



2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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Our Vision

We see a strong, healthy, and self-determining 2-Spirit community in Ontario where 2-Spirit peoples live with pride in their Indigenous heritages, values and roles in our communities. We see 2-Spirit peoples as continuing to celebrate our strengths and supporting community members to live with physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Our Mission

We will continue to nurture and grow within our sacred roles and celebrate our strengths as 2-Spirit peoples to provide physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual advocacy. We support 2-Spirit peoples and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit community members who are at risk of or living with HIV, hepatitis C, and related co-infections; and we will continue to support community members who are facing the effects of historic and ongoing colonial violence so that we may thrive within our communities and nations.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

BOOZHOO 2 SPIRITED COMMUNITY, FRIENDS, SUPPORTERS AND ALLIES!

IT HAS BEEN SUCH AN HONOUR AND PLEASURE TO BE BOARD PRESIDENT FOR 2 SPIRITED PEOPLES OF THE 1ST NATIONS. AS I FINISH MY FIRST TERM AS BOARD PRESIDENT, I WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT AND SHARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESSES SINCE OUR LAST AGM.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE, ACKNOWLEDGE, AND SHARE IN CELEBRATING THE 2 SPIRITED PEOPLES OF THE 1ST NATIONS TEAM MADE UP OF STAFF, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS. THIS PAST YEAR I HAVE THE PLEASURE OF GETTING TO KNOW THE 2 SPIRIT STAFF, I HAVE WITNESSED A TEAM THAT IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING 2 SPIRITED COMMUNITY, PASSIONATE ABOUT CREATING SPACES FOR FIRST NATIONS, INUIT, AND METIS 2 SPIRITED PEOPLE TO LEARN, SHARE AND RECLAIM OUR IDENTITIES AND PLACE IN COMMUNITY. I AM EXCITED TO SEE ALL THE MONTHLY PROGRAMMING, WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS THAT YOU ALL SO THOUGHTFULLY PLAN.

TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM KEITH, SAIGE AND AMANDA. CHI MIIGWECH. I HAVE HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF WORKING ALONGSIDE 2 SPIRITS LEADERSHIP TEAM, THE WORK THEY DO IS INCREDIBLE, THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE GROWTH AND SUCCESS OF THIS ORGANIZATION IS SPECTACULAR.

OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS UNDER THIS LEADERSHIP AND STAFF TEAM, 2 SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS HAS BEEN ABLE TO THRIVE, BUILD ABUNDANCE, AND FIRMLY ROOT THIS ORGANIZATION AS ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY WITHIN TORONTO.

IN 2023, WE GATHERED FOR THE 2ND ANNUAL 2 SPIRIT POW WOW. I AM IN DISBELIEF THAT WE GET TO HAVE A COMMUNITY GATHERING IN TORONTO THAT IS PLANNED, COORDINATED, AND HOSTED BY AND FOR 2 SPIRITED PEOPLES THAT CENTRES 2 SPIRITED PEOPLES WHILE INVITING EVERYONE TO SHARE IN THE DAY. 2 SPIRIT POW WOW IS AN EVENT I NOW LOOK FORWARD TO EVERY YEAR. THIS YEAR WAS ALSO THE FIRST EVER 4-DAY CONFERENCE, HOSTED BY 2 SPIRITS IN DOWNTOWN TORONTO. THE GATHERING HAD 2 SPIRITED PEOPLE AND INDIGENOUS WOMEN FROM ALL OVER TURTLE ISLAND SHARING KNOWLEDGE, SONGS, STORIES, AND LAUGHS.

THE SUCCESS AND GROWTH OF THE 2 SPIRIT LED TORONTO COMMUNITY CRISIS SERVICE, HAS BEEN REMARKABLE. AGAIN, I LOOK AT THE STAFF AND LEADERSHIP TEAM. KEITH AND THE TEAM SAW A GAP IN SERVICE AND WORKED VERY HARD TO ENSURE OUR COMMUNITY WOULD BE REPRESENTED AND CARED FOR.

I CANNOT WAIT TO WITNESS WHAT GROWTH AND SUCCESS THIS NEXT YEAR BRINGS. AS 2 SPIRITED PEOPLE WE CONTINUE TO GROW IN WAYS THAT FILL OUR EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL WELLNESS.

