in schools, communities, workplaces, and the academy." She emphasized the importance of tailoring curriculum to meet the needs of northerners, expanding on-land programs, and encouraging educators to understand the interests, skills, and abilities of students. As a further teaching aid, Crystal Gail Fraser's co-authored work *150 Acts of Reconciliation* encourages average Canadians to take control of their own educational journeys, engage with Indigenous issues at a higher level, and offers ideas of how to incorporate acts of reconciliation into homes, workplaces, social settings, and families.<sup>42</sup>

### **Creating New Partnerships and Nurturing Existing Ones**

Central to group discussions was the importance of fostering new relationships and nurturing existing ones. Connections with communities, Indigenous nations, bands, administrative bodies, and others invested in the success of post-secondary development will be a part of moving forward with Aurora College's plan. Examples of current relationships include Robert Charlie and his role at the Gwich'in Tribal Council, as well as Pearl Bird at the Northwest Territory Métis Nation.

### **People at the Centre of Changes: Students and Their Successes**

Student success is a central pillar in how Aurora College operates. Recognizing that they too hold knowledge can be an important step in developing and implementing policies that are relevant to them and respects/honours their cultures. A part of this was highlighted on Monday's student panel, where the group had the opportunity to learn from Inuvialuk student Tyson Pierscky and Teet'it Gwich'in student Rena Vittrekwa. The opportunity to listen to Mr. Pierscky and Ms. Vittrekwa's experiences at Yukon College provided Knowledge Holders with an idea of the challenges that face northern students, but also the many successes. The ability to have a relaxed and genuine conversation with students has the ability to transform post-secondary education in the NWT.

## **Changes to Physical Spaces and Architectural Considerations**

The idea of transforming Aurora College's campuses, centres, and institutes into aesthetically pleasing spaces based on Indigenous architectural and engineering philosophies was popular among Knowledge Holders. Some suggestions included incorporating Indigenous languages and artwork, installing medicine gardens, better curating culture rooms, incorporating elements of nature into indoor spaces, and the flying of Indigenous flags outside of all campuses and learning centres. The Circle of Knowledge Holders toured both Yukon College and Aurora College in Fort Smith while discussing their ideas of how northern Indigenous cultures could be better represented. Knowledge Holders were impressed with Yukon College initiatives in this area.

## Part 3: Our Reflections

This section highlights some of the activities Knowledge Holders engaged in while attending the Whitehorse meetings. Their reflections were captured in a variety of ways. Included below are notable quotations, a word art image, and the basket of barriers.

### Listening to the Circle: Quotes from Knowledge Holders

The following selected quotes are from the Circle of Knowledge Holders that was comprised of Aurora College staff, partners, and stakeholders who shared a commitment to reconciliation.

“Indigeneity is finding the truths in the ways of the Elders.” – Dr. Angela James

“We have Indigenous people coming into the College and we see their heads are down and they feel a lot of shame. We have to have them feel proud of where they come from, so they feel strong [and] supported. For the non-Indigenous people, they need to know that and to know about the people of the land they are on. And then we have to work together, live side by side, live the beauty way.” – Joanne Erasmus

“Talking about colonization, residential schools, etc....it was the hardest part of the course to confront my own perceptions. Love that it is still continuing, not always doing it right, but I do take input and listen and try.” – Sarah Rosolen

“Deciding to work in partnership was hard, because it meant giving up power.” – Tosh Southwick

“We can continue to talk about things, but now is the time for action. I think we have the right people around the table. We are doing a lot of good things, and sometimes we forget, sometimes we don’t share it.” – Robert Charlie

“I welcome my tears as a recognition that we are all healing.” – Dr. Lois Edge

“Colleges are based on a western colonial system and that system is why we are where we are today.” – Dēneze Nakehk’ō

“When I think about reconciliation, I wonder if this is a concept that colonial Canada stole from us...my didjū Julienne Andre was the living embodiment of how I understand reconciliation.” – Crystal Gail Fraser

“In the bush, they would tell a joke and would laugh, try to tell that in English, it doesn’t exist. We think differently than in the English language. Even the people that are trying to deny or don’t want to accept your concept of thinking, you have to keep controlling the agenda and keep pushing in order to teach these others as I call them, they are not Aboriginal people, it is hard for them to understand the Aboriginal way of life, the Aboriginal way of thinking, even the aboriginal government for that matter.” – Eddie Erasmus

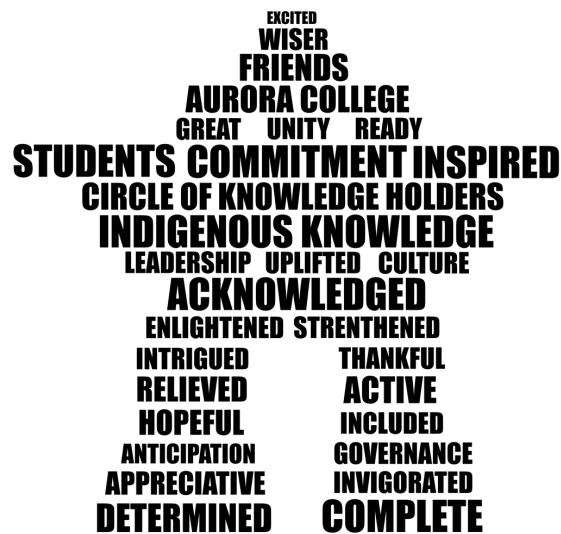
“We have to be grounded in our culture, to know who we are.” – Rosemary Gill

“My first priority is the students and trying to make them feel like they are at home, also utilize what they know. They bring in a lot of knowledge.” – Sheila Wiltzen

“I will use the Métis sash as a metaphor for Aurora College. Like the sash, the College is woven with a rich knowledge base of those who bring their personal, professional, and academic expertise everyday.” – Bonita LaFleur-Nowell

### Word Art: One Word Summary

Upon the closure of the Whitehorse meetings, Knowledge Holders were asked to share “one word” that summarized their feelings, characterizing how they felt, or noting a challenge they faced. The word art below aptly captures the spirit of group and their desire for a better future for all Northerners.



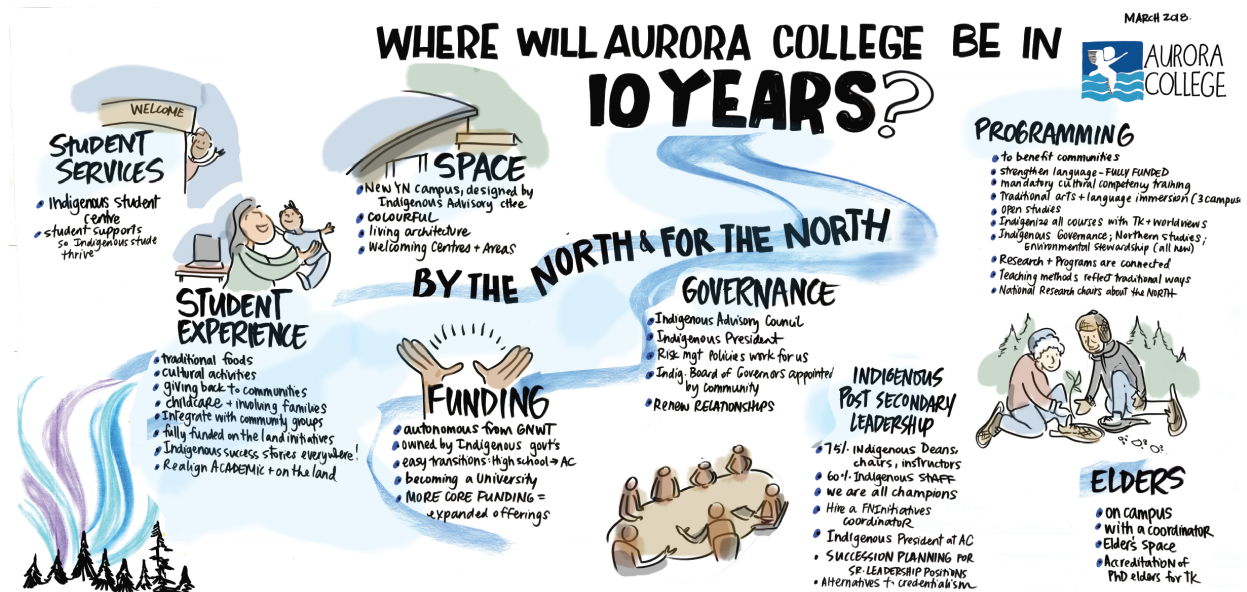
©INDIGENOUS CONSULTING SERVICES INC.

