



# 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



“What we have is  
because someone  
stood up before us.  
What our Seventh  
Generation will  
have is a  
consequence of  
our actions today.”

Winona LaDuke, Anishnabe



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# Letter from the Board President

Greetings to the community members and allies of 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations,

It has been an honour for me to serve as Board President since the fall of 2017. I've seen 2-Spirits evolve and grow into a vibrant community hub with greatly expanded services for our communities and families. 2-Spirits' growth has been overseen by the Board, but the true community heroes are our Executive Director, Keith McCrady and the hard-working staff members of the organization.

I also want to extend my heart-felt gratitude to the volunteers, placement students and all of the community members, both young and old, who contribute their time and energy to strengthening our community ties, especially while much of our programming and services have pivoted over to the virtual world.

Over the last 18 months, the programming and services at 2-Spirits have been altered to follow public health guidance around precautions to be implemented to slow the spread of COVID-19. Many of the lessons learned from the HIV pandemic have been applied to the COVID-19 pandemic and our harm reduction program continues to serve our community members' needs.

During this time, I've seen 2-Spirits working hard to increase trust and communication between the organization and the communities we serve and to reach out and ask what the community wants their organization to be. This year, the Board of Directors have been working closely with Keith on developing a strategic plan that will help steer the organization over the next 5 years. 2-Spirits started out in 1990 as an AIDS service organization with the mandate of responding to HIV. But we know that Two-Spirit People are more than HIV and the organization is about much more than just responding to illness. We are promoting and working towards helping our community members achieve a good quality of life through culturally relevant, non-judgemental programming and services.

We have heard from you that 2-Spirits is greatly valued by the members of our communities and everyone wants us to succeed. Over the last three years, under the leadership of Keith McCrady, 2-Spirits' activities have grown along with our strong family of staff and consultants into an effective, transformational social movement aimed at continuing to claim our rightful place in the circle as Two-Spirit leaders living exceptional lives.

My deep thanks go out to my fellow Board members for their volunteerism and dedication in their governance roles. Congratulations to Keith and the staff of 2-Spirits for doing such amazing work. You are the backbone of our organization. Thank you to all of the community members, allies and other helpers who selflessly contribute to the betterment of our communities.

Chi Miigwetch and prayers for a better tomorrow.  
All my relations,

Trevor Stratton  
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation  
Board President  
2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Red Works Photography

Boozhoo 2-Spirits Community!

This year marks my 3rd year at 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations and as I reflect, I think of how meaningful and rewarding it has been as I learn and grow in this role and how optimistic I am about the future with 2-Spirits. We deserve everything! We deserve dignity and respect, we deserve services, programming and resources that are safe and led by us. We deserve all we desire as a community.

I am excited as 2-Spirited People of 1st Nations is working towards creating a strategic plan that highlights the community members leadership in providing feedback and guidance on how they would like their agency to move forward and take part in their own service delivery methods. With this input, Our Strategic Plan will help provide our agency with a direction on what our community members need in the upcoming years and will help us construct new programs; as well as continue to improve the current programming that reflect our Seven Grandfathers Teachings

The 2-Spirit Community isn't a stranger to pandemics and this past year brought us a new pandemic, Covid-19. My immediate response was a teaching I was given, that in every tragedy, mistake and hurt, we can learn from it and take something good. As a community, we were responsive and worked together to do our best to stay safe during these tough times and support each other as a community. COVID-19 changed the ways in which our organization, 2-Spirited People of 1st Nations delivered programs and services and pushed 2-Spirits in developing new ways of delivering services and programs following the Public Health guidelines. 2-Spirits were able to switch to virtual ways of providing programs/services quickly and they were well received by our community members. This year was full of surprises for 2-Spirits as there were new partnerships formed with different organizations to provide our community members with a variety of services/programs that help fulfill the enhanced community needs due to COVID-19. 2-Spirits expanded quickly during the COVID-19 time due to an increase in funding and successful approval of funding proposals that lead to agency staff increasing from a 5-member team to a 20-member team currently. An increase in funding helped our agency reach wider community members and provide services that would have not been possible otherwise. Thus, COVID-19 helped our agency in several ways to push forward against all the adversity and work harder to foster a deeper relationship with our community members at the time of dire need.

We at 2-Spirits are working hard each day to provide our community with the resources and services they deserve. I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all the community members for being resilient during these unprecedented times, to our 2-Spirits Board Members for their continued guidance & support, to our staff for their tremendous work at 2-Spirits and to volunteers and students and all other community partners who shared their time with us.

I would also like to send my strength and power to families and friends who lost their loved one's last year and love to everyone who is connected to 2-Spirited People of 1st Nations and the 2-Spirit Community. I am honoured to continue to walk alongside our community and appreciate the trust given in my leadership. I take this role of Executive Director as it compliments my role as a 2-Spirit Anishinaabe man with compassion, bravery and humility.