Denise B. McLeod

BOARD PRESIDENT
2-SPIRITED PEOPLES OF THE 1ST NATIONS



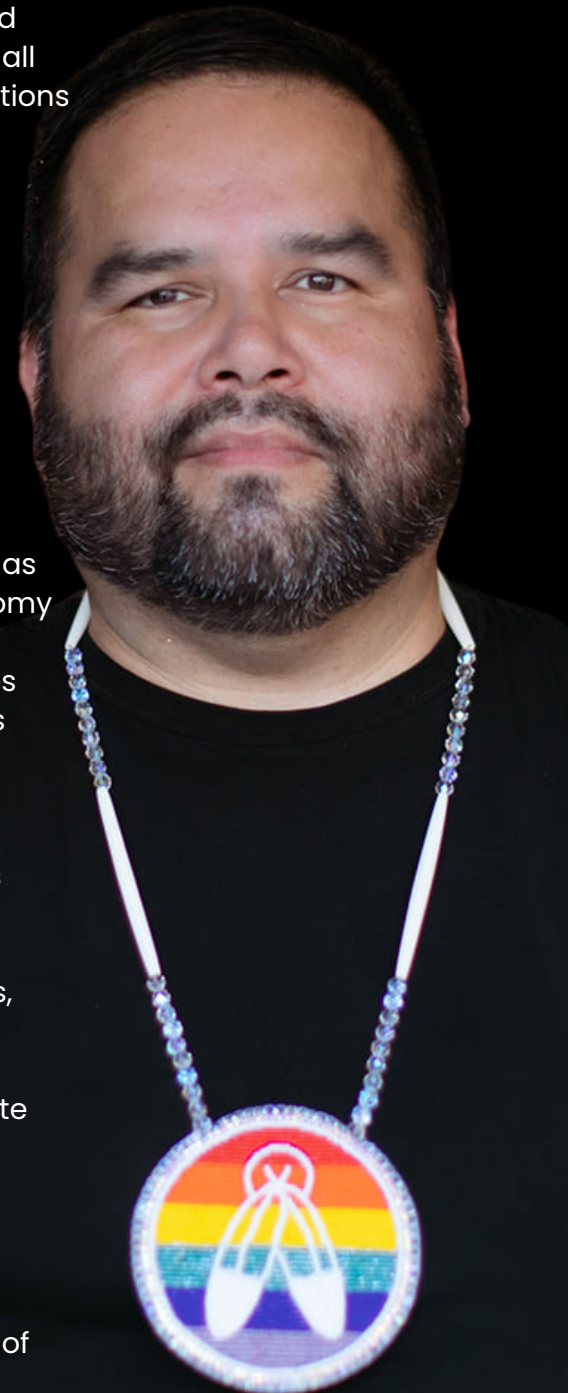
Photo taken by Tyler J. Stamer

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Just like life's many challenges, our experiences have been profound teachers, imparting valuable lessons. They've reminded us that not all members have equal access to resources and support. These situations have encouraged us to foster innovation, exploring new avenues of communication and information sharing. We've embraced a proactive mindset, reaching out to individuals instead of waiting for them to come to us. Additionally, we've recognized the vital importance of nurturing our physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being, especially during times of crisis. These experiences have affirmed that collective action can safeguard our community, highlighting the fact that everyone possesses unique skills and talents, some of which may remain hidden until invited to shine. We strive to ensure our membership gets equitable and fair opportunities at employment with us, honouring their lived experience and traditional knowledge as expertise. We've also realized the significance of community autonomy and self-determination, emphasizing that our choices should be collectively driven. Prioritizing community needs over individual ones when appropriate has been a key insight. Drawing upon the lessons learned from other challenging situations has provided valuable guidance. Through these experiences, we've discovered our vulnerability but also recognized our collective strength when we collaborate as we explore expanding our services and relationships throughout Ontario.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have stood by our side during these challenging times. This includes facilitators, elders, educators, knowledge keepers, assistants, staff, board members, community members, students, volunteers, donors, funders, and allies. Without your unwavering support, we would not truly constitute a community, and you have made this past year an unforgettable one. I am privileged to continue working alongside our 2-Spirit Community and am committed to maintaining transparency and accountability, always striving for community-driven decisions and amplifying voices. I wholeheartedly welcome feedback as a means to enhance our teamwork. I deeply appreciate each and every one of you and eagerly anticipate our future endeavors together. Love,

Keith McCrady



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past year has been a year of growth, challenges and learnings. In January of 2022, we were given the go ahead for our Indigenous Mental Health Crisis Response Pilot team, from there we had a swift timeline to get up and running by July. On July 11th, we launched our Indigenous led mental health crisis response team (TCCS) and have been operating 24/7 since then. 2-Spirits has also begun consultations around provincial expansions, and we are currently working on a 2-Spirit Emergency Shelter proposal. What a whirlwind this year has been!

Since starting with this agency about 5 years ago, I have seen 2-Spirits transition through many different seasons. It has been so rewarding to see the growth, hard work and determination our team, community and board has put into making 2-Spirits what it is today.