### Basket of Barriers

Tosh Southwick presented the “Basket of Barriers” to the Circle of Knowledge Holders. Reconciliation is a highly personalized process and Knowledge Holders attended the meetings with their own perspectives of key challenges for the College. They were asked to record Aurora College’s perceived challenges for indigenization and place them into the Basket of Barriers. Ms. Southwick explained that her team at Yukon College created their own bag of barriers nine years ago and it was only recently that she removed the last barrier from the basket.

## Part 4: The Circle of Knowledge Holders' 10-Year Vision

The creation of the Circle of Knowledge Holders, its inaugural meeting in Whitehorse and subsequent gathering in Fort Smith, the discussions that emerged, and the future of Indigenous initiatives at Aurora College are central to this document. This document honours the contributions of the twenty-six people who have provided their insight and knowledge for a future Indigenous plan for Aurora College. Although the College does not have all of the answers, further dialogue, self-reflection, and a new strategic direction are required to ensure that all of our students succeed in their post-secondary aspirations.



The Circle of Knowledge Holders identified the following challenges, organized below in three different themes. The points below were drawn from both the Basket of Barriers and the official meeting notes.

### Theme I: Changing Workplace Culture

- Lack of information and/or training to move forward
- Personal beliefs that are based on arrogance and disrespect
- Disbelief that some non-Indigenous Aurora College staff believe in reconciliation or indigenization
- Inability of some to undergo self-reflection about their practices
- Poor understanding of the profound impact of colonization
- Indigenous protocol about how to treat Elders lacking
- Frustration at the slow pace of change
- Working within a system that is geographically diverse
- Better informing the media about the work that Aurora College has undertaken

### Theme II: Structural Inequities

- Aurora College is tethered to colonial governments
- Impossible to fully indigenize or decolonize colonial systems (Canadian legal system, capitalist economy)

- The hiring of Indigenous staff, especially into prominent/visible positions
- What does Indigenization mean?
- Better relationships with communities
  - Hire an Indigenous community liaison and academic support workers for Indigenous students
- Lack of staff to successfully implement Indigenization project
- Prioritize housing opportunities for Indigenous students
- Desire for Indigenous Employment and Mentorship programs
- Better student funding
- The continued usage of Breynat Hall (a former residential school in Fort Smith) should be decommissioned and no longer used as a student residence

### **Theme III: How to Incorporate Indigenous Knowledge**

- Western philosophies/truths dominate Indigenous ones
- Curriculum is pre-determined, feel unsupported if modifications desired
- Indigenous artwork, symbols, representations have a permanent presence on campuses, especially around entryways
- Lack of cultural activities available
- Need for on-the-land programs, especially at Community Learning Centres
- Better focus on Indigenous languages, especially at Community Learning Centres

Over the next ten years, Knowledge Holders hope that these challenges will be addressed and overcome, with the assistance of the proposed President's Indigenous Advisory Group.

## Part 5: Conclusion and How To Move Forward

The main focus of this thematic report is to guide the indigenization process at Aurora College. The thematic report explained the purpose of the Circle of Knowledge Holders, provided a brief history of education and schooling in the NWT, highlighted important themes and a ten-year vision.

Knowledge Holders identified the following three points for special and immediate consideration:

### **Aurora College should establish an Indigenous Advisory Council (President's Indigenous Advisory Group).**

This Council would include equal representation from all regions in the NWT and work closely with Aurora College's Office of the President to develop the College's strategic plan and help shape policies around Elders on campus, housing, and other important issues. Before the Council is formed, Aurora College would organize and host a NWT post-secondary summit that will draw local, territorial, national, and international educators, academics, and big thinkers. Bringing higher intellectual rigor to the NWT will be the theme of this summit. This will provide expertise and direction for the future establishment of Aurora College's Indigenous Advisory Council.

### **Aurora College should actively work towards implementing an Elders-On-Campus Program and Indigenous/Traditional Knowledge Protocol.**

In addition to the President's Indigenous Advisory Group, it would be helpful for Aurora College to partner with northern Indigenous governments, tribal councils, bands, and consultants to expedite an Elders-On-Campus Program and Indigenous/Traditional Knowledge Protocol. This would include conversations and action around the following: Indigenous language revitalization; construction of new facilities (e.g. smokehouses, cabins, etc.); building better relationships with communities; new programming (e.g. hand games, moose hide tanning, etc.); the employment of Elders; expansion of courses outside of Yellowknife, Inuvik, and Fort Smith; and the consideration of Indigenous cultural protocols, which will vary regionally.

### **Aurora College should commit to strengthening its focus on student supports, needs, and success.**

Knowledge Holders identified recruitment, application and admission processes, student relocation, student activities, residence advisors, childcare, and financial challenges as topics for further conversation. Consideration for Indigenous students to have special advisors and supports was also highlighted.

A recurring question that Knowledge Holders asked was: what is reconciliation? The TRC provided path-breaking research on reconciliation efforts in Canada. Nevertheless, post-secondary institutions in Canada, including Aurora College, will benefit from continued and careful discussions about how to best reconcile with Indigenous peoples, Canada's past,





## Part 6: Meet the Circle of Knowledge Holders

The Aurora College's Circle of Knowledge Holders was established in 2018. The Knowledge Holders included the following twenty-six individuals comprised of Elders, Indigenous faculty and staff, the Former College President, two academic scholars, and one PhD Candidate with subject matter expertise.



**Jane Arychuk, Former President, Aurora College**

Jane is a non-Indigenous person who has made the North her home. She has over thirty-five years of experience as an educator in the North and, in 2012, was appointed President. Jane is married to a Métis man from Fort Providence and has two adult daughters. After working in Fort Providence for 23 years, she moved to Yellowknife and worked with Kalemi Dene School in Ndilo and Kaw Tay Whee School before joining the College in 2006. She resigned from the College in May 2018.



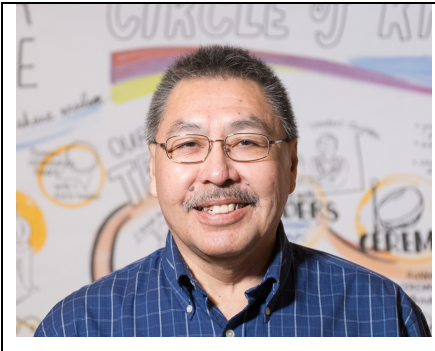
**Bonita LaFleur-Nowell, Manager, NABE Program, Aurora College**

Bonita completed studies in Executive Leadership from the University of Alberta and holds a designation as Supply Chain Management Professional. She is an acknowledged northern expert in public sector procurement with specialization in policy and program governance. Born in Yellowknife, she is the eldest of ten siblings, a sixth generation Northerner, family historian, and descendant of the NWT Métis Patriarch Francois Beaulieu I and Patriarch wife, Ethiba. She believes that indigenization at Aurora College presents new opportunities to enhance the College's holistic approaches.