All my Relations

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Keith McCrady".

**Keith McCrady**  
Executive Director



## Letter from Elder Blu Waters

Hello my name is Istchii Nickamoon (Earth Song) Elder Laureen (Blu) Waters I have been asked to speak about 2 spirited people of the First Nation agency.

I have the privilege to interact with 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations on numerous occasions, It is my opinion that if it were not for this agency our 2 spirited, non gender conforming, gender diverse community, and our trans community would be in serious trouble.

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations provides valuable supports, resources, and a space where our needs are nurtured, and provided to the best of their capacity. The Board, and staff and Executive Director go above and beyond to take care of community for our indigenous people. I will continue to advocate for this agency to support and help with my time and community members to work with the agency to the best of my capacity to ensure our voices are heard and respected, and included to make sure our community is valued. The supports they have provided through the pandemic has been essential to our community wellness.

Congratulation to the Staff, Board and ED for all their hard work and all the best for the AGM !

Elder Laureen (Blu) Waters

# LETTER FROM THE MANAGER OF HARM REDUCTION AND ALL PROGRAMMING



Boozhoo,

For those who do not know me, my name is Saige McMahon and I am an Anishnabekwe from Treaty 3 Territories, Rainy River First Nations. I am the Manager of Harm Reduction and All Programming at 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations. About 3 years ago, I began as a placement student at 2-Spirits while completing my Community Worker Degree, through that I was able to learn so much. From there I was hired on as the Coordinator of Volunteer Services and Development while also leading our harm reduction program. About a year into that role, I was promoted to Supervisor of Harm Reduction and Programming and I have since moved into the role of Manager.

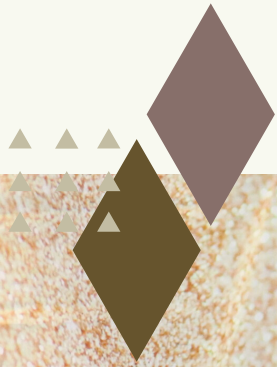
Since starting at 2-Spirits I have seen so much growth within the agency and within the team. Through this last year and a half, our community has been faced with many challenges. A global pandemic, housing crisis, encampment evictions, an increase in overdoses and overdose related deaths, the unburying of our little ones and more. In much of that pain, there is still so much resiliency, love and community care. I am so proud of the team we have here at 2-Spirits, for the work we have all done over the last few years and specifically over the last year and a half. You should all be so proud of yourselves for the tireless work you've all put in working alongside our community.

I am also so proud of our community, for the strength, resiliency and laughter we have been able to share through these times. I hope we can continue to support one another, with fierce bravery, love and humility.

Chi Miigwetch for such a wonderful year,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Saige McMahon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Saige McMahon**  
**Manager of Harm Reduction and All Programming**



# Board of Directors



Trevor Stratton  
Board President



J'net Ayayqwayaksheelh  
Vice-President



Denise Booth  
Treasurer



Adam Jones  
Board Member



Doe O'Brien-Teings  
Board Member



Jada Reynolds-  
Tabobondung  
Board Member



Randy Jackson  
Secretary



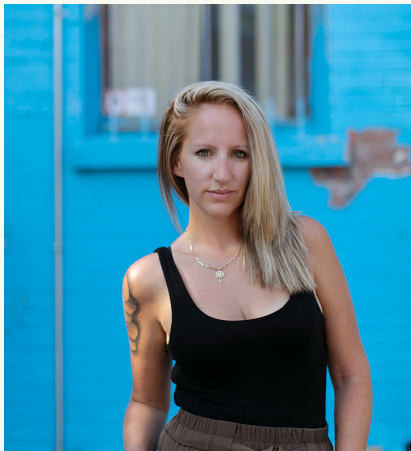
# Meet the Team



**KEITH MCCRADY**  
NO PREFERRED PRONOUNS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**SAIGE MCMAHON**  
SHE/HER  
MANAGER OF HARM REDUCTION  
AND ALL PROGRAMMING



