

Eagle Feather NEWS

FREE

Brander is home at Wanuskewin

Darlene Brander has returned to Wanuskewin after a twenty year absence. Once the Aboriginal awareness co-ordinator, she now has the title of CEO and a major renovation and renewal to oversee. (Photo by Angela Hill)



**By Angela Hill
For Eagle Feather News**

Darlene Brander has officially returned to a place that has been part of her life for decades.

On March 4, she became the new CEO of Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

“It’s going full circle for me,” said Brander, who walked the trails after her wedding 25 years ago and worked at the park in the late ‘90s, coordinating Aboriginal awareness education programs.

While Brander studied education at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, (now First Nations University of Canada), and taught for a few years in Saskatchewan’s Northwest, her time working at Wanuskewin marked a transition.

Brander started to fulfil her personal mandate: “serve and give back to the community in what way I can.”

She believes in planning for the future and figuring out what impact you want to have.

Brander grew a career in human resources through the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, City of Saskatoon and Athabasca Catering Limited Partnership and volunteering with Saskatoon Aboriginal Professionals Association board.

Brander said the best piece of advice she received is, “if there is a door of opportunity, you go through it.”

Her biggest piece of advice for women starting their careers is simple.

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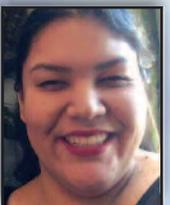
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CPMA #40027204

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“It’s important that they prioritize themselves, that they take care of themselves physically, mentally, spiritually, so that they are the best versions of themselves, so when they go to give back to the world, they have a good foundation.”

Brander sits on the Children’s Discovery Museum board (now Nutrien Wonderhub), and the Saskatoon Board of Police Commissioners, where she has been the chair since 2016.

During Brander’s tenure as police board chair, Troy Cooper became Saskatoon’s police chief. He said Brander serves a special role on the board and “does an excellent job” in her role explaining the work of the police to the community.

“She has guided the board into looking more to the community around expectations around policing,” Cooper said.

Brander chaired the human resources and nominating committee at the children’s museum.

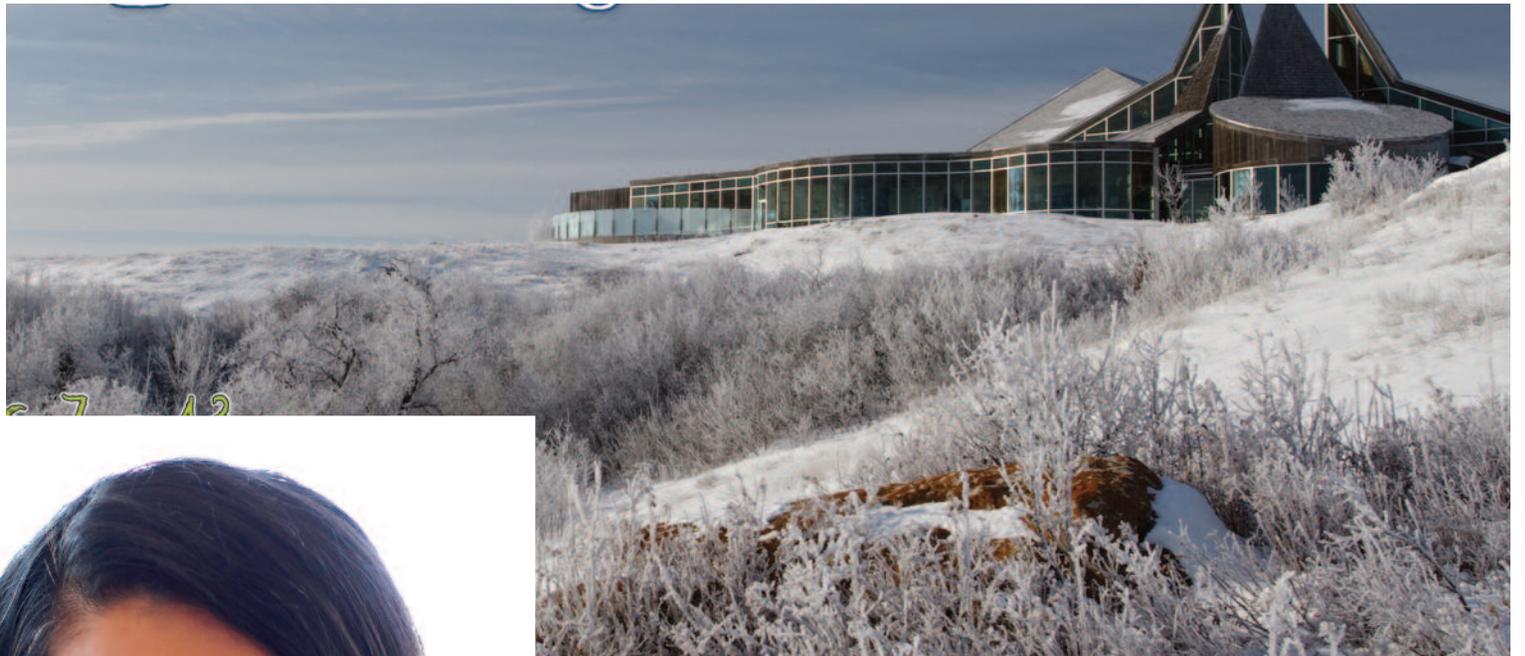
“... so when you walk through the door at Wanuskewin you feel that you’ve come home.”

– Darlene Brander

Brander said she is looking forward to implementing the four-part plan at the park: creating the centre of excellence; preserving the valley; the returning of the bison, which is set for 2020; and becoming a UNESCO heritage site.

Wanuskewin is a world class facility, Brander said.

“I want to bring it to the next level, so when you walk through the door at Wanuskewin you feel that you’ve come home. I want everybody to feel like that and that you want to come back home again, and you want to bring some people with you.”





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As well PMHC administers the Saskatchewan Non-Designated Indigenous funding stream for the Aboriginal Homelessness Partnering Strategy as well as addressing the housing mandate for Métis and low-income people of Saskatchewan. The Aboriginal HPS program is as status blind program that provides funding for projects that focus on reducing homelessness and specifically Indigenous homelessness throughout the Province that are off-reserve and outside of the designated communities of Regina and Saskatoon. The name of the Aboriginal HPS program will change to Reaching Home as of April 1, 2019 but the mandate and process will remain the same with projects recommended by an independent advisory board and administered by PMHC.

PMHC is looking for representation on the Board of Directors for the South, Central and Northern areas of Saskatchewan and as such PMHC is requesting interested Métis applicants to submit their resumes to the office by March 31, 2019. PMHC requires a cover letter indicating your interest, a Criminal Record Check, and a summary from a recognized Credit Bureau. We are encouraging Métis persons with legal, administrative and housing delivery experience as well as those interested community members who have a specific interest in social housing and homelessness in the Indigenous communities to apply.

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Mr. Derek Langan – MNS Minister of Housing
Provincial Métis Housing Corporation
#15 – 901 1st Avenue North, Saskatoon, SK. S7K 1Y4

Michelle Brass named to provincial bench

**By Angela Hill
For Eagle Feather News**

Michelle Brass didn't plan to become a judge. She just wanted to serve society.

"I've always enjoyed working for the public as a public servant," Brass said.

Throughout her career in law, spanning over 20 years, she has worked to give back, spending time with Justice Canada, the Indian Specific Claims Commission, Saskatchewan Water Security Agency and in private practice.

She received her law degree from the University of Saskatchewan and has

gone back to teach classes for the College of Law's Wiyasiwewin Mikiwahp Native Law Centre.

"Judge Brass is an outstanding appointment to the bench," said Saskatchewan's justice minister and attorney general Don Morgan.

"From sharing her knowledge in the classroom, to providing advice to the ministry, she has made valuable contributions to the legal community in Saskatchewan and Canada. Her knowledge, experience and skill will certainly enhance the judicial system in our province."