**Tosh Southwick, Associate Vice-President, Indigenous Engagement and Reconciliation, Yukon College**

Tosh is a citizen of the Kluane First Nation and belongs to the Wolf Clan. She was the former Executive Director of First Nations Initiatives and Community Engagement for Yukon College. She is honoured to be a part of the Aurora College Indigenization journey, a process that will fundamentally shift the North away from the history of colonization towards the North that our ancestors have envisioned for generations.



**Robert Charlie**, Director, Beneficiary Services, Gwich'in Tribal Council

Robert, originally from Fort McPherson, comes from both Teet'it and Vuntut Gwich'in families and has made Inuvik his home. He is a former Councilor of the Nihtat Gwich'in Council and Chair of the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board. Indigenous people comprise 50% of the NWT population and Robert works to ensure that Indigenous voices, histories, and cultures are represented. He believes that youth recognize the importance of education, as it is the key to opening many doors.



**Greta Sittichinli**, Instructor, Business & Office Administration (Aurora Campus), Aurora College

Greta, a Gwich'in beneficiary, holds many degrees, including BMgmt, BEd, and MEd. Her family taught her the importance of respect and relationships. Greta feels that Aurora College's Indigenization strategy is important to curate welcoming learning spaces that reflect the people we serve. She is the mother of Kandace, Katherine, Edward, and her late daughter, Kendra.



**Dëneze Nakehk'ō**, Indigenous Cultural Support Worker, École St. Patrick School

Dëneze is a Dehcho and Denesuline Dene from Denendeh. He is a strong advocate for Indigenous knowledge, particularly Dene ways of knowing. As a founding member of Dene Nahjo, he encourages and supports connections/re-connections to land, language, and culture. Dëneze is a public speaker who actively confronts the impacts of colonization through Dene methods of decolonization. He has over a decade of experience in northern media and communications. Dëneze is originally from Łíídlı́ Kúé but now lives in Yellowknife with his wife, Heather, his son, K'a and daughter, Lucia.



**Edward "Ediwa" Erasmus**, Former Grand Chief and Chief, Thchq Government and Former Executive Director, Dogrib Tribal Council and Dogrib Treaty 11 Council

Grand Chief Erasmus was born in Behchokò, but currently resides in the Thchq region, where he was raised. He had an accomplished career as a leader and Senior Lands Negotiator. Grand Chief Erasmus believes that we need to start teaching more about our history, ways of life, languages, and on-the-land survival skills. He is committed to younger generations and Aurora College's Indigenization initiative, but notes that it will be a long process that should be transparent.



**Curtis Lepine, Instructor, Heavy Equipment Technician (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College**

Curtis is Métis and resides in Fort Smith, where he was born and raised. He hopes that by Indigenizing Aurora College, students will succeed in all their endeavours.



**Layla Charlo, Finance Manager (Yellowknife/North Slave Campus), Aurora College**

Layla holds a BMgmt from Athabasca University. She was born in Yellowknife and raised in Dettah and is a member of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. Layla's vision for Aurora College's plan to indigenize includes welcoming more Indigenous students to post-secondary studies and nurturing connections between Indigenous students and staff. She believes that education is essential to building a successful career.



**Randy Villeneuve, Instructor, Carpenter (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College**

Trained as a Building Construction Engineering Technologist and Red Seal Carpenter, Randy has been employed with Aurora College since 2000. Originally from Fort Resolution, he was raised in various South Slave communities. Randy is an avid hunter and fisher and incorporates wild game into his everyday lifestyle. Randy is committed to bringing more on-the-land opportunities for trades students and believes that the Aurora College campuses should visually reflect northern Indigenous cultures. As an Indigenous educator, he offers Aurora College his expertise in not only carpentry, but also indigenous food preparation.



**Sheila Wiltzen, Senior Instructor, Developmental Studies (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College**

Sheila holds a BEd and MEd in Leadership, focused on teaching Indigenous students. Her teaching career began in 1990, in Fort Chipewyan, Alberta. Twenty-five years ago, Sheila married into a Dene family and has four children. She currently resides in Fort Smith and considers the North her home. Putting students first, Sheila believes that Aurora College staff needs to understand where their Indigenous students came from and who they are. She often reflects upon a teaching that an Elder once gave her: "Students should not have to look out the window to see where they are from."



**Duane McDonald**, Program Head, Apprenticeship, Trades & Industrial Training (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College

Duane is trained as a Plumber/Gasfitter, Oil Burner Mechanic, and Fourth Class Power Engineer. He is Métis and resides in Fort Smith, where he raised his family. Duane believes that Aurora College students need a better understanding of the histories of northern Indigenous nations.



**Sarah Rosolen**, Manager, South Slave Research Centre & Instructor, Environmental Natural Resources Technology & BEd Programs (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College

Arriving in Fort Smith in 2010, Sarah connected to the land and community and she continues to feel lucky to call Fort Smith home. Sarah has grown to appreciate and be humbled by the power of traditional knowledge and the resilience of people, while learning about untold histories, injustices, and intergenerational trauma. She feels that Aurora College should be responsive to the student body and communities as it works to mend relationships.



**Jesse Evans**, Information Technology Analyst (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College

Jesse is a Network Security Specialist. He is a lifelong northerner and appreciates everything that Fort Smith has given him and his family. Jesse believes that Aurora College needs to create better spaces for Indigenous students at all of its campuses and learning centres, while better engaging with Indigenous nations and communities. For Jesse, this will create a stronger North.



**Crystal Gail Fraser**, PhD Candidate, University of Alberta; Owner, Indigenous Consulting Services Inc.

Crystal is originally from Inuvik and Dachan Choo Gèhnhjik and is the granddaughter of Marka Andre and Richard Bullock. She is Gwichyà Gwich'in and resides in Amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton). She is completing a PhD in Canadian History and her research focuses on the history of residential schooling in Inuvik between 1959 and 1996. Crystal is a leader in community-engaged scholarship and is the co-author of *150 Acts of Reconciliation*. She is the mother of two-year-old Quinn Addison Fraser; they're learning Dinjii Zhuh Ginjik together.



**Jessi Johnson, Admissions Officer (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College**

Jessi has a diploma in Business. She is Métis and a lifelong northerner. It is Jessi's hope that Aurora College will become a culturally inclusive and culturally sensitive environment. She is also committed to seeing more Indigenous staff at Aurora College, particularly in senior management positions.



**Pearl Bird, Aboriginal Skills and Education Training Strategy (ASETS) Manager, Northwest Territory Métis Nation**

Pearl is a mother and grandmother from Fort Smith and is of Cree decent. She was influenced by her Maternal Grandmother who taught her many of the traditional ways of knowing and she grew up practicing this knowledge. Pearl has been with ASETS for the past 14 years. Prior to working for the NWT Métis, she worked for Aurora College for 28 years. She was appointed to the Fort Smith Health Board, including the Ethics Committee. Pearl was elected on the Fort Smith Métis Council.



**Dr. Lois Edge, Instructor, BEd Program (Thebacha Campus), Aurora College**

Dr. Edge holds a BA, MA (Anthropology), and a PhD in Indigenous Peoples' Education from the University of Alberta. She is a member of the Gwich'in nation and has made Fort Smith her home. Dr. Edge continues to be guided by Indigenous perspectives, worldviews, principles, and values. By connecting her lived experiences with historical and contemporary realities, she is an avid supporter of Indigenous self-determination, governance, strength-based practices, and health and wellness.