**AMANDA LOMAS**  
SHE/HER  
SUPPORT SERVICES WORKER AND  
SUPERVISOR OF COVID  
PROGRAMMING



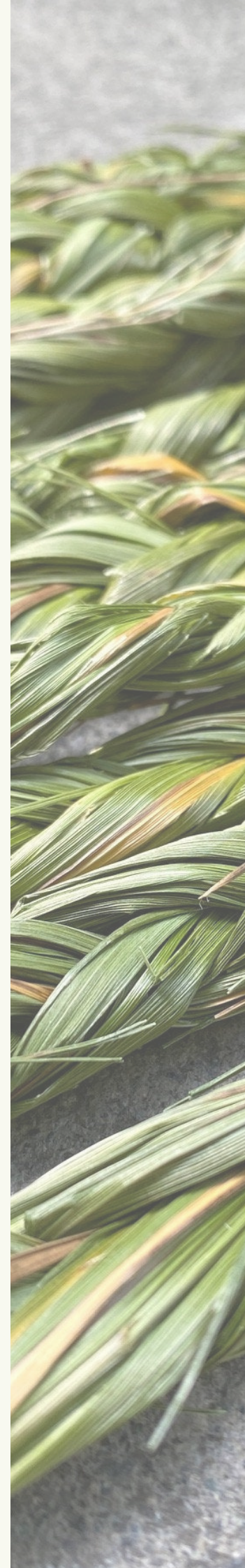
**ANMOL BUDHIRAJA**  
HE/HIM  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT



**AMERICO ALBARRAN**  
HE/HIM  
CLIENT CARE COORDINATOR



**SHIVA ASHARYA**  
HE/HIM  
HIV/AIDS EDUCATOR, AND LEAD  
RESEARCHER FOR TOBACCO  
PROJECT





**KENDA HOFFER**  
THEY/THEM  
CLIENT CARE COORDINATOR



**BROOKE BOWMAN**  
SHE/HER  
SUPPORT SERVICE WORKER  
(ON-LEAVE)



**JEREMY REDDICK**  
HE/HIM  
HARM REDUCTION WORKER



**ROBIN KECHEGO**  
SHE/HER  
COVID AND PROGRAMMING  
SUPPORT



**BRIDGET O'CONNELL**  
SHE/HER  
COORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEER  
SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT



**SARAH ANDERSON**  
SHE/HER/THEY/THEM  
SUPPORT STAFF



**CHANTEL COPENACE**  
SHE/HER  
COVID ASSISTANT



**BABE WATERS**  
NO PRONOUNS  
COVID PRIDE COORDINATOR



**WAABSHKAA MKWA**  
CONTRARY  
INDIGENOUS HARM REDUCTION  
COORDINATOR



**NICHOLE LEVECK**  
SHE/HER/THEY/THEM  
WELLNESS COORDINATOR



**TRACY BARKER**  
SHE/HER  
CULTURAL PROGRAMMER



**PAM LAPOINTE**  
SHE/HER/THEY/THEM  
CULTURAL PROGRAMMING  
COORDINATOR



**ELDER BLU WATERS**  
THEY/THEM  
ELDER SUPPORT



Photo by: Jon Elliot

# our impacts

2020-2021

**1145**

Food hampers delivered directly to our community.

**748**

Education events delivered to our community.

**2144**

Harm reduction kits provided to our community through outreach.

**3475**

Brief outreach contacts made.

**7094**

Safer sex supplies provided to our community.

**135**

Community development initiatives delivered.



# our impacts

2020-2021

**505**

Structured interventions/workshops for Indigenous people.

**4,411**

Contacts through structured interventions/workshops for Indigenous people.