Brass, who is from the Peepeekisis



Michelle Brass being sworn in as the judge of Estevan Provincial Court.

First Nation, was appointed in November and was sworn in as the judge of the provincial court in Estevan on Jan. 11.

"It was a great ceremony," Brass said.

Over the hour and a half long ceremony there was both the traditions of the legal system and cultural tradition, she said.

At the Regina Provincial Courthouse, where the event was held, chief justices from the courts and representatives from the legal community attended, a drum group played an honour song, and an elder offered a prayer.

"I thought it was very important because it was the first time for Treaty 4 to have an Indigenous judge sworn in in their own territory," she said, about in-

cluding culture in the ceremony.

Throughout her career, Brass said she had people to look up to, whether it was her uncle inspiring her to pursue higher education, or her father starting her thinking about the law as a career path, and she always felt supported. Brass hopes she can be a role model to youth.

Seeing an Indigenous woman judge in the courtroom has led people to approach Brass after court, "and say they are so happy to see me sitting there." Another time, a youth wanted to know if she would be there the next day.

Brass finds it encouraging.

"I think that this is a positive thing," she said. "I find it an exciting challenge, a positive challenge."



A drum group played during the ceremony. (Photos submitted by Nelson Bird)

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Honour Indigenous women every day

For our March issue, we are honouring our Indigenous women.

We wanted to try something different, so I went out searching for female journalists and writers to contribute to this month's paper. All female Indigenous writers. All stories based on Indigenous women!

All of the contributing writers are women I went to university with, who were my instructors, strong community leaders and my past coworkers. It was nice reconnecting with everyone.

The idea of giving our writers the chance to pitch stories based on Indigenous women was exciting. Hearing all their pitches was incredible and refreshing. There are so much stories out there that are untouched and we gave them a chance to shine a spotlight on our Indigenous women.

We had a few stories that fell through due to the inability of connecting with the sources to meet our deadline.

I wanted to take the time to acknowledge an important story that didn't make it into this month's paper. I pitched a story on Saskatchewan's oldest Indigenous matriarch. I've done a story on seeking Saskatchewan's oldest Indigenous peoples a few years back. Through research and public call-outs, I've found our province's oldest Indigenous people – all three were women. Sadly, two of those women had passed on.

Sarazine Ratt, a Denesuline from English River, passed away at the age of 104 in 2016. She had accomplished a lot in her life. Sarazine was married to Frank Ratt who died a long time ago. They never had any children but she raised her nephew, Velmore Aubichon who is in his late 60s.

Sarazine attended residential school in the early '20s in Beauval where she learned to speak French, Latin, Cree and Dené. As a multi-linguist, Sarazine taught Dené syllabics at school in the '70s. Her community al-

ways acknowledged her birthday by having a community celebration with cake and a community meal.

Philomene Moise, who lived on the Muskowekwan First Nation, passed away at the age of 105 in the same year as Sarazine. Philomene never took food for granted and always ate wild meats, soup, bannock, porridge and other traditional foods. She lost her eyesight and resided in the Lestock care home for almost nine years. Her community also

celebrated her birthday yearly.

Sarazine and Philomene will be missed by their families and communities.

Flora Weenonis from the Big River First Nation is the remaining oldest Indigenous woman in Saskatchewan. Flora will be celebrating her 107th birthday this month! Her late husband, Thomas Weenonis, passed away years ago. Together, they had about ten children and many grandchil-



Imagine all of the change that Flora Weenonis has seen in her 106 years watching this world turn. Born near the start of the First World War, this Big River citizen is Saskatchewan's oldest First Nation person and has stories tell and lessons to share with her extensive family. Her birthday is celebrated yearly with a community feast.



Comment

Jeanelle Mandes

dren and great-grandchildren. Flora continues to speak her Cree language and practice her culture, eating traditional foods like wild meat and still refuses to eat fast foods. Her community celebrates her birthday with a community feast.

It was amazing to listen to these three women's stories on how they lived their lives, their hobbies, what their diet consisted of and how they stayed active. Covering this assignment will always be a memorable experience that will stay with me forever.

Speaking of matriarchs, I am reminded by the strong women who made an impact in my life.

My mothers, Olive and Linda, and my traditionally adopted moms Loretta and the late Delores.

All four women have made me the woman I am today. I've learned the importance of valuing family and embracing my role as a mother through them. I've learned about the hard times through their stories.

I recall during my pregnancy, I was afraid of becoming a mother. All four of these women guided me throughout my pregnancy and provided me with the knowledge and tools to take on my journey as a mother.

I was taught how to cook and bake, how to sew, bead, basic life hacks and the power of ceremony. I was blessed then and I am blessed today. Nanaskamon.

This month, take the time to reflect on our Indigenous women. Acknowledge their presence, the contributions and impact they made in your life, recognize their strengths and embrace who they are to you and your community.

Our Indigenous women shouldn't only be recognized on Mothers Day or international women's day but every single day.

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Box 924 Saskatoon, Sk S7K 3M4
306-978-8118, 1-866-323-NEWS (6397)

PUBLISHER/EDITOR: John Lagimodiere, John@eaglefeathernews.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Warren Gouling, publisher@askewcreek.com

NEWS EDITOR: Jeanelle Mandes, Jeanelle@eaglefeathernews.com

WEB EDITOR: Darla Read, Darla@eaglefeathernews.com

SALES: deirdra ness, d@eaglefeathernews.com

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Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: EFN Circ., P.O. Box 924 Saskatoon SK S7K 3M4

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The hugs are over, now we need real change

Full disclosure, this column was paid for by the PMO's team. It only cost them a measly three hundred thousand. I'm so ashamed to admit that I am one of Katie Telford's minions. (I'm not of course, but hey Katie, if you're reading, call me!)

On the same day that Trump's lawyer Michael Cohen was describing all the crimes and crap that his boss had put him through, former Attorney General and Minister of Justice Jody Wilson-Raybould was providing testimony about her boss's pressure tactics.

Now, Trudeau is no Trump – that's like comparing apples to orange-hued lumps of toxic sludge. But it is the rare day when Canadian politics is as riveting as American. Raybould-Wilson started hot.

In her opening statement, Wilson-Raybould described a sustained effort to influence her to provide SNC-Lavalin with a Deferred Prosecution Agreement (DPA). She also did a land acknowledgement, probably the most important and cheekiest one ever made.

I watched Wilson-Raybould's testimony and if you came away with any other impression than that she is brilliant and principled then you might be a Republican.

She stood up to efforts to influence her decision and whether or not you agree with that decision, she had the right to make it and to not be subjected to undue pressure to un-make it.

In her opening statement, she said that these efforts culminated in "veiled threats". She described a phone call from one of the Prime Minister's officials around Christmas time (yikes) in which it was implied that her job was on the line if she didn't reconsider her decision on the DPA.

When questioned about Raybould-Wilson's testi-

mony, Trudeau said that it's about saving jobs. He thinks this answer makes him look good but it only raises



more questions. Such as, don't other companies also provide jobs and haven't they provided prominent members of the Gaddafi family with sex workers?

Or is that just part of the business of engineering? "Hey Todd, did you get those contracts signed?" "Yup." "And did you ask them what kind of perverse desires they want satisfied?" "Uh..." "Jesus, Todd, you had one job!"

And, if SNC-Lavalin profited from the criminal behaviour of a few of their officials, then weren't other engineering companies affected by this unfair advantage?

I suppose if the PDA does occur, then the remediation agreement might be able to address this inequity in the penalty – which is something we should all look for. (But we probably won't.)

I don't think this is about jobs really, or maybe it's about one specific job, the position of Prime Minister.

Raybould-Wilson is correct in characterizing this a political decision because he was worried about losing votes in his riding. Ironically, this situation might be the reason why he loses it.

Wilson-Raybould boldly stood her ground and it a

pattern that we are seeing right now: female juggernauts who are not afraid to wield the power that their positions afford them.