**Joanne Erasmus, Counsellor, Student Services Division (Yellowknife/North Slave Campus), Aurora College**

Joanne was born and raised in Yellowknife and is a member of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. She holds a degree in Indian Social Work from the First Nations University of Canada, as well as a Leadership Certificate from Vancouver Community College. Joanne has close ties to Dene peoples and views community partnerships, cultural teachings, and Indigenous protocol as central to her philosophy. She believes that through heartfelt dialogue and collaboration, Aurora College will become better equipped to meet the needs of students.



**Liz Pope**, Community Adult Educator (Katlodeeche First Nation), Aurora College

Liz holds several degrees, including CAEd, BEd, and MEd. She is of Anishnabeg and Scottish descent and calls Fort Good Hope home, but she resides in Hay River. Liz asserts that by implementing a plan to indigenize Aurora College, Indigenous peoples will be fully recognized, including their languages, stories, experiences, and ways of knowing. The next steps, for Liz, include making decisions together.



**Rosemary Gill**, Program Head, Dehcho Region, Aurora College

Rosemary is Dene from the Dehcho Region. Her post-secondary education includes the Teacher Education Program at Thebacha Campus, BEd at the University of Alberta, and an after degree program in Aboriginal Governance at the University of Victoria. Rosemary currently resides in Łíídlıı Kúé and has been with Aurora College since 2012. She believes in education that reflects the people it serves including the history, culture and language. For her, key elements to enhance Indigenous student success include the availability of academic and student supports that are culturally affirming and relevant.



**Nicole Hammer**, Licensing Coordinator (Headquarters), Aurora Research Institute

Nicole was born in Inuvik, where she currently resides, and is a member of the Inuvialuit nation. Having spent her childhood and adolescent years in Calgary, she returned to the North when she was 17 to obtain a better sense of community, culture, and family. Nicole went on to complete the Office Administration Diploma program at the Aurora Campus. For her, indigenizing Aurora College means bringing culture and tradition into classrooms and creating a sense of belonging and familiarity through staff and curriculum.



**Dr. Angela James**, Director, Department of Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT

Angela has lived most of her life in the NWT and married into a Chipewyan Dene family, combining the traditions, culture and languages into her family life. She recently graduated with her PhD in Education from Simon Fraser University, defending her dissertation in July 2016 on Indigenous education in the NWT. Angela believes that indigenizing education needs to be the foundation and focus that honours educational approaches that include NWT history, people and place as integral components of teaching and learning.



**Sam Bradd, Graphic Facilitator and Illustrator, Drawing Change**

Sam Bradd (MEd) is a graphic facilitator and principal of Drawing Change, working with organizations for social impact. He is a white settler who lives on the unceded x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) territories. His vision for indigenizing post-secondary includes settlers confronting the truth of our histories, and rebuilding thriving education systems by and for Indigenous people and worldviews. He's the co-editor of two books, including the award-winning Graphic History Collective.



**Amos Scott, Filmmaker & Photographer, Adze Studios Inc.**

Amos Scott is a Tłı̨chǫ filmmaker and producer. He is the producer of the documentary series *Dene A Journey* and of the award-winning feature film *The Sun At Midnight*. Amos also owns and operates the small video company, Adze Studios Inc. He is also a co-founder of Dene Nahjo, which strives for Land, Language and Culture. Forever. Amos believes it is time for Aurora College to trail blaze indigenous spaces and practices within all facets of the school.



**Mary Beckett, Owner, Beckett Business Services, Inuvik, NT**

Mary has completed an Associate in Business from McGill College University and is trained in photography and arts. She has previously served as Vice Chair on the Aurora College Board of Governors and Chair of the Aurora Research Institute Advisory Council. Mary is a thirty-four year resident and business owner of Inuvik and has raised four children there. She believes that Aurora College has the potential to offer world-class educational opportunities to northern students. As such, Mary believes the College should be a representation of the people it serves, reflecting their culture and values.

# Appendix A: Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes

In 2015, Paul Andrew, the Elder Representative for the Aurora College Board of Governors, signed the Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes.



Colleges and Institutes Canada  
Collèges et instituts Canada

## Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes

The signatory institutions to this protocol recognize and affirm their responsibility and obligation to Indigenous education.

Colleges and institutes respect and recognize that Indigenous people include First Nation, Métis and Inuit people, having distinct cultures, languages, histories and contemporary perspectives.

Indigenous education emanates from the intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Indigenous education will strengthen colleges' and institutes' contribution to improving the lives of learners and communities.

**The signatory institution agrees to:**

1. Commit to making Indigenous education a priority.
2. Ensure governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples.
3. Implement intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities.
4. Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
5. Commit to increasing the number of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments, throughout the institution, including Indigenous senior administrators.
6. Establish Indigenous-centred holistic services and learning environments for learner success.
7. Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training and applied research.

Signatories endorse the intent of these principles and are committed to developing policies, procedures and practices within their institutions.

**Aurora College**

**Institution**

**Paul Andrew**

**Name**

**Elder Representative, Board of Governors**

**Title**

**June 9, 2015**

**Date**

**Signature**



## Appendix B: Deliverables Produced Through the Project

The Circle of Knowledge Holders Inaugural Meeting in Whitehorse and the subsequent meeting in Fort Smith resulted in the following deliverables:

- Item 1 - NABE Project Plan 4.4: Circle of Knowledge Holders Inaugural Meeting
- Item 2 - Aurora College Circle of Knowledge Holders Membership List
- Item 3 - Inaugural Meeting
- Item 4 - Seven Graphic Recording Illustrations (x7)
- Item 5 - Promotional Video
- Item 6 - Photographic portraits (x22)
- Item 7 - Biographies (x22)
- Item 8 - Circle of Knowledge Holders Group Photograph
- Item 9 - PowerPoint Presentations and handouts (x4)
- Item 10 - Candid Photographs (x56)
- Item 11 - Minutes and Digital Audio Recording of Inaugural Meeting
- Item 12 - 18"x 37" Wall Plaques of graphic recording illustrations (x90)
- Item 13 - 30" x 60" Wall Plaques of graphic recording illustrations (x5)
- Item 14 - Draft Thematic Summary Report of Inaugural Meeting
- Item 15 - WordArt Illustration
- Item 16 - Student Panel Interview
- Item 17 - News Releases
- Item 18 - Formal Indigenous Plan incorporated in the Aurora College Strategic Plan

# Appendix C: Graphic Illustrations



# CIRCLE of KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS

## INAUGURAL MEETING

with thanks to all the people gathered to share wisdom...



# WHAT WILL SUPPORT US?

## WE HAVE A COMMON GOAL FOR EDUCATION



**BUY-IN**  
To make the change

**AUTONOMY**  
- To lead the way  
- for funding, governance

**COMMITMENT, ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES**  
- To the change that's coming

**ASK**

language changes

CLARIFYING LANGUAGE - ask community what's BEST

What to do with RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS? ASK FOR GUIDANCE.

**FUNDS**

What ways can we work with ENWT to demonstrate IMPACT + PREVENTION?