I am so very proud to be a part of this team and the community here within Toronto. The strength, resilience, self-determination, knowledge, humour, kindness and love our community carries is beautiful. I look forward to seeing what is in store for 2-Spirits in the next 5 years.

Chi miigwetch to all the team members, board members, volunteers, students, facilitators, helpers, Elders, Knowledge keepers, support persons, funders and donators for all your work and support over the last year. I am honoured to be in the role of Director of the Indigenous led Crisis Response team, it is not a role I take lightly, and I hope to continue to walk alongside community, to keep listening and learning.

All my relations,

Faige McMahon

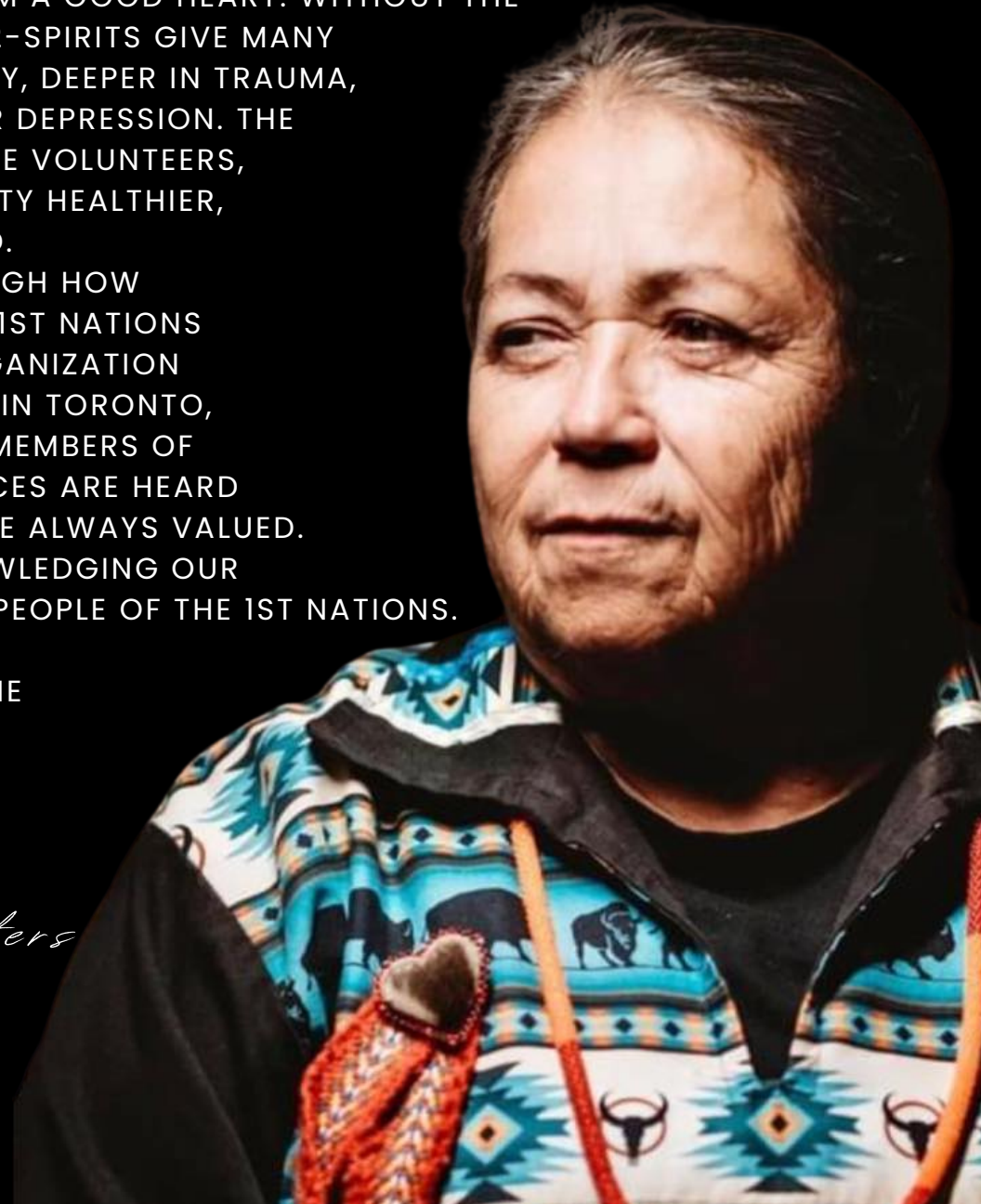


A MESSAGE FROM ELDER BLU WATERS

A BIG HELLO TO ALL TODAY, MY NAME IS ELDER BLU WATERS AND I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY SINCERE GRATITUDE TO 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS. AS WE HEAD TO A LESS COVID ENVIRONMENT I WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE ALL THE HARD WORK EVERYONE AT 2-SPIRITS DID FOR THE COMMUNITY. MANY IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL PROGRAMS, FOOD SUPPORT, STREET OUTREACH, HELPING THE COMMUNITY WITHOUT JUDGMENT, OR SHAMING AND GIVING FROM A GOOD HEART. WITHOUT THE SUPPORT AND CARE THAT 2-SPIRITS GIVE MANY WOULD HAVE GONE HUNGRY, DEEPER IN TRAUMA, AND EXPERIENCED GREATER DEPRESSION. THE STAFF FROM THE E.D. TO THE VOLUNTEERS, TRULY MAKE THE COMMUNITY HEALTHIER, SUPPORTED, AND INCLUDED. WORDS CANNOT SAY ENOUGH HOW 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS ARE SUCH A VALUABLE ORGANIZATION AND SO NEEDED NOT ONLY IN TORONTO, BUT ACROSS CANADA. AS MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, OUR VOICES ARE HEARD AND OUR SUGGESTIONS ARE ALWAYS VALUED. PLEASE JOIN ME IN ACKNOWLEDGING OUR GRATITUDE TO 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS.

CHI MIIGWETCH FOR ALL THE SUPPORT YOU PROVIDE TO THE COMMUNITY.

Elder Blu Waters



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



PRESIDENT
DENISE B. MCLEOD
SHE/HER



VICE PRESIDENT
DANIELLE MIGWANS
SHE/HER



SECRETARY
AARON BOWERMAN
HE/HIM



BOARD MEMBER
TREVOR STRATTON
HE/HIM



TREASURER
JADA REYNOLDS-
TABOBONDUNG
THEY/HE/SHE

MEET THE LEADERSHIP TEAM



KEITH MCCRADY
NO PREFERRED PRONOUNS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