From Nancy Pelosi holding the mic away from the infant-potus until he caved on the shutdown, to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez who refuses to back down on her climate change views and socialist ideals (one of them is that people who work for her should be paid decent wages. Oh, the horror!)

And, of course, Cindy Blackstock who continues to hold the federal government's feet to the fire for discriminatory funding for First Nations children (another non-compliance order is in the works.)

Our society and government need to focus on cleaning up the environment, on reducing our carbon imprints and transitioning away from the fossil fuel industry. This will require principled leadership. Is that Trudeau or is the First Nations woman who just handed his ass to him?

But Trudeau is no slouch when it comes to progressive moves. Trudeau appointed the first gender-balanced cabinet ever. Before he came along, it was just a room of dudes wondering who was going to get them coffee.

He also appointed an Indigenous woman to the highest federal post that any Indigenous person has ever held. Like Wilson-Raybould, he knows how to make a helluva an opening statement.

Watching the proceedings was pretty exciting but when they were over I only felt sad.

The two of them with their strong mandate letters and uncomfortably close hugs represented a chance for real change which we need now more than ever.

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Supper tickets are \$5 each and available at your local advice centre.

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We'll get through this with honesty, humility, love

It is heartwarming to see the resurgence of Indigenous women's ceremonies, leadership, and pride.

It is heartwarming to see our people increasingly making space for women and non-binary genders in all aspects of community life. It's also heartwarming to see more attention given to raising our children to honour and be respectful of each other.

Rebuilding our families, communities and nations from the effects of colonization is hard work. It requires that we challenge and make changes in our thinking and in our personal behavior.

It also requires that we make changes in the system—in institutions and laws. We can see some of these systemic changes taking place.

For example, in 1951 First Nations women were finally able to vote in Band elections, and the 1985 Indian Act was revised to prohibit non-Native women from gaining Indian status and Band membership when they married First Nations men.

There have also been some recent changes in matrimonial property laws and membership codes. But systemic change alone will not fix what's broken. It's up to each and every one of us to reflect on our thinking and our actions, and how negative thinking and actions continue to keep us down.

Colonialism introduced a lot of ideas and behaviors that are totally out of whack with our ways of life before European colonization. I have written elsewhere that I believe the three big uglies colonialism introduced to our people are materialism, individualism and the patriarchy (male dominance).

The three big uglies are still wreaking havoc in our families and communities but at least now they have been identified, we know how much damage they have caused, and they are being challenged.

In our lifetimes we have seen and experienced misogyny (dislike, contempt and/or prejudice against women) and violence directed at non-binary people, and have been ignored and silenced.

So it is a beautiful thing to experience and see the efforts towards decolonization—towards the healing—of gender relations in our families and communities.

Truth and Reconciliation is not just about addressing our relations with non-Indigenous Canadians. There is also a continued need for Truth and Reconciliation within our own communities to help us regain healthy relations and lifestyles.

The need to face the truths of our colonized minds and actions is evident in the emergence of our own version of the #MeToo movement. The social media

#MeToo movement created a space for victims of sexual harassment and sexual assault to identify and call out abusers, and it strives to

make abusers accountable to their victims and communities.

This is the "truth" part that is both painful and liberating. The "reconciliation" part is just as hard. We expect the abusers to not just confess but to heal and actively work to educate about and end all forms of abuse.

These Truth and Reconciliation efforts are vital to help heal the trauma and rebuild healthy families and communities.

One significant effort to address the #MeToo movement in our communities comes from Dr. Rob Innes (Cowessess First Nation) and Tracey Robinson (Ahtakakooop First Nation). In the midst of the #MeToo social media movement they noted that there was a handful of Indigenous women who shared their #MeToo experiences.

Innes and Robinson, like many of

us, are concerned that in the era of missing and murdered Indigenous women, open discussion on "sexual entitlement, male dominance, misogyny, sexual harassment and sexual assault is eerily quiet within Indigenous communities in Canada and the United States."

Innes and Robinson want to build on the social media discussions by compiling stories into a book. They are inviting people to share their experiences and responses to the #MeToo movement, with the goal that it will initiate more meaningful and long overdue discussions.

There is always the aspiration that open discussion can lead to increased awareness and change. They are inviting submissions in the form of stories, essays, poetry, op-eds, creative artistic expressions, creative non-fiction, and photography.

If you are interested in participating, please send them a 300 word description of what you want to contribute to katawasin@gmail.com by April 1, 2019. Complete submissions will be due by August 1, 2019.

There's a saying that pops up on Facebook every once in a while that I find empowering: "we inherited trauma from our past, but we also inherited resilience."

I have faith that we will get through this too, with honesty, humility and love.



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Thunderchild lawyer earns prestigious QC designation

By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News

An Indigenous lawyer from Thunderchild First Nation has had a remarkable career so far.

Eleanore Sunchild has been practicing law since 1999. It was a passion that she longed for and a dream that she made happen.

“I always liked reading. I wanted to find a job where I can make a difference,” she said. “In high school, I had an aptitude for law from doing one of those self-tests. It was in Grade 11 that I decided that I wanted to be a lawyer.”

Sunchild obtained her education from the University of Alberta. She currently has her own law firm in North Battleford called Sunchild Law which has been in operation for almost 14 years. Her practice focuses on Indigenous law and specializes in residential school claims. She credits her greatest mentors in law who are two strong Mohawk women, the late Patricia Monture and her adopted sister Beverly Jacobs.

In December, Sunchild was amongst other distinguished lawyers who were honoured with 2018 Queen’s Counsel Designations for their contributions to the legal profession and public service.

“These individuals have made significant contributions to the legal profession, the justice system and their communities,” Justice Minister and Attorney General Don Morgan said in a statement.

“I’m pleased to recognize their hard work and dedication to our province.”

The Queen’s Counsel appointments are based on recommendations from a selection committee consisting of Saskatchewan’s Minister of Justice and Attorney General, the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan or the Chief Justice of the Court of Queen’s Bench and the past presidents of the Saskatchewan branch of the Canadian Bar Association and the Law Society of Saskatchewan.

Sunchild dedicated her honour to those she worked hard for in her career.

“I am honoured to receive the appointment from the Province. I have worked hard and dedicate it to Indian residential school survivors and the Boushie family as these have been the most rewarding and challenging matters of my career,” she said.

Sunchild suggests the path for other Indigenous women who want to pursue a career in law is to be fearless.

“Don’t allow self-doubts or self-sabotaging fears to stand in your way of speaking out for what you want,” she said.

“A lot of times, I felt very alone. Speaking out against issues that affect our people, issues of injustice, genocide.

“My opinion wasn’t (and still) isn’t popular but I speak out because I have a role as a lawyer to speak for those who can’t speak for themselves.”

Eleanore Sunchild has achieved the designation of Queens Counsel. Her 20-year law career has seen her participate in high profile cases and build a well respected business, Sunchild Law, out of North Battleford.




Sheri Benson
Member of Parliament Saskatoon West

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Sixties Scoop movie shows Indigenous view

By Betty Ann Adam
For Eagle Feather News

Trouble in the Garden, a new Canadian movie about the Sixties Scoop, has a Saskatchewan connection in the form of executive producer Raven Sinclair.

The film is about an Indigenous adoptee, who had returned to her roots and became a land claims activist, and who is unexpectedly reunited with her estranged adoptive family.

The film explores the collision between cultures, worldviews and values. It exposes good intentions executed through assimilation and racism. It touches on issues of stolen land and what family means when self-interest tests loyalty. It looks at advice to forget the past against ongoing realities that still effect Indigenous people.

While some reviewers have questioned the likelihood of the confluence of all the story elements, Sinclair said she still gets shivers of recognition when she watches scenes in which picture-perfect exteriors are revealed as masking dark truths.

Writer and director Roz Owen, a lecturer in film studies at Ryerson University, approached Sinclair in the fall of 2017. She had Sinclair read the script to see if it presented an authentic Indigenous perspective of the main character, Pippa, who prefers her Indigenous name, Raven (a name change Owen made after working with Sinclair.)