AC (NO-STRINGS ATTACHED) FUNDS

• we need flexibility  
• financial commitment

**effective COMMUNICATION**

• between people + groups  
• public awareness plan

attract our own funding

- asking communities their needs + SHARING education/training costs

Hiring Indigenous initiatives staff (inclusive term)

**NEW** OPEN AN INDIGENOUS OFFICE

**ENGAGEMENT** with communities, governments - BE INCLUSIVE

**RELATIONSHIPS PARTNERS**

Regional PARTNERSHIPS: relationships of First Nations + governments at all levels

KNOW THE COLLEGE'S HISTORY: establish a working group

**LEADERS**

Formalize the Circle of Knowledge Holders

- terms of reference, etc.
- this group continues and INFORMS THE OFFICIAL strat plan

develop: Indigenous strategic plan

linkages

Have an INTERIM PLAN

BRING it BACK TO THE STUDENT

SENIOR LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

WORK WITH COMMUNITIES

DON'T ASK IF YOU'RE not ready for the answer

FOCUS ON CHAMPIONS not resistors

We tackle "5 EASY THINGS + 2 HARD THINGS" A YEAR

at YK, the First Nations initiatives committee TELLS us HOW + WHAT FOR THE WORK

INDIGENIZE THE process

FOLLOW PROTOCOLS

**WHO'S STEERING? WE ARE!**

YOU HAVE A WIDE NETWORK OF SUPPORT: don't re-invent the wheel

CELEBRATE SUCCESS + COMMUNICATE IT OUT

**WHAT STRENGTH** do you need to keep going?

BE CREATIVE in HOW STUDENT WORK CAN SUPPORT YOUR GOALS...

cultural design team: To design how we'll reach 75% all indigenous staff

# WHAT GOES IN OUR CANOE?

Sambraid

# INDIGENIZING: SOME INITIATIVES AT POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

presented by Sarah Rosolen

Do I even like this term? it's imperfect...

on this journey as an instructor... a white person... learning

RESEARCH can be beyond the classroom  
So I got a research license to talk to elders.  
Presenting SOME IDEAS here... it's NOT complete.

ACKNOWLEDGING TERRITORY  
learning the STORIES + HISTORIES of the PLACE

LANGUAGE  
signage within instruction presenting Masters + assignments in their language

CURRICULUM  
Required course for all students/staff in support of RECONCILIATION

STAFF DEVELOPMENT  
SOCIAL INNOVATION

ON THE LAND  
connect with Elders + Instructors  
Northern context  
Self-sufficiency

PEOPLE

- Prioritize HIRING
  - address CREDENTIALISM
  - Elders in Residence - fair, paid compensation
- "Elders Have a PhD on the LAND"

SPACES  
□ Significant structures  
□ Indoor spaces to gather, art

STUDENT SERVICES  
welcome  
student centered bridging or orientation prog. community support's healing + Elders

- STORIES OF HOPE
- support students developing strong IDENTITIES
  - Include INDIGENOUS knowledge, beliefs, AS TAUGHT BY knowledge keepers
- mandatory courses
  - reflective, critical thinking about practices

- RESEARCH
- Conversations about DECOLONIZATION EFFORTS
  - 2-yr project to bring researchers together IN COLLABORATION
- @decolonize\_ed





DR ANGELA JAMES, EdD.

# Shaping Influences of A "CAPABLE PERSON"

it has not been an EASY JOURNEY for me to reach this place—



We need to INDIGENIZE the ACADEMY

language everywhere  
welcoming  
"walk in & smell moosehide"

Indigenous Research methodology:  
Answering to all your RELATIONS (WILSON, 2008)

**EDUCATION** is the great EQUALIZER

I wanted to OPEN UP the concept of a "capable person"

2 Year JOURNEY with 12 ELDERS in NWT

it took me 25,000 KM!

story + narratives with an Indigenous worldview

Indigenism gets SWALLOWED by the ACADEMY

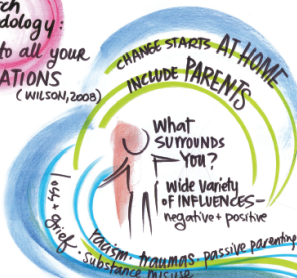
Leadership that BALANCES Indigenous & Western ways of KNOWING

called many things - "two eyed seeing"

allies alongside - "Indigenist" teachers

Research changes YOU.

LEARNING, GROWTH, & DEVELOPMENT



to find the TRUTH I needed - the CONCEPTUAL FRAME was gifted to me of RAISING a tipi and RAISING children."

RELATIONAL INFLUENCES

• Tripod of relationships  
• time, people + place  
• the negative forces and chapters of our recent history

• the land as an extension of spiritual beliefs

OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

RECURRING INFLUENCES

GROUNDING INFLUENCES

CIRCLE OF SELF, including HEART + SPIRIT

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

CIRCLE METHODOLOGY -

to finding OUR WAY + PLACE - and having a STRONG IDENTITY!

it teaches me the RECIPROCALITY OF TEACHING + LEARNING

SPIRAL GUIDES

1. Belonging, trust
2. Sharing, kindness
3. Laughter
4. Responsibility + hard work
5. Respect, honesty
6. Language + culture
7. Passing on knowledge
8. Storytelling
9. Food, medicine
10. Prayer, ceremony

SPIRAL LEARNING

• create the conditions for SPIRAL LEARNING  
• they come from the CENTER - and are "spiral guides"

I WAS PRIVILEGED TO HEAR these stories - NOW to be in BALANCE it's time to GIVE BE PART OF YOUR CULTURAL PRACTICES

We want students to say school is like FAMILY

We need INDIGENOUS TEACHERS MENTORS ELDERS

INDIGENIZE the PEDAGOGY  
• pace of learning  
• learning styles  
• teach to these potential

WHAT INDIGENIZE the CURRICULUM

• here, it would be Dene, Inuit + Inuvialuit perspectives  
• embed it in the land

# RECONCILIATION IS...

WE'RE ON THE MOVE...!

WHAT WILL WE DO?

## RECONCILIATION IS RELATIONSHIP



DO THIS WORK BY THE NORTH, FOR THE NORTH

... TO EDUCATE and RAISE HEALTHY CHILDREN!

A WISH: that our College HONOURS our STUDENTS, their identities + reflects the citizens it SERVES

# TO MOVE THINGS forward FOR AURORA COLLEGE

what is the most important?  
 ... **SHARING + LISTENING:** to **CONTEXT & BACKGROUNDS:**  
 ... with love and acceptance  
 ... in **RELATIONSHIP** with each other  
 ... honouring your wisdom

IMPLEMENTING the TRUTH & RECONCILIATION calls to ACTION

that this work takes HONESTY + is PERSONAL

FORMS--

Human Resources policies need to ensure Indigenous colleagues can be hired + advance beyond entry-level - address systemic discrimination

RECONCILIATION is accepting other people's views + my father speaks 5 languages

we are experts in reconciliation

? is reconciliation another thing colonial government has co-opted from us?

? recognizing that children in residential schools had ways of resisting + being resilient - what does history show us?

### HEALING

### RELATIONSHIPS

- Students need space to share what they know and their **GIFTS**
- Grief and loss from being rejected as Indigenous...
- traumas of residential school survivors

means were role models for students  
 I'm a healer and my role is inside + outside the college - there's no boundary

lift each other up and work in partnership  
 - walk in my own beauty + way + d

The lands are contaminated - they didn't ask us they didn't ask us THIS IS OUR LAND.

UNIQUE SOLUTIONS FOR EACH NATION

**RECONCILIATION and RESEARCH**  
 doing the work in a good way  
 strengths-based  
 "In the 2nd generation - it will take 7 generations & what WILL THAT LOOK LIKE?"

TRUTH COMES BEFORE RECONCILIATION - What is AC's truth?

The longest journey is from HERE to HERE

(not being afraid) challenge non-Indigenous people to "try" - even if it means making mistakes

### EMOTION

### BODY

### SPIRIT

### MIND

connecting YOUTH & ELDERS  
 "Half my life is on the land when I'm not teaching"

Pay respect - only taking is not a way of life.  
 Every time we're learning on the land, "we're decolonizing"

## SPIRAL LEARNING

### ANCESTORS

We must listen to our ANCESTORS  
 We must speak in our own languages - not stereotypes

How can we decolonize the education system that created this crisis? Seeing Yukon college changes my mind...

With COLONIAL GOVTS were not SEEN as self-governing:  
 In our cultures we already have philosophies, Flavours + KNOW GOVERNMENT.