SAIGE MCMAHON
SHE/HER
DIRECTOR OF INDIGENOUS LED
CRISIS RESPONSE



AMANDA LOMAS
SHE/HER
SUPERVISOR



NATASHA MADASSA
SHE/HER/THEY/THEM
MANAGER



LAURA-LEE LEWIS
SHE/HER
SUPERVISOR



KENDA HOFFER
SHE/THEY
FINANCE & OPERATIONAL
CONSULTANT



TINA COPENACE
SHE/HER
COUNSELLOR



STACEY JACKSON
SHE/HER
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER



WINSTON TAN
HE/HIM
PROJECT MANAGER

MEET THE TEAM



BE SCHRECK
SHE/THEY
NINOSHE



NICHOLE LEVECK
SHE/HER/THEY/THEM
WELLNESS COORDINATOR



**ROBIN KECHEGO-
PEGAHMAGABOW**
SHE/HER
HARM REDUCTION WORKER



PAM LAPOINTE
ANY PRONOUN
MULTIGENERATIONAL
PROGRAM COORDINATOR



MISSY FISHMAN
SHE/HER
2-SPIRIT COORDINATOR



BRIDGET O'CONNELL
SHE/HER
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR



JUSTIN EVANOFF
HE/HIM
HARM REDUCTION WORKER



MEGH GUPTA
HE/HIM/THEY
RESEARCH ASSISTANT



**SPENCER WAABSHKE
MAKOONHS**
THEY/THEM
YOUTH OUTREACH WORKER

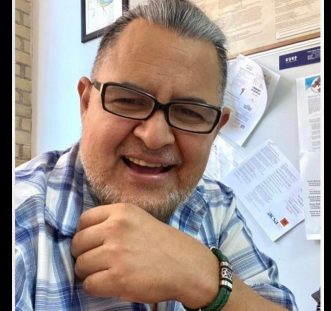
MEET THE TEAM



SHIVA ACHARYA
HE/HIM
LEAD RESEARCH AND
POLICY ANALYST



TEGAN SMALLWOOD
THEY/THEM
OSHKABEWIS/ HIV-AIDS
OUTREACH WORKER



AMERICO ALBARRAN
HE/HIM
CLIENT CARE COORDINATOR



TONIE OGILVIE
SHE/HER
HARM REDUCTION WORKER



SHANE LYON
ANY PRONOUN
PRIDE AND GENDER EQUITY
COORDINATOR



DAKOTA WILLIAMSON
HE/HIM/THEY
PEER SUPPORT



EZELIA INGRAM
SHE/HER
PEER SUPPORT



COURTNEY JUDGE
SHE/HER
PEER SUPPORT



JENNA ISAAC
SHE/HER
PEER SUPPORT

MEET THE TEAM



CLARE ELIE
SHE/HER
PEER SUPPORT



GENESIS CLARK
SHE/THEY
PEER SUPPORT



NOWELL WEMIGWANS
SHE/HER
PEER SUPPORT



SARAH ANDERSON
SHE/THEY
PEER SUPPORT



MICAH DELUX
THEY/THEM
ON-CALL SUPPORT



**MEMENGWAAHN
BELL**
SHE/HER
ON-CALL SUPPORT



ALEX MICMINNIMAN
SHE/HER
ON-CALL SUPPORT



MICHELLE EDGAR
ANY PRONOUNS
ON-CALL SUPPORT



AMY COOPER
SHE/HER
CASE MANAGEMENT

MEET THE TEAM



CHANTEL COPENACE
SHE/HER
ADMIN SUPPORT



CHRISTOPHER ROSS
THEY/THEM
DATA SPECIALIST



BROOKE BOWMAN
SHE/THEY
COMMUNITY RESOURCE
SPECIALIST



ANMOL BUDHIRAJA
NO PREFERRED PRONOUN
CRISIS RESPONSE SPECIALIST



JEREMY REDDICK
HE/HIM
CRISIS RESPONSE SPECIALIST



JORI WASKAHAT
HE/HIM
CRISIS RESPONSE SPECIALIST



KIELLO OSMOND
SHE/THEY
CRISIS RESPONSE SPECIALIST

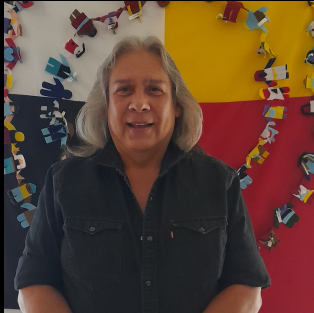


OLIVIA UHM
SHE/THEY
CRISIS RESPONSE SPECIALIST



SHANTEL PLUMMER
SHE/HER
CRISIS RESPONSE SPECIALIST

MEET THE TEAM



KIRA VALLEN
THEY/THEM
2-SPIRIT OUTREACH WORKER



MARZ ABI
THEY/THEM
HARM REDUCTION WORKER



RAVEN JACK
THEY/THEM