Sinclair, a professor in the faculty of Social Work at the Saskatoon campus of the University of Regina, is a Sixties Scoop survivor and a leading expert on the subject.

"I couldn't put (the script) down. It was like a good novel. I said I loved it but it needs work," Sinclair said recently.

Thus began months of revisions as Sinclair, "In-

digenized or Scoop-ized" the story, going through the script word by word, and making changes such as vetoing the character having an alcoholic drink with her brother after smudging.

In another scene, Sinclair injected a lighter side to the character, having her mischievously taunt her brother as he tries to keep her in line.

"Even though we go through these situations, we still laugh," she said.

The situations that arise in the film don't represent all Indigenous adoptive and foster child experiences, which fall on a continuum, yet even survivors of loving and safe childhoods struggle with their identities and their experiences, Sinclair said.

"The themes it captures will resonate with all survivors," she said.

Sinclair was unable to attend the 12-day film shoot in October 2018 in North Bay, Ontario and was disappointed with a few incongruent details that snuck in.

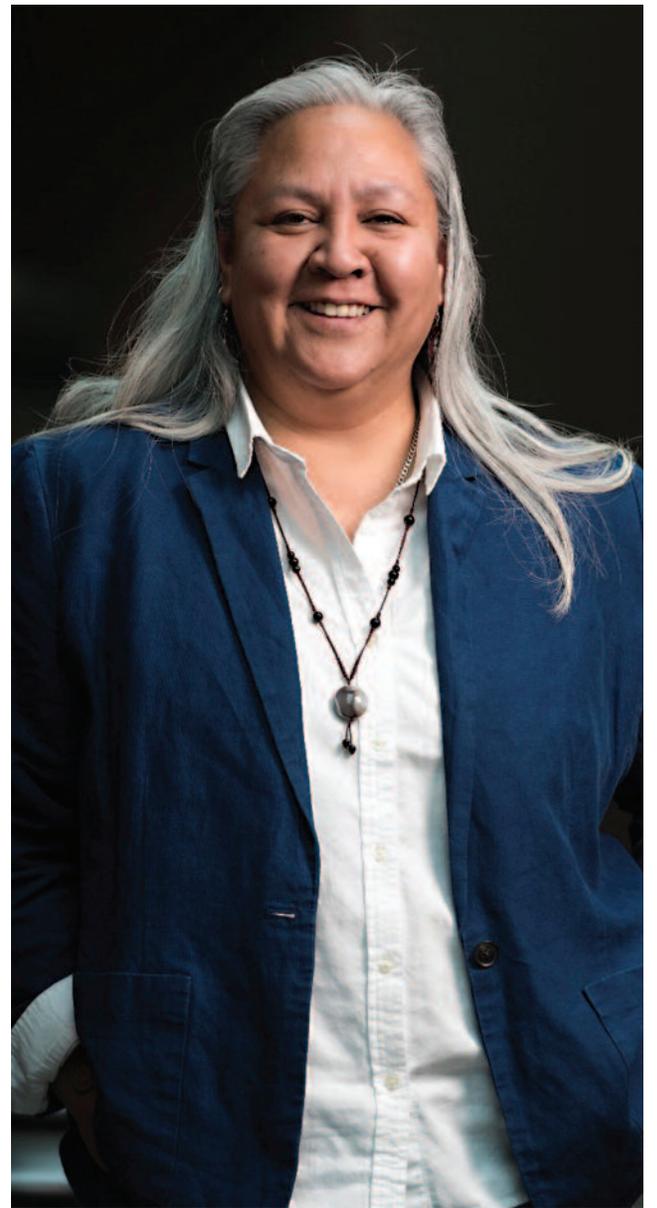
In the scene with the smudging, the character uses a lighter instead of the more proper matches to light the sage. Sinclair had the filmmaker add a voiceover of Raven apologizing to Creator for making do with what she had.

It's a small mistake that many Indigenous people who are still learning their culture will likely recognize and laugh along with, Sinclair said.

The film stars Cara Gee and Jon Cor with well-known actors Fiona Reid and Frank Moore in supporting roles.

It features music from Buffy Sainte-Marie and the Ottawa-based Indigenous folk music duo Twin Flame.

Trouble in the Garden opened March 1 at Regina's Rainbow Cinema and on March 8 at the Roxy Theatre in Saskatoon.



Raven Sinclair is the executive producer of the movie *Trouble in the Garden*, a Canadian made movie about the 60's Scoop.



Provincial Métis Housing Corporation

#15 - 901 1st Avenue North, Saskatoon, SK. S7K 1Y4
Tel: (306) 343-8240 Fax: (306) 343-1700 E-mail: metishousing@sasktel.net

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The federal government has invested \$2.2 billion dollars to reduce chronic homelessness in Canada by 50% by 2027-2028. Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy is part of the federal government's \$40 billion-dollar National Housing Strategy. The National Housing Strategy objectives are to provide safe, adequate and affordable housing for Canadians and to address serious affordable housing shortages in all regions of Canada and to reduce chronic homelessness by 50% over the next 10 years.

The Provincial Métis Housing Corporation (PMHC) has been invited to apply to provide the administration for the Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy through the Saskatchewan Non- Designated Indigenous Homelessness Funding Stream.

The Saskatchewan Non-Designated Funding Stream administered by PMHC will provide funding for projects that focus on reducing homelessness and specifically Indigenous homelessness throughout the Province. The projects must be off-reserve and outside the designated communities of Regina and Saskatoon. This Request for Proposals will solicit applications that provide social and housing first supports and applications that provide for capital projects that are specific to meet the needs of people who are homeless and who are at the risk of homelessness and specifically people who are the Indigenous homeless in the Province of Saskatchewan.

The total amount of funding available for New Projects for 2019-2020 is approximately \$700,000 under the new Reaching Home Non-Designated Indigenous Homelessness funding stream to fund projects between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020 pending funding.

Please note: Due to nature of the 2019-2024 contract roll out PMHC is releasing this request on a Pending Funding basis. The closing date for receiving applications is Monday, March 18, 2019 by 4:00 PM.

For an application package or for more information please contact:
Program Coordinator Marcia Wolinski or Program Coordinator Shane Pelletier
Email: metishousing@sasktel.net
Phone: 1 (306) 343-8240 or Toll free 1 (844) 396-7933



Provincial Métis Housing Corporation

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Tel: (306) 343-8240 Fax: (306) 343-1700 E-mail: metishousing@sasktel.net

APPEL DE PROPOSITIONS

Le gouvernement fédéral a investi 2,2 milliards de dollars pour réduire de 50% le nombre de sans-abri chroniques au Canada d'ici 2027-2028. Reaching Home: La stratégie pour les sans-abri du Canada fait partie de la stratégie nationale du logement du gouvernement fédéral, dotée de 40 milliards de dollars. Les objectifs de la Stratégie nationale pour le logement sont de fournir des logements sûrs, adéquats et abordables aux Canadiens, de remédier aux graves pénuries de logements abordables dans toutes les régions du Canada et de réduire le nombre de sans-abri chroniques de 50% au cours des dix prochaines années.

La Provincial Metis Housing Corporation (PMHC) a été invitée à présenter une demande pour administrer la stratégie Reaching Home: Canada Homelessness par l'intermédiaire du volet de financement pour les sans-abri autochtones non désignés de la Saskatchewan.

Le volet de financement non désigné de la Saskatchewan administré par la PMHC financera des projets axés sur la réduction des sans-abris me et plus particulièrement des sans-abri autochtones dans toute la province. Les projets doivent être hors réserve et hors des communautés désignées de Regina et de Saskatoon. Cette demande de propositions sollicitera des demandes de soutien social et de logement, ainsi que des demandes de financement de projets d'immobilisations spécifiquement conçus pour répondre aux besoins des sans-abri menacés de sans-abris me et plus particulièrement des sans-abri autochtones la province de la Saskatchewan.