Educational change must occur. 7000 non-Indigenous adults have a degree in what 700 Indigenous adults.

### SHIFT POWER:

How can we deolonize the education system that created this crisis? Seeing Yukon college changes my mind...

Indigenizing my classroom changed - how I teach - with stories and RELATIONSHIPS

How can this change trends? Honour the matriarchs?

Ensure all communities have a voice

Students need to SEE THEMSELVES + FEEL AT HOME

WHEN STUDENTS WALK IN they deserve LOVE

Students need to be PROUD of their INDIGENOUS CULTURES

settlers need to know strong Indigenous cultures.

strong identities

GROUNDING IN CULTURE

connecting YOUTH & ELDERS

Pay respect - only taking is not a way of life.

UNIQUE SOLUTIONS FOR EACH NATION

settlers need to know strong Indigenous cultures.

# WHERE WILL AURORA COLLEGE BE IN 10 YEARS?

## PROGRAMMING

- to benefit communities
- strengthen language - FULLY FUNDED
- mandatory cultural competency training
- Traditional arts + language immersion (3 campus)
- OPEN STUDIES
- Indigenize all courses with TK + world news
- Indigenous Governance; Northern studies; Environmental Stewardship (all new)
- Research + Programs are connected
- Teaching methods reflect traditional ways
- National Research chairs about the NORTH



## ELDERS

- ON CAMPUS
- with a coordinator
- Elder's space
- Accreditation of PhD elders for TK

## INDIGENOUS POST SECONDARY LEADERSHIP

- 75% Indigenous Deans, chairs, instructors
- 60% Indigenous STAFF
- we are all champions
- Hire a FN initiatives coordinator
- Indigenous President at AC
- SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR SR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS
- Alternatives + credentialism

## GOVERNANCE

- Indigenous Advisory Council
- Indigenous President
- Risk mgt Policies work for us
- Indig. Board of Governors appointed by community
- Renew RELATIONSHIPS



## BY THE NORTH & FOR THE NORTH

## FUNDING

- autonomous from GNWT
- owned by Indigenous gov'ts
- easy transitions: high school → AC
- becoming a University
- MORE CORE FUNDING = expanded offerings

## SPACE

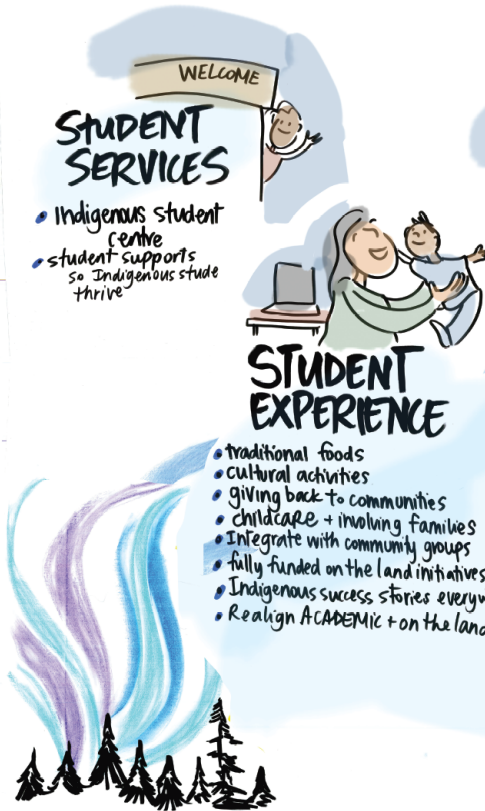
- New YN campus, designed by Indigenous Advisory cttee
- COLOURFUL
- living architecture
- Welcoming Centres + Areas

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- traditional foods
- cultural activities
- giving back to communities
- childcare + involving families
- Integrate with community groups
- fully funded on the land initiatives
- Indigenous success stories everywhere!
- Realign ACADEMIC + on the land

## STUDENT SERVICES

- Indigenous student centre
- student supports so Indigenous students thrive





## References

### Academic Literature

- Andersen, Chris. *Métis: Race, Recognition, and the Struggle For Indigenous Peoplehood*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014.
- Chisholm, Susan. "Assimilation and Oppression: The Northern Experience, Education and the Aboriginal Adolescent." *Education Canada* 34, 4 (1994).
- Cleveland, M. "Arctic College: The Development of a Territorial College System." Unpublished paper presented at the fourth *Inuit Studies Conference*, Montreal, 1984.
- Fumoleau, René. *As Long As This Land Shall Last: A History of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004.
- Heine, Michael, Alestine Andre, Ingrid Kritsch, and Alma Cardinal. *Gwichya Gwich'in Googwandak: The History and Stories of the Gwichya Gwich'in*. Tsiigehtshik and Fort McPherson, NT: Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, 2007.
- James, Angela. "Shaping Influences of a 'Capable Person': A Narrative Research of Elders' Stories of Raising Children to Inform Aboriginal Education in the Northwest Territories." EdD Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2016.
- McGregor, Heather. *Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010.
- Yellow Bird, Michael. "What We Want to Be Called: Indigenous Peoples' Perspectives on Racial and Ethnic Identity Labels." *American Indian Quarterly* 23, 2 (Spring 1999).

### Government Documents

- Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Government of the Northwest Territories. *Understanding Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in the Northwest Territories*, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).
- Advisory Committee on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories. *Report of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, Vols. 1 and 2*. Ottawa: The Commission, 1966.
- Aurora College. *2018-2019 Aurora College: Celebrating 50 Years, Academic Calendar*. 2018.
- Bosely, Elizabeth and John Reid. *Sunshine: The Report to Yukon College on the Training Needs and Dynamics of Yukon First Nations*. Whitehorse, YT: Yukon College, February 2008.

Council of the Northwest Territories. *Ninth Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories*. Yellowknife, NT: Northwest Territories Information, 1983.

*Report to the Special Committee of the Northwest Territories to Study the "Survey of Education – Northwest Territories."* Yellowknife, NT: Council of the Northwest Territories, 1973.

Dehcho First Nations, Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and The Government of the Northwest Territories. *Deh Cho First Nations Framework Agreement*, May 2001, [www.aadnc-aandc.ca.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.ca.ca).

Déliné First Nation Band, Déliné Land Corporation, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, and Indian Affairs and Northern Development. *Déliné Final Self-Government Agreement*, February 18, 2015, [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca).

The Dene of Colville Lake, Déliné, Fort Good Hope and Fort Norman and the Metis of Fort Good Hope, Fort Norman and Norman Wells, Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Government of the Northwest Territories. *Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement*, 1993, [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca).

Department of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories. "Education in the Northwest Territories: Presented to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, 1976," Unpublished Paper.

*Survey of Education: Northwest Territories*. Yellowknife, NT: Department of Education, 1972.

*Adult Vocational Training Centre, Fort Smith, Northwest Territories*. Fort Smith, NT: Department of Education, 1970.

Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Government of the Northwest Territories. *Aurora College Foundational Review, Prepared by MNP*, tabled document 198-18(3) on May 30, 2018.

*Inuuqatigiit*. Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1996.

*Dene Kede (Dene Zhatie; Dene Náoweré Dahk'é)*. Yellowknife, NT: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1993.

Dominion of Canada. *Treaty No. 11 (June 27, 1921) and Adhesion (July 17, 1922) with Reports, etc.* Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1927.

*Treaty No. 8 (June 21, 1899) and Adhesions, Reports, Etc.* Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1899.

Government of Canada. *The Constitution Act, 1982, La Loi constitutionnelle de 1982*. Ottawa: Canadian Government Pub. Centre, Supply and Services Canada, 1982.

*Family Allowance Act, 1945.* Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1945.

