NorQuest Colleges’ Commitments to Indigenous Learners & Community

On November 2nd, NorQuest College became the first Edmonton post-secondary to sign the Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) indigenous Education Protocol.

In a concerted effort to reaffirm the importance of Indigenous education, CICan developed the protocol with input from member institutions and external partners. The document highlights the importance of structures and approaches required to address Indigenous Peoples’ learning needs, and supports the educational and economic development of Indigenous communities.

“By signing this protocol we recognize and affirm our responsibility and obligation to Indigenous education,” said NorQuest president & CEO, Dr. Jodi Abbott. “We recognize and respect that Indigenous Peoples include First Nation, Métis, and Inuit, and that they have distinct cultures, languages, histories, and contemporary perspectives. This is our commitment to making Indigenous education a priority at NorQuest College.” Denise Amyott, President and CEO, CI Can was a special guest of NorQuest for the historic day and offered words of encouragement and compliment for our post-secondary.
The RBC Mentorship has had an awesome November. The mentors volunteered for NorQuest’s commitment to Indigenous Learners & Communities event on November 2, 2017.

We also participated in the NorQuest College Annual Road Hockey Tournament on November 3, 2017. We lost, but we still had a lot of fun!

As well, we had the 3rd Annual NorQuest College Bannock Bake-off, which was a lot of fun and had four contestants in the competition. The results were:

1st Place: “#BOGYOB”; 2nd Place: “Kokum’s Bannock”; 3rd Place “Fluffy Bannock”; 4th Place: “Mah It Tastes Okay”

The mentors also volunteered for NorQuest College’s commitment to Indigenous Learners & Communities event on November 2, 2017.

Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund Legacy Room

The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund Legacy Room project is a result of the former Tragically Hip frontman’s calls to action for reconciliation, and celebrates the memory of Chanie Wenjack, a young First Nations boy from Ontario who never returned home from residential school over 50 years ago.

The project is an opportunity for organizations and the corporate sector to answer Downie’s call to action. NorQuest is answering the call, in part, by dedicating a special space in the college in memory of victims and to honour the survivors of the Indian Residential Schools. By committing to the Fund, NorQuest becomes the first institution of any kind in Western Canada to offer space for the creation of a Downie-Wenjack Legacy Room.

NorQuest College Indigenization Strategy

Also on November 2nd, NorQuest College released its’ Indigenization Strategy. This strategy will act as a guide for NorQuest College in its’ relationships with Indigenous students, communities, stakeholders, as well as many others.

“Today we have also launched our NorQuest College Indigenization Strategy,” said Abbott. “More than words on paper, it will help guide our day-to-day work. It is a living document that provides us with a holistic approach to reconciliation and decolonization. The success of our college depends on all of us feeling respected, engaged, and part of a greater good.”

The concept of collaboration and respect highlighted both announcements today and represents an integral part of the NorQuest psyche. Abbott introduced her college’s strategy using the Cree word of wahkâhtowin to impart NorQuest’s resolute desire be a friend and partner of Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners everywhere.
Alberta Indigenous Construction Career Centre (AICCC) Update

The Alberta Indigenous Construction Career Centre (AICCC) opened its doors in March 2015. The Centre was originally mandated to register about 12 clients per month to career plan, train, and follow up with supports after they got hired. This would have involved intense support in the form of career planning, worksite visits, and supportive escorts to various agencies and organizations from non-profits to places like NAIT to register for trades skills courses.

Shortly before the centre opened, the price of oil started to plummet. This resulted in a sudden and unexpected shock to the Alberta (and world) economy. Suddenly there was less money in the province, which meant less jobs and less companies willing to hire an Indigenous workforce.

Management quickly changed the approach in which the AICCC would work and decided to emphasize safety ticket training to arm the Indigenous workforce with resources to find work in a more competitive job market. Combining this emphasis on safety ticket training with a staff that is enthusiastic and passionate about helping; and you have a busy and bustling employment centre! At one time, there were only two staff and now we have five talented staff members.

NorQuest College Student Profile—Faleshia Harper

Hi, my name is Faleshia Harper, I am from Onion Lake Cree Nation in Saskatchewan. I am currently enrolled in the first year of the Practical Nurse program at NorQuest College. Since being here, I have been involved in the RBC Indigenous Mentorship Program. I have been attending meetings and trying to volunteer when possible. It is a great way to meet new people!

My plan when I am done my program in 2019, I would like to return back home. I plan on working for homecare in my community and giving back to the elders. They are the ones who need the most care and I feel that they deserve the best care possible. Health care is my passion and I love the Practical Nurse program here!

New Staff Introduction—Yvonne Carifelle

Tanisi, I am here in Pauline L’Hirondelle’s absence as the Indigenous Student Advisor. I am a fluent Cree speaker who was born and raised in the Peavine Metis Settlement.

I have been in the student advisory role for the last 24 years and am looking forward to working with you students in planning your journey towards your career goal. I will also continue the Conversational Cree classes on Tuesdays. You can find me in the Indigenous Students’ Centre in Pauline’s office, 1-151D.
Conversational Cree
Yvonne Carifelle

Continuation of greetings:

When conversing with another, it is polite to nod in acknowledgment of the other.

Tâniti ohci kîiya?  Where are you from?
Wabasca ohci niya.  I am from Wabasca.
Ikwa kiya?  And you (where are you from)?
Òta ohci niya  I am from here.

Photos from the November 2nd Event

NorQuest College Upcoming Event

SAVE THE DATE!
DECEMBER 8, 2017

Join us for the 2nd Annual Norquest Round Dance!
City of Wetaskiwin Drill Hall

Contact Information
Location:
Room 1-151, Singhmar Centre for Learning,
Downtown Campus
Phone: 780.644.5965
Website: https://www.norquest.ca/resources-services/student-services/indigenous-student-services.aspx