Le montant total des fonds disponibles pour les nouveaux projets pour 2019-2020 s'élève à environ 700 000 dollars au titre du nouveau volet de financement Reaching Home pour les sans-abri autochtones non désignés, qui financera des projets entre le 1er avril 2019 et le 31 mars 2020.

Remarque: en raison de la nature du déploiement du contrat 2019-2024, le PMHC publie cette demande sur la base d'un financement en attente. La date limite de réception des candidatures est le lundi 18 mars 2019 à 16h00.

Pour un dossier de candidature ou pour plus d'informations, veuillez contacter:
La coordonnatrice du programme, **Marcia Wolinski**, ou le coordonnateur du programme, **Shane Pelletier**
Email: metishousing@sasktel.net
Téléphone: 1 (306) 343-8240 ou sans frais 1 (844) 396-7933

Self-defence a way of life for Pasapa

By Penny Smoke
For Eagle Feather News

Getting up and getting active isn't just a motto for self-defence trainer and founder of Power Our Women (POW), a self-defence program aimed at women. For Shana Pasapa it is a way of life.

Pasapa, 31, is a Nakota woman originally from the Whitebear First Nation located in southern Saskatchewan.

A mother of two sons, aged 11 and 12, Pasapa prides herself on being a positive role model not only for her children but for all the students she coaches.

"Having balance mentally, physically and spiritually has really helped me stay centered," said Pasapa.

Self-defence training is a big part of Pasapa's life but she says finding balance for her is spending her down time with her partner and sons.

Eight years ago, she found her passion in martial arts and said that when she began to train she found that her own confidence and physical health excelled and that is something she wants others to find in themselves.

"If I can help one person feel better about themselves then I feel accomplished," she said.

A strong believer in her culture, Pasapa said including cultural aspects is a large part of her success, something she credits her mother for instilling these skills within her growing up on Whitebear First Nation.

"Being able to teach life skills is a great feeling. Even if it's self defence, hoop dancing, hooping making. It is something they will have for the rest of their lives," said Pasapa.

She has visited over 23 communities across the province providing training and seminars, with hopes to travel to others in the future.

Pasapa said she lost track of how many students she has had after it hit the 3,000 mark.

"It just keeps growing and that is what my goal was when I started this to get people active and aware," she said.

Pasapa recently complete a 12-week program with clients and staff at All Nations Hope, a grass root organization in Regina's North Central neighbourhood, where students received basic skills in identifying and escaping dangerous situations.

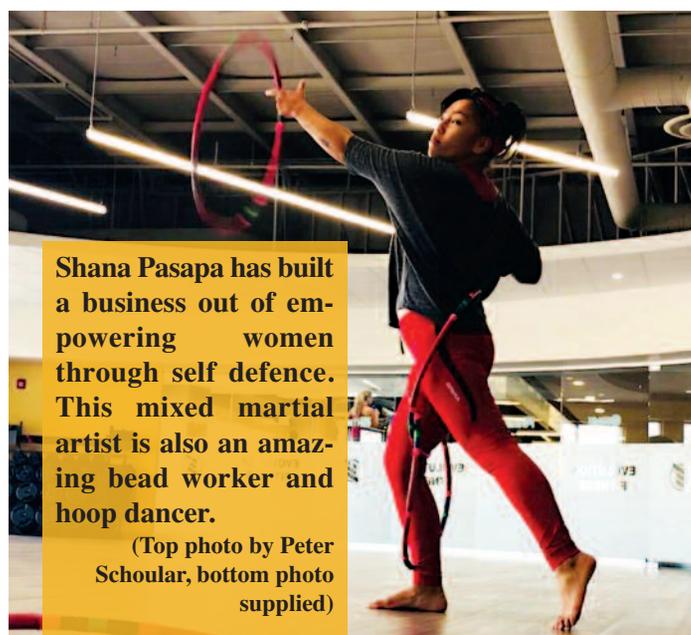
"I felt stronger and felt safer after the 12-weeks. It made me feel more confident in myself than I had before," said a former student Carolyn Pelletier.

In 2015, Pasapa was selected as one of CBC's Future 40 winners and received a Strength of Our Women award the same year for her strides in sports and leadership. This year she received an award for community safety from the Saskatchewan First Nations Safety Association in her work within the community.

Currently, Pasapa is offering a beginner classes for women out of Queen City Martial Art, as well as self defence class for a spring session at the Mamawayatitan Centre.

She hopes to eventually do a Canada-wide tour to spread her message of self awareness to women and girls across the country, and has aspirations to have a P.O.W trainer in each city.

"Anytime anyone wants us to come out to their communities, we are more than welcoming to those opportunities to help empower our women."



Shana Pasapa has built a business out of empowering women through self defence. This mixed martial artist is also an amazing bead worker and hoop dancer.

(Top photo by Peter Schoular, bottom photo supplied)

CONGRATULATIONS STUDENTS!

During Indigenous Achievement Week this February 41 Indigenous students received awards for their accomplishments in academics, community outreach, leadership and research. Congratulations to everyone and thank you for all that you do!



INDIGENOUS
ACHIEVEMENT
WEEK



Non-traditional at times, Tootoosis wants to emulate kokums

By EFN Staff

Tattoos and ribbon skirts.

Some people may say it's not a traditional combination, but Tala Tootoosis has never claimed to be traditional.

"I would rather be real and authentic," said the newly published author of, *The Awakening of the Kokum Spirit in a Young Woman*.

The book is a compilation of her spoken word poetry, blog posts along with some of her favourite images.

"I wanted to create something that wouldn't take too long to read, but would contain some teachings," said Tootoosis.

It was a labour of love and she couldn't be happier with the finished product.

"I look at it and I still can't believe that's me," Tootoosis said about the book. "Every time I'm asked to sign one it brings tears to my eyes. It's so humbling."

For the past few years, she has been active on social media blogging about rape culture, sexual assault, addiction, colonization and residential schools as a way to raise awareness about how these things have, and continue to impact Indigenous women.

Tootoosis didn't realize until she was in university that she had a talent for spoken-word poetry.

She recalled struggling in an In-

igenous Studies class because she couldn't connect with the instructor.

"There was this white woman standing there, in front of me, trying to teach me about my people," said Tootoosis.

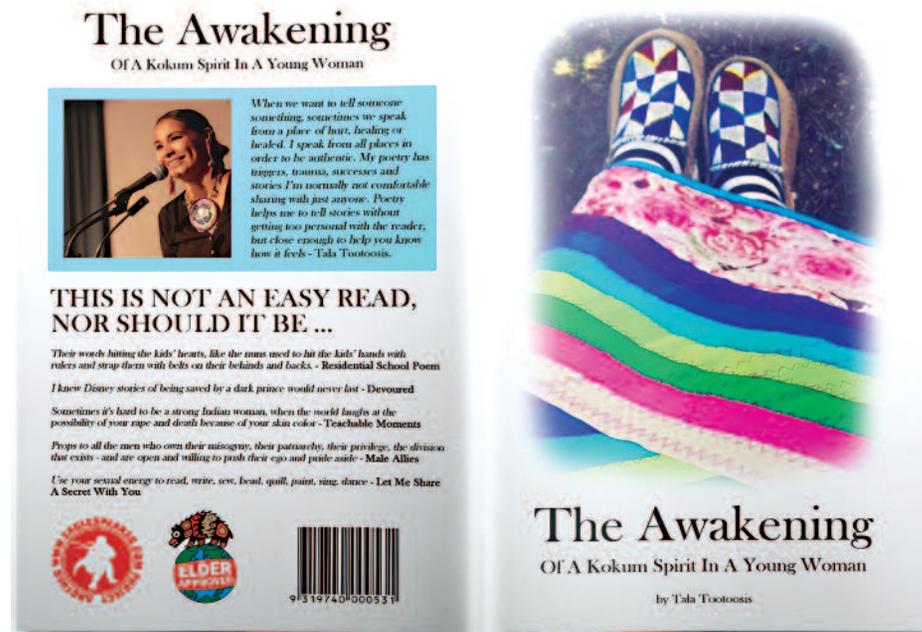


Image by Jason Eaglespeaker of Eaglespeaker Publishing)

"I was biased and I wasn't doing the assignments."