HARM REDUCTION WORKER



TORONTO COMMUNITY CRISIS SERVICE

**"KAMAAMWIZME WII
NAAGIDIWENDIYING"**
COMING TOGETHER TO HEAL
OR LOOK AFTER OR TO TAKE
CARE OF EACH OTHER

The Toronto Community Crisis Service (TCCS) is a new, alternate approach to responding to someone in crisis that focuses on health, prevention and well-being. The service provides an alternative to police enforcement, creating a community-based, client centred, trauma-informed response to non-emergency crisis calls and wellness checks. This service aims to respond to the needs and desires of the communities most impacted by policing and establish trust and confidence in a new community-based response model.

The Indigenous led crisis response team responds to mental health related crisis and wellness checks for individuals located within Division 14, and Indigenous identifying individuals in Divisions 51/52.

Kamaamwizme wii Naagidiwendiiying is rooted in community, it is relational, trauma informed, non-aggressive, and aims to always centre the individual in our approach to supporting their wholistic health and wellness. Culture and traditional ways of being are fundamental to supporting community. Our approach is flexible and responsive to the varying needs of people in crisis and those around them.

211: The main access point is 211, where individuals in crisis or 2nd party callers can call 211 and be connected to a 211 dispatcher. Your call will then be dispatched to our crisis team.

2-Spirits has also launched and Indigenous led and operated crisis line that is available to those living within the GTA from 2pm-2am 7 days a week. To access the team, please call 416-363-2999.

We have just celebrated our one year of service with a community gathering, over the last year we have responded to nearly 2000 crisis response calls. We look forward to continuing to expand and to make these services accessible to all Indigenous folks through the GTA.



TORONTO COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD

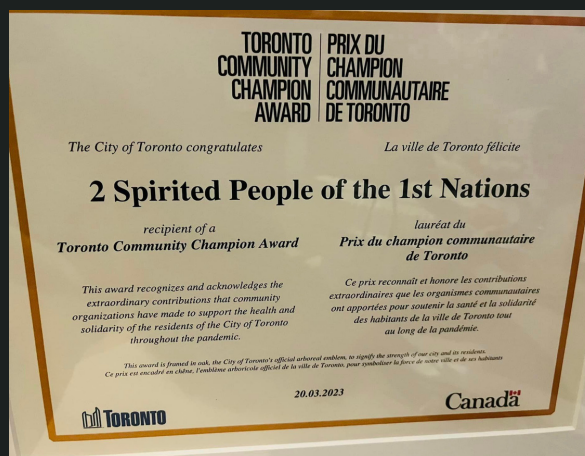
DEAR 2-SPIRIT STAFF AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS,

WE ARE OVERJOYED TO EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU FOR YOUR UNWAVERING DEDICATION AND TIRELESS EFFORTS. IT IS WITH IMMENSE PRIDE AND APPRECIATION THAT WE ANNOUNCE OUR RECEIPT OF THE TORONTO COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD, AND WE KNOW THAT THIS ACHIEVEMENT IS A TESTAMENT TO YOUR INCREDIBLE WORK.