*Indian Act, 1876 and its amendments (1880, 1894, 1920, 1927, and 1951).* Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1951.

Indian Affairs and Northern Development, *The Inuvialuit Final Agreement as Amended, Consolidated Version, 2005*, [www.irc.inuvialuit.com](http://www.irc.inuvialuit.com).

Indian Affairs and Northern Development, The Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations, and the Government of the Northwest Territories. *Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations Framework Agreement, July 25, 2000*, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).

Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Gwich'in Tribal Council, *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement*. Ottawa: Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1992.

Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Government of Canada and Salt River First Nation. *The Salt River First Nation Treaty Settlement Agreement, 2001*, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).

Legislative Assembly, Government of the Northwest Territories. *Aurora College Corporate Plan, 2017-2018, Tabled Document 33-18(3) on October 20, 2017*.

*2014-2015 Traditional Knowledge Annual Report, Tabled Document 88-18(2), Tabled on June 28, 2016*.

Legislative Assembly, Special Committee on Education, Government of the Northwest Territories. *Learning: Tradition & Change in the Northwest Territories*. Yellowknife, NT: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1982.

Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry. *Arctic Red River, N.W.T., March 13, 1976, Proceedings at Community Hearing, Vol. 47*.

*Lac La Marte, N.W.T., August 12, 1976, Proceedings at Community Hearing, Vol. 73*.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1996.

Tłı̨chǫ Government, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Government of the Northwest Territories, *Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Among the Tłı̨chǫ and the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada*, August 25, 2003, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. *Canada's Residential Schools: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 6 vols. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016.

*A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools From the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Edited & Abridged.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016.

*Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.* Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Ltd., 2015.

*94 Calls to Action.* Winnipeg: TRC, 2015.

Yukon College. "Terms of Reference for Yukon College President's Advisory Committee on First Nation Initiatives." Whitehorse, YT: Yukon College, 2007.

Yukon Native Brotherhood. *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow: A Statement of Grievances and An Approach to Settlement.* Whitehorse: Council for Yukon Indians, 1973.

### Other Contributions

Agerbeck, Brandy, Kelvy Bird, Bradd, Sam, and Jennifer Shepherd, eds. *Drawn Together through Visual Practice.* Kelvy Bird, 2016.

Cockney, Bob. *I Nuligak*, trans. Maurice Métayer. Richmond Hill: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

*The Drum* 17, 18, May 6, 1982.

Fraser, Crystal Gail and Sara Komarnisky. "150 Acts of Reconciliation for the Last 150 Days of Canada's 150," *Active History* Blog Post, August 4, 2017. [www.activehistory.ca](http://www.activehistory.ca).

Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, *Northwest Territories Official Community Names and Pronunciation Guide*, [www.pwnhc.ca](http://www.pwnhc.ca).

Rosolen, Sarah (Aurora Research Institute, Aurora College). "Indigenizing: Some Initiatives Happening in Post-Secondary Institutions Across the Country." Paper circulated to Aurora College, November 2017.

Rosolen, Sarah and Dave Porter (Aurora Research Institute, Aurora College). *Decolonizing Learning in Communities Across Canada: Stories of HOPE.* September 2016.

### Indigenizing Post-Secondary Institutional Plans (Selected)

British Columbia Institute of Technology, The President's Advisory Committee for the Development of an Aboriginal Student Strategic Plan, *BCIT Aboriginal Strategic Plan and Recommendations.* September 2010.

Camosun College. Connie Michel. *Inspiring Relationships Indigenization Plan.* Victoria, BC, April 2013.

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology: The Home of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia. *Nicola Valley Institute of Technology Strategic Plan, 2012-2017*.

Simon Fraser University. *Simon Fraser University Office for Aboriginal Peoples, Aboriginal Strategic Plan, 2013-2018*.

*First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan, March 2007*.

Thompson Rivers University. Jack Miller with Nathan Matthew. *Report to the Academic Planning Steering Committee on the Inclusion of Aboriginal Content in the TRU Academic Plan*. April 8, 2011.

Stansa, Erin. *Aboriginal Destination TRU Project Results*. December 1, 2010.

University of British Columbia. *Indigenous Strategic Plan, Draft for Comment v. 3.4, 12 March 2018*.

First Nations House of Learning. *Aboriginal Strategic Plan, Fifth Year Implementation Report, Vancouver Campus, July 2014*.

*UBC Aboriginal Strategic Plan Implementation Report, Vancouver Campus for the Period Ending June 30, 2012*.

*Aboriginal Strategic Plan Implementation Report, UBC Vancouver, September 2010*.

*Implementation Priorities for the Aboriginal Strategic Plan, February 2009*.

The UBC Aboriginal Strategic Plan Development Working Group. *UBC Aboriginal Strategic Plan, December 17, 2008*.

University of Regina. Shauneen Pete. *100 Ways to Indigenize and Decolonize Programs and Courses*. 2016.

*Peyak Aski Kikawinaw: Together We Are Stronger. Strategic Plan 2015-2020*. 2015.

University of the Fraser Valley. *Indigenizing Our Academy: Strategic Planning Indigenous Post-Secondary Education at UFV Working Document*. April 2007.

University of Victoria. *Draft Strategic Framework for the University of Victoria, 2018-2023*.

---

<sup>1</sup> You can find the reference for the Indigenous place names in: Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, *Northwest Territories Official Community Names and Pronunciation Guide*, [www.pwnhc.ca](http://www.pwnhc.ca) (accessed on April 14, 2018). Information about treaties and other legal agreements can be found here: Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Government of the Northwest Territories, *Understanding Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in the Northwest Territories*, accessed on April 12, 2018, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).

<sup>2</sup> Treaty 8 was signed in 1899 and the adhesion a year later in 1900. Dominion of Canada, *Treaty No. 8 (June 21, 1899) and Adhesions, Reports, Etc.* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1899), accessed on April 12, 2018, [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca). Salt River has opted out of the Akaitcho Territory Government

---

and has a Treaty Land Entitlement Settlement: Salt River First Nation and Indian Affairs and Northern Development, *The Salt River First Nation Treaty Settlement Agreement, 2001*, accessed April 12, 2018, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).

<sup>3</sup> The Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations, Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Government of the Northwest Territories, *Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations Framework Agreement, July 25, 2000*, accessed April 12, 2018, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).

<sup>4</sup> K'atł'odeeche First Nation has not signed a modern land claim, but is governed under the *Indian Act*. Government of Canada, *Indian Act, 1876* and its amendments (1880, 1894, 1920, 1927, and 1951) (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1951).

<sup>5</sup> Dominion of Canada, *Treaty No. 11 (June 27, 1921) and Adhesion (July 17, 1922) with Reports, etc.* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1927), accessed on April 12, 2018, [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca); Dehcho First Nations, Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Government of the Northwest Territories, *The Deh Cho First Nations Framework Agreement*, May 2001, accessed on April 12, 2018, [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca). Fort Liard left these negotiations in 2008 to pursue independent negotiations.

<sup>6</sup> Dominion of Canada, *Treaty No. 11*; Tłı̨chų Government, Government of the Northwest Territories, and Aboriginal Affairs, *Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Among the Tłı̨chų and the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada*, August 25, 2003, accessed on April 12, 2018, [www.eia.gov.nt.ca](http://www.eia.gov.nt.ca).

<sup>7</sup> The Dene of Colville Lake, Déline, Fort Good Hope and Fort Norman and the Metis of Fort Good Hope, Fort Norma and Norman Wells, Government of the Northwest Territories, and Indian Affairs and Northern Development, *Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement*, 1993, accessed on April 14, 2018, [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca).

<sup>8</sup> Délı̨né First Nation Band, Délı̨né Land Corporation, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, and Indian Affairs and Northern Development, *Délı̨né Final Self-Government Agreement*, February 18, 2015, accessed April 12, 2018, [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca).