That's when she had a talk with her friend Zoey Roy, an established spoken word poet.

"She told me to write it down, write

everything I was feeling, so I did," said Tootoosis.

That is when she created the poem *Doubts, Thoughts and Goals* which she has performed several times to rave reviews.

need to harness their life experiences and share it with others.

"Our descendants are our true audience," he said. "What will they know of our lives? What stories will we tell them? What struggles will we reveal to them?"

"We owe it to our descendants to express ourselves – fully and completely."

Eaglespeaker said Tootoosis's story is medicine; and it has the power to heal.

Last fall, the pair began working on the book.

When she is able, Tootoosis plans to host an official launch in Saskatoon, but until then, the book is available online at Amazon.ca.

In the meantime, she will continue to blog, host ribbon skirt workshops, expand the Kokum Scarf Campaign, as well as, work and be a full-time mom.

Future goals include obtaining a Masters in Social Work, writing her autobiography and one day opening a treatment centre where those with addictions can be treated with ceremony and traditional medicines.

Ultimately, she just wants to be like the kokums she had growing up,

"I will wear a ribbon skirt, quill, make really good bannock, give good advice except I will have tattoos and listen to Tupac," said Tootoosis.

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No horsin' around for ambitious young equestrian

By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News

A young Indigenous teen has accomplished a great deal during her years of practicing and competing in the equestrian sport.

Jesse Gaudry, 14, grew up on a farm in Park Valley, near Debden. She has been riding horses since she was four-years-old. She was inspired to love sports involving horses through her grandpa and father who were both chuckwagon drivers.

"I like three-day eventing which is show jumping, dressage and cross country," said Gaudry.

Gaudry started competing professionally when she was nine and in the summer of 2016 at the Saskatchewan Summer Games in Estevan, she won gold in individual dressage and led her team to win gold for team dressage.

In July 2017, she was the only Saskatchewan competitor that qualified for the Dressage Nationals in Edmonton and won second place in training level dressage and third place in freestyle dressage.

In January of 2018 she was one of only two Canadians selected by The Jockey Club from Lexington, Kentucky to be a Youth Ambassador for The Thor-



Jesse Gaudry gets a kick out of jumping horses.

(Photo by Action Media Projects)



Jesse Gaudry is one of only two Canadians and 12 in North America selected by the Jockey Club in Lexington, Kentucky for the Thoroughbred Incentive Program.

(Photo by Action Media Projects)

Jesse Gaudry is one of only two Canadians and 12 in North America selected by the Thoroughbred Incentive Program. There are only 12 positions for youth Ambassadors in North America.

Since last year, Gaudry has hauled her three horses; Rambo, Boss and Nick all over Saskatchewan and Alberta and has competed successfully during the three-day events.

Next summer she hopes to travel to the U.S. to compete as well. She will be traveling with a group of other competitors from Alberta.

Gaudry looks up to Laurel Vaadeland, who was the first equestrian trainer she's had since she was four-years-old. She also looks up to a young equestrian named Laine Ashker.

"I look up to her on how she rides and her as a person too," she said. "She's outgoing and the kind of person I want to be when I grow up."

Gaudry rode with Sandra Donnelly, a Canadian eventing Olympic athlete, who was also her coach last summer. That is Gaudry's dream, to make it that far.

Gaudry rides four times a week by training at Vaadeland's facility called the NorthWestEquest, which is down the road from her place. She trains throughout the winter and competes in the summer leading into the fall. Vaadeland hosted the first horse trials competition after 20 years in Saskatchewan.

Gaudry has already begun competing last month at Saskatoon's Equine Expo at Prairieland Park and will be travelling to Alberta's competitions throughout the summer.

Next year, she hopes to travel to compete at a national level.

"I would love to represent Saskatchewan and be one of the first riders to compete in the North American Youth Championships in the year 2020," she said.

"College is way better than high school. It's so awesome!"

JOCELYN DELORME

Hometown & Band:
Cowessess First Nation, SK
Program: Professional
Cooking certificate



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Regina's SWAP offers hope for vulnerable people

**By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News**

An organization in Regina strives to provide safe and culturally sensitive services for people involved with street prostitution, those at risk of becoming street involved, and providing supports for families with addictions.

Over the years, the Street Worker's Advocacy Project (SWAP) began expanding services to serve the community. Located in the north central part of the city, the SWAP building became a

fairly frequent basis," said Lawrence, who added 95 per cent of those people are Indigenous.

"We're estimating over 40,000 visits for this current fiscal year. I think that speaks to the issue of the credibility that we established, particularly through our street outreach program."

SWAP partnered with the Ministry of Social Services, the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) and Namerind Housing Corporation to establish Raising Hope – an initiative that provides hous-

through her child protection worker. In order for Pelletier to move into Raising Hope, she was required to go to detox before moving in.

"At the time, I was homeless. I came to meet (Raising Hope's Residence Manager) and she told me that they would hold an apartment for me but I had to go to detox first," said Pelletier.

"I ended up going through detox and ended up moving into here."

To help with her addictions, Pelletier utilizes outreach programs such as the Crystal Clear support group which aims to provide support for crystal meth addicts.

"Being homeless for the amount of time I was and losing my children and my home. I lost everything. Before that, I was a homemaker. I had a home and

spent a lot of years clean and sober so I know what that life is like. I'm wanting to get back to that; having a home for my family, being sober and being a good example for my kids."

Pelletier knows that she can get back to that lifestyle again. All it takes is to focus on her recovery and taking advantage of all the programs that Raising Hope has to offer. That's why she feels Raising Hope and SWAP is essential in order for families to succeed.

"It is such a high need that a lot of people don't get the help that they do need. I know this place in particular has a lot of support (to offer)," said Pelletier.

"We have programming all week (so) another program like this would be ideal. I think there needs to be more, definitely."



Olivia Pelletier feels services such as Raising Hope that transpired from SWAP is an essential need in Regina for families that are struggling. (Photo by Jeanelle Mandes.)

safe haven for those in need. SWAP offers services such as the drop-in centre, outreach services, support groups, public education and the evening street outreach program.

On average, the age range SWAP sees on the streets can be from the age of 12 and up. Almost 70 per cent of the women SWAP connects with working on the streets will utilize the drop-in centre.

Barb Lawrence, the Executive Director of SWAP said they estimate there might be around 200 people working in prostitution in Regina.

"We have well over 2,000 individuals who utilize the drop-in centre on a

ing for at-risk, substance-using pregnant and early postpartum women.

Raising Hope provides safe housing and in building programming for prenatal and parenting support, childcare, transportation for appointments, counselling, wellness sessions, and building healthy relationships with other mothers.

Olivia Pelletier struggled with her addiction to crystal meth but has been clean for over six weeks now. She first moved into the Raising Hope building last October and due to the progress on herself, her four children were back in her custody.

Pelletier heard about Raising Hope



Trustee Position

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations is seeking applicants for the position of Trustee of the First Nations Trust.

The **First Nations Trust** was created by the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) pursuant to a Trust Indenture in 2003. The purpose of this Trust is to distribute monies due to First Nations from the profits of SIGA casinos and SGC casinos.

Position: Trustee

Responsibilities: The Trustees are responsible for the distribution of funds received pursuant to the Gaming Agreements between the FSIN and the Government of Saskatchewan. The Trustees are primarily charged with ensuring full compliance with the Gaming Agreement and Trust Indenture including ensuring proper reporting from the Beneficiaries and accountability to the Beneficiary and to the FSIN.

Qualifications:

- 18 years of age or older and not have the status of bankrupt,
- Does not hold elected Indian Government office,
- Bondable,
- Never convicted of an offence involving fraud, dishonesty, breach of trust, theft or forgery,
- Have education or business experience, or a combination of both, suitable to being a Trustee,
- Never been declared mentally incompetent by a Court of competent jurisdiction,

Term: Successful applicants will be appointed to a three year term.