WITHOUT YOUR COMMITMENT, PASSION, AND RESILIENCE, THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT WOULD HAVE REMAINED BEYOND OUR REACH. YOUR UNWAVERING SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN MAKING OUR COMMUNITY THRIVE AND IN ACHIEVING THIS PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITION. YOUR COMPASSION AND HARD WORK HAVE TOUCHED THE LIVES OF MANY, AND WE ARE TRULY HONORED TO HAVE YOU AS PART OF OUR TEAM.

THIS AWARD IS A REFLECTION OF YOUR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS, AND WE CELEBRATE IT TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY. YOUR COLLECTIVE EFFORTS INSPIRE US ALL TO CONTINUE OUR MISSION AND STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY.

ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND UNWAVERING SUPPORT. TOGETHER, WE ARE MAKING A PROFOUND DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THOSE WE SERVE, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO MANY MORE ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FUTURE.



2-SPIRIT BIG DRUM

THE 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS EMBARKED ON A MOMENTOUS JOURNEY AS WE COME TOGETHER TO CREATE OUR TWO-SPIRIT BIG DRUM. THIS ENDEAVOR REPRESENTS A POWERFUL UNION OF TRADITION, IDENTITY, AND RESILIENCE. THE TWO-SPIRIT INDIVIDUALS, REVERED FOR OUR UNIQUE ROLES AS MEDIATORS BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL REALMS, HAVE HISTORICALLY HELD A SACRED PLACE WITHIN INDIGENOUS CULTURES. BY CRAFTING THIS GRAND AND RESONANT DRUM, WE ARE NOT ONLY REVIVING A TRADITIONAL ROLE BUT ALSO REKINDLING A PROFOUND CONNECTION TO OUR ANCESTORS. THIS REMARKABLE UNDERTAKING SERVES AS A SYMBOL OF UNITY AND CULTURAL REVITALIZATION, AS IT BEATS WITH THE HEARTBEAT OF OUR DIVERSE TWO-SPIRIT IDENTITIES AND THE RICH HERITAGE THAT HAS SUSTAINED OUR COMMUNITIES FOR GENERATIONS. OVER THE PAST YEAR, THIS DRUM HAS TRAVELED TO OWEN SOUND AND THUNDER BAY, CARRYING WITH IT THE SPIRIT AND STORIES OF ITS CREATORS AND THEIR COMMITMENT TO PRESERVING THE TRADITIONS AND NARRATIVES OF TWO-SPIRIT PEOPLE IN THESE COMMUNITIES.



OUR IMPACTS

48

UNIQUE EVENT TICKET EXPERIENCES RECEIVED BY
COMMUNITY MEMBERS

2000

CRISIS CALLS RESPONDED TO
SINCE LAUNCHING PILOT

11

BARRIER FREE BURSARIES GIVEN OUT TO 2-
SPIRIT COMMUNITY MEMBERS TOTALING
\$12,000

256

PROGRAMS/WORKSHOPS/COMMUNITY EVENTS
FACILITATED THOUGH THE YEAR

196

DAYS OF HARM REDUCTION
OUTREACHING IN COMMUNITY

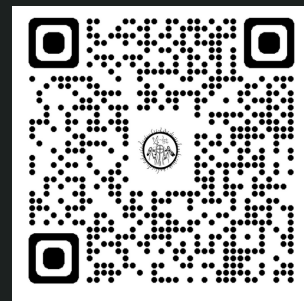
100

BACK TO SCHOOL BACKPACKS PROVIDED TO
COMMUNITY

167

INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE RECEIVED CASE
MANAGEMENT, WRAP AROUND SERVICES

2 SPIRIT RESOURCE GUIDE



IN 2022, THE 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS EMBARKED ON A JOURNEY ACROSS ONTARIO IN THE HOPES OF FINDING AND CONNECTING WITH THE GREATER 2-SPIRIT COMMUNITY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND A NETWORK OF CULTURALLY SUPPORTIVE AND SAFE RESOURCES. 2-SPIRIT COLLABORATOR, MISSY FISHMAN LED THE PROJECT AS OUR STAFF TRAVELLED TO MANY NATIONS AND CITIES, MEETING WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS, ELDERS, FAMILIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS THAT SERVE THE 2-SPIRIT, INDIGENOUS OR LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITIES TO DISCUSS THE SAFE SPACES AND SERVICES FOR 2-SPIRIT INDIVIDUALS IN THEIR REGION. THE INFORMATION GATHERED WAS THEN COMPILED INTO A DIGITAL 2-SPIRIT RESOURCE GUIDE THAT CAN BE EASILY ACCESSED ONLINE FROM OUR 2SPIRITS.ORG HOMEPAGE.



THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESOURCE GUIDE, WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE WHERE THE PROGRAMMING AND SUPPORTS ARE, WHILE ALSO RECOGNIZING THE GAPS AND INADEQUACIES THAT ARE APPARENT AS WELL. MOVING FORWARD, WE WILL BE WORKING TO ASSIST AND COLLABORATE WITH THOSE COMMUNITIES THAT NEED GREATER 2-SPIRIT SAFE SPACES AND SERVICES IN THE WAY THAT IS OPTIMAL FOR THEM.



THE TOOLKIT OF CONNECTIONS AND RESOURCES IN THIS RESOURCE GUIDE HAS BEEN CREATED AS A FOUNDATION FOR THE ONGOING GROWTH AND CHANGES IN PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES THAT SUPPORT THE 2SLGBTQIA+ AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN ONTARIO. AS THE SUPPORTS GROW – THE RESOURCE GUIDE WILL TOO – PERHAPS, ONE DAY, ACROSS ALL OF TURTLE ISLAND. THIS PROJECT PRIORITIZES 2-SPIRIT CULTURE AND WELL-BEING AND MAKES EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS ACCESSIBLE AND EASY TO FIND.



THIS PROJECT WAS A PART OF THE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES FUND GRANT FUNDED BY THE OTF. THE OTF IS AN AGENCY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO, AND ONE OF CANADA'S LEADING GRANTING FOUNDATIONS.

2 SPIRIT BURSARY PROGRAM

11 COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM THE 2-SPIRIT COMMUNITY OF THE 1ST NATIONS WERE AWARDED A SERIES OF BARRIER-FREE BURSARIES

THESE BURSARIES INCLUDE:

THE BUDHIRAJA FAMILY BURSARY (\$500)
KENDA HOFFER 2-SPIRIT BURSARY (\$1,000)
RED SKY CANDLES BURSARY (\$1,000.00)
ELLA GIIZHIG GA IKWE (\$2,400),
TWO-SPIRITED TRADITIONAL MEDICINE TALK SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000),
THE COPENACE & SINCLAIR (\$1,500)
MAHOGANY MAKWA BURSARY (\$1,000)
LEONOR MENDOZA TAN MEMORIAL (\$2,000)
DAVID MCCRADY JR. MEMORIAL (\$800 X 2)

THESE BURSARIES PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ELIGIBLE 2-SPIRIT INDIVIDUALS, PROMOTING ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT.

TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BURSARY PROGRAM AND SUPPORT INDIGENOUS INDIVIDUALS IN ONTARIO, YOU CAN MAKE A MEANINGFUL IMPACT BY DONATING YOUR OWN SCHOLARSHIP OR CREATING A SCHOLARSHIP FUND SPECIFICALLY DESIGNATED FOR THIS CAUSE. BY DOING SO, YOU'LL PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THOSE IN THE 2-SPIRIT COMMUNITY WHO ARE PURSUING EDUCATION AND PERSONAL GROWTH. YOUR CONTRIBUTION CAN HELP BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THESE DESERVING INDIVIDUALS, FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY AND EMPOWERMENT WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. WHETHER YOU ARE AN INDIVIDUAL OR AN ORGANIZATION, PARTICIPATING IN THIS BURSARY PROGRAM DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE, EDUCATION, AND THE WELL-BEING OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN ONTARIO. YOUR GENEROSITY CAN PAVE THE WAY FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR MANY.



2-SPIRIT POW WOW

DOWNSVIEW PARK,
TORONTO ON



THE 2ND ANNUAL 2-SPIRIT POWWOW, HELD ON SATURDAY, MAY 27, 2023, EXCEEDED OUR EXPECTATIONS. WE WELCOMED AN IMPRESSIVE CROWD, WITH OVER 3,500 ATTENDEES, SOME TRAVELING FROM AS FAR AS VANCOUVER AND THE EAST COAST.