<sup>9</sup> Dominion of Canada, *Treaty No. 11*. Inuit and Inuvialuit extending from the Mackenzie Valley to the Coppermine River were invited to join Treaty 11 in 1929, but they refused. Inuvialuk man Bob Cockney told the Department of the Interior's Branch Director O.S. Finnie, "We don't want it. We have no business with you. Keep your five dollars. Instead of distributing it to everyone, put that money to some purpose [...] It would be better to feed those who are in misery, the widows, the blind, the sick." Bob Cockney, *I Nuligak*, trans. Maurice Métayer (Richmond Hill: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 163; René Fumoleau, *As Long As This Land Shall Last: A History of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004), 265-266.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Gwich'in Tribal Council, *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* (Ottawa: Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1992).

<sup>11</sup> Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, *The Inuvialuit Final Agreement as Amended, Consolidated Version, 2005*, accessed on April 12, 2018, [www.irc.inuvialuit.com](http://www.irc.inuvialuit.com).

<sup>12</sup> Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, states: (2) In this Act, "Aboriginal Peoples of Canada includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada." Government of Canada, *The Constitution Act, 1982, La Loi constitutionnelle de 1982* (Ottawa: Canadian Government Pub. Centre, Supply and Services Canada, 1982).

<sup>13</sup> Chris Andersen, *Métis: Race, Recognition, and the Struggle For Indigenous Peoplehood* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 16-17.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Yellow Bird, "What We Want to Be Called: Indigenous Peoples' Perspectives on Racial and Ethnic Identity Labels," *American Indian Quarterly* 23, 2 (Spring 1999).

<sup>15</sup> Aurora College Community and Extensions Division, *Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) Program Annual Report, 2015-2016*. Yellowknife: Aurora College, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Government of the Northwest Territories, *Aurora College Foundational Review, Prepared by MNP*, tabled document 198-18(3) on May 30, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Heine et al., *Gwichya Gwich'in Googwandak: The History and Stories of the Gwichya Gwich'in* (Tsiigehtshik and Fort McPherson, NT: Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, 2007), 58-59.

<sup>18</sup> *Indian Act*; Government of Canada, *Family Allowance Act, 1945* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1945); The Council of the Northwest Territories and, later, the Government of the Northwest Territories had several versions of *School Ordinances*. For more, consult the Legislative Library, Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

<sup>19</sup> Control over Indian Affairs in the North was the responsibility of several different departments over several decades. Its various forms included the Department of Indian Affairs, the Department of Mines and

---

Resources, and the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. In 1969, it was known as the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories, *Adult Vocational Training Centre, Fort Smith, Northwest Territories* (Fort Smith, NT: Department of Education, 1970).

<sup>21</sup> Council of the Northwest Territories, *Ninth Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories* (Yellowknife, NT: Northwest Territories Information, 1983), 64.

<sup>22</sup> Advisory Committee on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, *Report of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, Vol. 1* (Ottawa: The Commission, 1966), 2-3; Council of the Northwest Territories, *Ninth Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories*, 64.

<sup>23</sup> Victor Allen, Reverend Douglas, Mrs. M.E. Hamilton, L.P. Mann, Panelok, Father Posset (Fort Simpson), Robert Tompkins, P. Verhesen, Enooeyea, Chief Edward Hardisty, Mrs. W.P. Johnston, Kongasiritook, Koonark, B.K. Kristensen, Kyak, Lionel Nutaradlaluk, Peterosee, Dan E. Priest (Fort Norman), Joe Sanspariel, Bernadette Tungilik, and Phyllis M. Worsley; Advisory Committee on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, *Report of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, Vol. 2* (Ottawa: The Commission, 1966), B11, B15, B19, B25-B28, C11, C16, C21-C22, C24, C26, C30-C32, C38-C39, C41-C42, C45, C48.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories, "Education in the Northwest Territories: Presented to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, 1976" (unpublished paper).

<sup>25</sup> Isadore Zoe, *Lac La Martre, N.W.T., August 12, 1976, Proceedings at Community Hearing, Vol. 73*, 8198.

<sup>26</sup> Nap Norbert, *Arctic Red River, N.W.T., March 13, 1976, Proceedings at Community Hearing, Vol. 47*, 4575.

<sup>27</sup> Department of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories, *Survey of Education: Northwest Territories* (Yellowknife: Department of Education, 1972), 4; Council of the Northwest Territories, *Report to the Special Committee of the Northwest Territories to Study the "Survey of Education - Northwest Territories,"* (Yellowknife, NT: Council of the Northwest Territories, 1973), iii.

<sup>28</sup> Heather McGregor, *Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 93.

<sup>29</sup> "Recommendations of Special Committee on Education," *The Drum* 17, 18 (May 6, 1982), 5; Susan Chisholm, "Assimilation and Oppression: The Northern Experience, Education and the Aboriginal Adolescent," *Education Canada* 34, 4 (1994), 31.

<sup>30</sup> Legislative Assembly, Special Committee on Education, Government of the Northwest Territories, *Learning: Tradition & Change in the Northwest Territories* (Yellowknife, NT: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1982).

<sup>31</sup> M. Cleveland, "Arctic College: The Development of a Territorial College System" (unpublished paper presented at the fourth *Inuit Studies Conference*, Montreal, 1984).

<sup>32</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>33</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Calls to Action* (Winnipeg, MB: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012), 2, 7-8.

<sup>34</sup> Government of the Northwest Territories, *2014-2015 Traditional Knowledge Annual Report, Tabled Document 88-18(2), Tabled on June 28, 2016*. The report reflects that Aurora College programs and policies were responsible for 34% of entries (breakdown for each category as follows: Core Services 10.25%, Cultural Awareness 85.32%, Culture 40.63%, Language 37.5%, On-the-Land Skills 50%, Research and Monitoring 0%, and Traditional Healing 50%.)

<sup>35</sup> Legislative Assembly, Government of the Northwest Territories, *Aurora College Corporate Plan, 2017-2018, Tabled Document 33-18(3) on October 20, 2017*.

<sup>36</sup> Yukon Native Brotherhood, *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow: A Statement of Grievances and An Approach to Settlement* (Whitehorse: Council for Yukon Indians, 1973).

<sup>37</sup> For more on this process, see: Elizabeth Bosely and John Reid, *Sunshine: The Report to Yukon College on the Training Needs and Dynamics of Yukon First Nations* (Whitehorse: Yukon College, February 2008).

<sup>38</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Calls to Action*.

<sup>39</sup> Sarah Rosolen and Dave Porter, "Decolonizing Learning in Communities Across Canada: Stories of HOPE," September 2016. For more, see: [nwtresearch.com/projects/education/stories-hope](http://nwtresearch.com/projects/education/stories-hope) (accessed on September 2, 2018).

<sup>40</sup> Yukon College's document was used as an example. See: Yukon College, "Terms of Reference for Yukon College President's Advisory Committee on First Nation Initiatives" (Whitehorse, YT: Yukon College, 2007), accessed on August 28, 2018, [www.yukoncollege.yk.ca](http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca).

---

<sup>41</sup> For the *Terms of Reference* for Yukon College President's Advisory Committee on First Nation Initiatives, see: [https://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/PACFNI\\_Terms\\_of\\_Reference\\_-\\_Final\\_Version.pdf](https://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/PACFNI_Terms_of_Reference_-_Final_Version.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> Crystal Gail Fraser and Sara Komarnisky, "150 Acts of Reconciliation for the Last 150 Days of Canada's 150," *Active History* Blog Post, August 4, 2017, [www.activehistory.ca/150acts](http://www.activehistory.ca/150acts).