Application: Interested candidates should apply in writing including:

- A statement of your interest in becoming a trustee and your qualifications;
- A copy of your current resume or C.V.;
- A Current Criminal Records Check;
- A Current Credit Report from Equifax (a printout from Equifax.ca is acceptable);
- A statement of whether you live on reserve and whether you are Bondable; and
- The names of three references.

The closing date for receiving applications is March 22, 2019 @ 4:00 p.m.

Applicants should be submitted to:

Office Administrator - First Nations Trust
202E Joseph Okemasis Drive
Saskatoon SK S7N 1B1
Fax: (306) 931-4424
Email: firstnationstrust@sasktel.net

Please Note: Candidates selected for interview will be contacted. No phone calls please.

Regina women taste the bright lights of Paris

By EFN Staff

Two Regina women recently made the long journey to Paris. For one it's a once in a lifetime opportunity; for the other it's been long overdue.

On March 1, International Indigenous Fashion Week (IIFW) hosted two shows at the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.

Olivia Saulteaux, a novice model, was selected to accompany the IIFW team that included Chelsa Racette, IIFW director and founder, 10 Indigenous designers and model Ashley Callingbull-Burnham.

It all started when Racette put out a call for models on Facebook.

At the time, Saulteaux's only experience with modeling was as a "guinea pig" for her sister's hair shows.

"I enjoy being pampered and having my makeup and hair done," said Saulteaux.

So, the idea of walking the runway was appealing.

Saulteaux said everything happened very quickly.

In October, Racette invited Saulteaux to participate in a fashion show at the MacKenzie Art Gallery and to appear in a photo shoot. The photos were for the Paris show and that's when Saulteaux knew she was going to Paris.

In February, she walked the runway for only the second time in her life and before she boarded the plane, she hoped twice was good enough to prepare her for the Paris shows.

Saulteaux, 21, is presently a first-year mechanic apprentice and spends most of her days in coveralls – so modeling is a welcome change.

She knew Paris was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity she could not pass up.

Saulteaux was especially grateful to her employer the Auto Gallery Subaru for not only allowing her the time off of work to attend, but for sponsoring her trip.

While in Paris she looked forward to trying the French cuisine, sightseeing and was open to other modeling opportunities if they came up.

The Paris shows were the result of two years of planning by Racette.

In 2016, she was invited to Cannes Fashion Week and while there she explored the city.

When Racette walked into the Eiffel Tower, she noticed something was being filmed there and as she looked on, she had a vision of hosting an IIFW event at that location.

Once the idea manifested itself, she began figuring out the logistics of it all.

Since founding IIFW she has made several international contacts in the fashion world, which have helped as she organized everything by phone from Regina.

When she launched IIFW in 2007, Racette knew she was diving into uncharted territory and it would take commitment on her part to pull off what she envisioned.

She started her career in the fashion industry first as a model, then as an agent, but recognized a real gap in the fashion world.

Although there were plenty of talented Indigenous designers there was no show dedicated specifically to Indigenous fashion so she decided to rectify it, which she has.

Racette said the Paris show is just the beginning and she has already scouted a new location in for the next IIFW event.

Ultimately, she wants to an IIFW event in all the major fashion capitals in the world.



Olivia Saulteaux is a Regina model who was in Paris for International Indigenous Fashion Week. (Photo by Calyn Olsen)

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I'm scared but won't be a statistic

It is not only me I am trying to protect.

I have daughters who have to grow up in this place.

As I continue to bare witness to missing and murdered Indigenous women who cover this land and place.

This is not a safe place for me, it is not a safe place for my babies.

Where do I turn when so many of my people are lost in this colonial space?

Who are our protectors? Why does everything come down to me and how come so many people would rather look the other way while this genocide is ongoing and no one's safe.

My feelings are valid but everywhere I turn people are trying to erase the truth that continues to rise as if were not meant or allowed to even be alive.

My existence has made it through genocide, by the love of my ancestors for the children to hopefully one day break free of this ongoing legacy. Where I have to fear

for myself and my daughters every day.

How do I know my babies will be safe when so many people show on their face that they don't even care or want to hear the truth of how we got here?

My daughters are brave warriors and I am tired of this place tainting them to think less of themselves and

take them down a path of self-destruct like it did to me for so many years.

I am trying my best to overcome these fears but the truth is I am scared and there seems to be no real safe space in a colonial world where our own people are so lost, tired and drained.

Stop stealing my energy, I won't just be a statistic, I whisper to myself. I will devote my life to raising girls who can rise above the mess and all I can do now is at least make sure our home will always be a safe space.



Comment
Alyson Bear

Indigenous women facts

The following information is from a Royal Canadian Mounted Police report from May, 2014 titled **Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview**.

- There are 1,181 documented cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada from 1980-2012.
- Aboriginal females are overrepresented in homicides and missing person cases in Canada. Aboriginal females make up 4.3 per cent of the female population of Canada but 16 per cent of homicides are committed against Aboriginal women and 11.3 per cent of missing women are Aboriginal.
- Aboriginal females are 3 times more likely to be victims of violence than non-Aboriginal females in Canada.
- Aboriginal women are 3.5 times more likely to be victims of violence compared to non-Aboriginal women

From NWAC website:

- Women and girls with disabilities experience physical and sexual assault at four times the national average.
- In systemic, targeted efforts to reduce First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations, the Government of Canada forcibly sterilized tens of thousands of Indigenous women.
- Despite accounting for less than 4 per cent of the female population, Indigenous women make up 39 per cent of the female prison population.
- Fifty-one per cent of Indigenous women age 25 to 64 have PSE credentials
- Thirty-seven per cent on reservation and 51 per cent of off reservation First Nations women have PSE credentials



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Île-a-la Crosse's Erin Aubichon was born to sing

By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News

A northern gospel singer has been nominated for this year's Indigenous Music Awards.

Edmonton to experience the presence of being on stage.

At the age of 17, she joined a band that included her father, brother and cousins. They went around the province

her father, Barry Gardner who used to sing back in the day. But now he has traded his passion for singing to play various instruments and create music.

"My father did music when I was growing up. From there, I started working on my voice. Soon after, I started having other inspirations such as George Jones, Whitney Houston, Ronnie Milsap, Shania Twain and the list goes on."

Aubichon said it doesn't matter if she wins the 2019 Best Gospel Album award or not. The main thing is being recognized as a singer. She said this nomination is the door that opens possibilities for her.

"I never know what's next. I just go with opportunities that come my way," she said.

The Indigenous Music Awards will

be held on May 17, 2019 in Winnipeg at the Club Regent Event Centre.

"Basically, I love anything artistic. I always had a passion for creating"

- Erin Aubichon



Île-a-la Crosse's Erin Aubichon has been nominated for a 2019 Best Gospel Album award by the Indigenous Music Awards. The awards will be held in May in Winnipeg.

(Photo by Dakota McLeod)

Erin Aubichon, from Île-à-la-Crosse, felt in shock at first after she found out that she was nominated for 2019 best gospel album award.

"I had many reactions but they came in stages," she said. "My first reaction was 'I was nominated?' After that, came the excitement that this is really happening. Then came the feeling of having an opportunity and being grateful for that opportunity."

Aubichon, 28, has had a growing interest in the art of music ever since she was a child. At the age of nine, she got her first karaoke machine and started singing constantly by the age of 15. Aubichon joined a few talent shows and showcases in Saskatchewan as well as

playing gigs up to Hay River as well as North Dakota for a Métis Fest.

"Other events I was privileged to be apart of was to sing at an Aboriginal award show at the Enok Casino," she said.

"I had the honour to be part of an event to contribute my talent for a Telemiracle back in 2008, 2015 as well as 2016."

Aubichon has her own studio at home and it's where she creates her music. Her hobbies include drawing, singing and painting.

"Basically, I love anything artistic. I always had a passion for creating," she added.