THIS YEAR, WE MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN ACCOMMODATING VENDORS, WITH 225 VENDOR APPLICATIONS RECEIVED, A THREEFOLD INCREASE COMPARED TO LAST YEAR. WE WERE DELIGHTED TO EXTEND INVITATIONS TO 43 MARKETPLACE VENDORS, 19 INFORMATION BOOTHS, AND 10 FOOD VENDORS.

THE TURNOUT OF DANCERS WAS EQUALLY REMARKABLE, BOASTING OVER 100 REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS.

WE EXTEND OUR HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO THE COMMUNITY FOR CONTRIBUTING TO THE TREMENDOUS SUCCESS OF THIS EVENT. WE EAGERLY ANTICIPATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TOGETHER AGAIN NEXT YEAR AND SHARE IN THE SPIRIT OF THE POWWOW. THANK YOU ALL, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ONCE MORE IN THE FUTURE.



ZHAWENIM

ZHAWENIM (UNCONDITIONAL LOVE IN ANISHINAABEMOWIN) IS THE 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATION'S YOUTH HAND DRUM GROUP. THIS GROUP STARTED IN FEBRUARY OF 2022 AS A SPACE FOR 2-SPIRITED, QUEER, INDIGENOUS YOUTH TO GATHER AND SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE HAND DRUM AND THE SONGS THEY CARRY. OUR GOAL HAS BEEN TO DEMONSTRATE THAT YOUTH HAVE THE CAPACITY TO BE LEADERS; WE AIM TO INSPIRE FELLOW INDIGENOUS YOUTH AS WELL AS NON-INDIGENOUS FOLKS TO LISTEN TO THE VOICES OF THE NEXT GENERATION.

ZHAWENIM HAS BEEN ABLE TO PERFORM FOR A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY EVENTS INCLUDING THE 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS ANNUAL POWWOW, THE OPENING OF PRIDE TORONTO, A STEELHEADS HOCKEY GAME, AND SHARE A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AT BOYGENIUS' CONCERT FOR 16000 PEOPLE.

WE HAVE FOUND FRIENDSHIP, COMMUNITY, AND KNOWLEDGE WITHIN THE DRUM GROUP. IT HAS BECOME A SACRED SPACE WHERE WE CAN EXIST AS WE ARE.



A YEAR IN REVIEW



PRIDE 2023

TORONTO PRIDE 2023 HAD AN ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE OF 3 MILLION PEOPLE THIS YEAR. ON FRIDAY JUNE 23RD, WE DID THE OPENING CEREMONY AT NATHAN PHILLIPS SQUARE. IT WAS LED BY ELDER BLU WATERS FOLLOWED BY DRUMMERS, SINGERS AND DANCERS. THIS INCLUDED MEMBERS OF OUR YOUTH DRUM GROUP ZHAWENIM. 2- SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS LED THE PARADE ON SUNDAY WITH AN ESTIMATED 100 COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND ALLIES. OUR BOOTH THIS YEAR WAS IN A PRIME LOCATION AT CHURCH STREET AND ALEXANDER STREET. WE CURATED TWO STAGES THIS YEAR. OUR SATURDAY STAGE, LOCATED AT CHURCH STREET AND GOULD STREET, HAD 8 PERFORMERS. OUR SUNDAY STAGE, LOCATED AT CHURCH STREET AND DUNDAS STREET, HAD 9 PERFORMERS. PERFORMANCES ON BOTH DAYS INCLUDED DJ'S, DRAG, BURLESQUE, BANDS, SINGERS AND DANCERS. AT THE SUNDAY STAGE WE ALSO PROVIDED A FEAST FOR THOSE WHO WALKED IN THE PARADE AND ATTENDED THE STAGE. WE ALSO HAD 6 VENDOR BOOTHS SETUP THAT WERE PROVIDED BY TORONTO PRIDE.



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS





CHI MIIGWETCH

TO ALL OUR
COMMUNITY MEMBERS

We want to express our immense gratitude to our community for walking alongside us on this incredible journey. To our dedicated funders and invaluable partners, your unwavering support is deeply appreciated, and it fuels the work we have done and will continue to do in the future.

A special thank you goes out to all our volunteers, as your contributions are the lifeblood of our organization. Without your dedication and assistance, it would be impossible to execute all the events and programs that are so vital to our mission.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the members of our Crisis Response Advisory Committee for their invaluable guidance in the work we are undertaking and for being strong representatives of our community.

To our facilitators, Elders, and knowledge keepers, your wisdom and support play an integral role in bringing our programming to life. Your contributions are truly treasured.

Our Board of Directors deserves sincere thanks for their steadfast guidance and support in all the work we carry out behind the scenes. And finally, a heartfelt thank you to our incredible team. Your hard work, dedication, and passion are the driving force behind our success.

Together, we are making a meaningful impact, and we are grateful for each and every one of you.



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