One of her biggest inspirations is

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Loss of vision sharpened her sense of purpose



After becoming visually impaired, Ketchemonia-Obey lived everyday to the fullest. (Photo supplied)

By Jeanelle Mandes
Of Eagle Feather News

After a 28-year-old woman from Pasqua First Nation lost her eyesight, she became determined to be independent and strive on a road towards success.

Stella Ketchemonia-Obey fell sick three years ago so she was hospitalized and put on 24/7 oxygen due to a collapsed lung. It was then that Ketchemonia-Obey started to lose her eyesight.

“When I was put on oxygen, my brain wasn’t getting enough oxygen so it swelled up and damaged my optic nerves,” she said. “I’ve been blind ever since.”

Prior to Ketchemonia-Obey losing her eyesight, she wasn’t in a good place in her life and was unhappy with her choices.

“I didn’t have a good lifestyle before I lost my eyesight,” she said. “I had addictions. I didn’t live a healthy lifestyle. I partied a lot and I wasn’t very successful in school at first.”

Ketchemonia-Obey was enrolled in classes at the University of Saskatchewan but had failed due to lack of focus and desire. While she entered into the Early Childhood Program, it was then that she became sick and hospitalized which led to her health complications. Gradually, as days passed, she began to lose her eyesight.

Ketchemonia-Obey turned a negative into a positive. Instead of dropping out of school, Ketchemonia-Obey remained in school to finish her program and taught herself to use braille. She didn’t allow self-pity in her life after she became visually impaired. She pushed herself to live a better lifestyle.

“I (sought) counselling for my grief and loss. I started attending church and I surrounded myself around positive influences,” she said.

“I became focused and set a lot of goals for myself. I took care of my spirit and I made sure that I prayed a lot. I (didn’t) want to be stuck anymore. After losing my eyesight, it was an extra push to motivate myself to keep going. If I can finish school while being on oxygen and going blind, I feel like I can do anything.”

Ketchemonia-Obey exercised a lot to strengthen her lungs and heart to maintain a good oxygen level which resulted in ridding the dependency of oxygen tanks. She utilized the programs with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind for a couple of years which helped her transition to living independently.

Her positivity even captured the attention of a man who is now her fiancé.

“We just got engaged in February,” she said. “At the end of the summer is when we plan to get married.”

Her advice for others is to keep moving forward and never let anything hold you back.

“I know that sounds like a cliché but it really is true once you set your mind to something,” she said.

“Make goals for yourself and it can take you far. Keep focused on what you want.”

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CCDF brings Paramount Day Spa's new location to life

By Naomi Zurevinski
For Eagle Feather News

When Laura Dutka bought Paramount Day Spa in 2000, she knew that expanding the business was something she wanted to do.

As Saskatoon's first full-service day spa, Paramount has been serving the city for almost 70 years — a legacy Dutka is grateful to be a part of.

renovations for that new space," Dutka said.

Part of the CCDF's vision is to increase the representation of Métis females in business and entrepreneurship, which is in line with the federal government's Women Entrepreneurship Strategy, launched in 2018. Having women in business allows for creative and diverse ideas to be brought to the market, and strong female role models further inspire other young

Women's Network and have been involved on the board in past. The Saskatoon Women's Network is the first (network) I ever joined and it's a great organization. They're very supportive and it's a really good learning ground for women."

Overall, Dutka noted that the CCDF and their support has been important to Paramount's success.

"We're very appreciative of the CCDF and the help that they've given us with the business. It's just really nice feeling like you have that support behind you. They don't ever leave you hanging, which is really great, especially if you're just starting out and you don't have a lot of answers — or you don't even know what the questions are most of the time."

For more information on Paramount Day Spa visit www.paramountdayspa.com.

For more information on the CCDF, visit www.clarencecampeau.com.



Sarah and Laura Dutka were thrilled with the support offered to them by CCDF when the time came to move and renovate their business, Paramount Day Spa.

"I come from an entrepreneurial family and always wanted a business of my own," Dutka said.

"Paramount had been in the same location for almost 20 years, and so I knew we either had to do some major renovations or look at moving."

To help with the expansion, Dutka approached the Clarence Campeau Development Fund and accessed their Business Plan and Business Development Programs in 2017. The CCDF is an organization established in 1997 by the Government of Saskatchewan and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, to stimulate economic development activities of Métis people in the province.

Dutka said the CCDF was very responsive to working with her, right from the beginning.

"They made the process easier and they were very encouraging. I had looked at other options and sometimes it's just more work than it's worth. But the (CCDF) wants to work with you, and without their help, we wouldn't have been able to do what we did, making a move to a wonderful new location and doing

women to enter the field, creating greater gender equality and representation.

Dutka offered some advice for women entering business, which comes from her experience of working very closely with her daughter, Sarah, who is Paramount's director of sales.

"From watching Sarah grow in the business, I would say to reach out to people. It's about not being afraid to get on the phone and make connections — she's really good at that," Dutka said.

"Both Sarah and I are members of the Saskatoon

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Sask. model on Canada's largest billboard sets her sights on Times Square

By EFN Staff

From the small town of Biggar to Canada's biggest billboard, Michaella Shannon is doing what she can to bring Indigenous faces and Indigenous voice into mainstream media.

The 23-year-old model and actress has spent the past decade working in an industry where she is often the only Indigenous person in the room. But that only fuels her ambition.

Today, you can find her image in the centre of Yonge-Dundas Square on Canada's largest outdoor LED billboard, where she represents Nordstrom's latest clothing line.

Shannon hopes it won't be a one-time thing and other major clothing lines will follow suit.

She began modelling at 14 and it has taken her many places, but to appear on Canada's biggest billboard has been a surreal experience.

"It was a whole different kind of emotion," said Shannon. "I was so happy I wanted to cry."

"Our ancestors and our relatives didn't go through what they went through for us to just stop succeeding."

- Michaella Shannon

To reach this point, took a lot of grit and pure determination.

"Growing up I experienced a lot of racism and bullying as a kid," said Shannon. "(My bullies) told me I wouldn't be anything more than just a dirty Indian or a squaw. Those were things I grew up being called."

Then, as an adult, she experienced domestic violence, but instead of letting those things break her, she uses them to push her to keep fighting to succeed.

Shannon, who represents herself, wanted to see her image on the billboard in Yonge-Dundas Square and worked hard to achieve it.



Michaella Shannon has hit the big time...literally. You can see her modeling on the largest LED billboard in Canada in downtown Toronto.

Now that she has, she's set some new goals for herself.

Before retiring as a model, she would like to appear on a billboard in New York's Times Square.

Shannon, a host of APTN's *The Other Side*, also has a television goal in mind.

"I would like to be a host on ETalk, because you don't see an Indigenous face up there," she said. "Those networks focus on diversity and you see every other ethnicity, but Indigenous peoples."

She knows the work she is doing is helping to break down barriers in the fashion and entertainment industry and it motivates her to continue.

"I want other young indigenous women to see that these things are possible," said Shannon. "It doesn't matter where you come from or what obstacles you are enduring ... you can break cycles and chase your dreams."

She believes things will change and there will be more Indigenous faces in mainstream media simply because it's time.

"Our ancestors and our relatives didn't go through what they went through for us to just stop succeeding," said Shannon.

"They fought through cultural genocide for us to rise and for us to claim our spaces."

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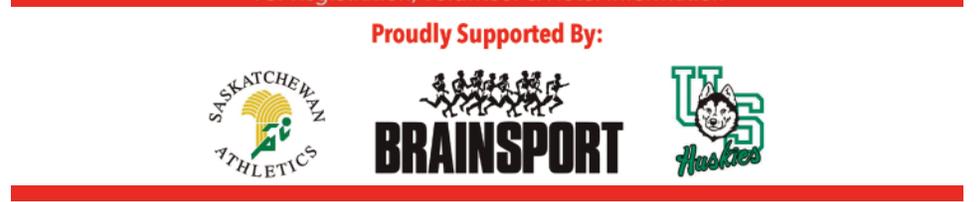
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