**66**

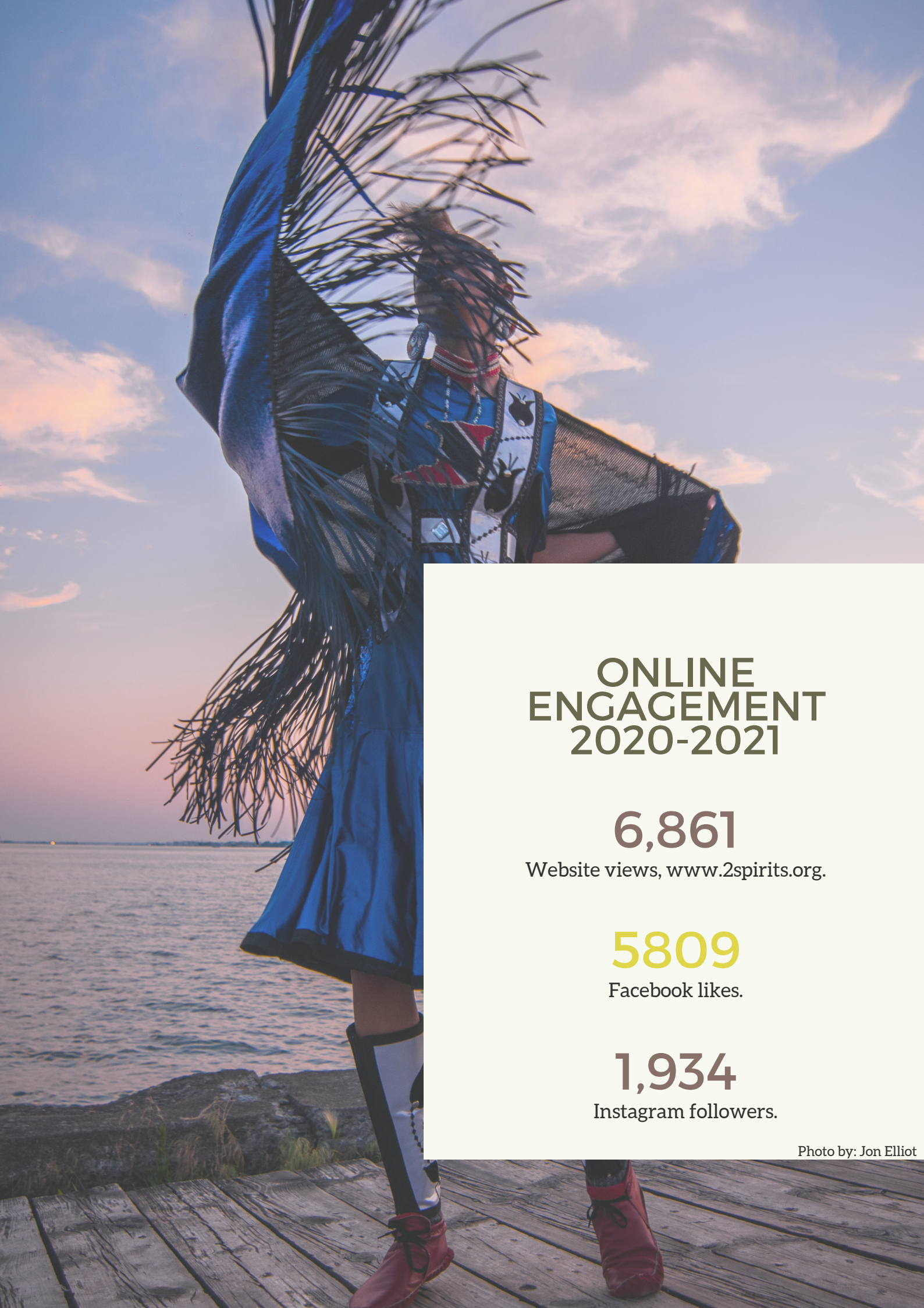
Structured interventions/workshops for people living with HIV.

**39**

Active volunteers.

**6**

Active student placements.



# ONLINE ENGAGEMENT 2020-2021

**6,861**

Website views, [www.2spirits.org](http://www.2spirits.org).

**5809**

Facebook likes.

**1,934**

Instagram followers.

Photo by: Jon Elliot



Red Works Photography

# Shared appreciation from our community

**Community member Tonie:**



“

December of 2020 was one of my darkest times in my life. I had been home for 10 months with the pandemic and had not left my place unless it was for food or medication. I was not seeing my family and aside from a once a month zoom call with two old friends, I wasn't really speaking to anyone. I was living in a shared living space and the roommate I was living with was abusive. To be honest, I barely was noticing the overly controlling behaviours as I was so depressed.

Then at Christmas, a friend on Facebook mentioned that 2-Spirits was giving out a tablet for a Christmas gift to clients. I needed a tablet so I could look for work, so I got in touch. This was the beginning of things turning around for me. I received my Christmas gift, some sacred Medicines and food. I started to attend the programs available online and noticed I was starting to feel better. I attended some healing workshops; I attended the social colouring book workshop and did a circle with an Elder.

The healing workshops included Yoga with Kayla and one night after a bad day with my roommate, I had a panic attack. Never had one in my life before. As I lay in bed shaking, I imagined Kayla's voice in my head telling me to breathe and let go. That I would be okay. It made all the difference in the world. I kept attending the workshops, started seeing the Elder on a one to one, was able to leave the abusive situation after I found work.

None of the stuff I have today would have happened without the initial support from 2 Spirits. I am eternally grateful to your agency and only hope to be able to give back.

”



Shared

## appreciation from our community:

**Community member  
Maria and Family:**

“ On behalf of the Sondezi Bird family we would like to thank 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations for all the amazing support before and mostly during the pandemic. They have done so much for our family from healthy cooking classes with Robin, nutritious grocery support, ribbon skirt making, access to traditional medicine, education on harm reduction, self care programs and so much more. Also, allowing Lovely to facilitate her own workshop over ZOOM. That was so amazing for her self esteem and truly made her feel special. Our family did not grow up with culture due to the Residential School system. We are so grateful for 2-spirit being able to organize full moon ceremonies, beading and medicine making. This means so much to our family, especially for the kids as we adults did not have this growing up. Our wish is to continue learning and be able to pass on teachings to generations to come. With the support of organizations like 2-spirit our family can continue to break generational curses. Migwetch! ”



# SHARED APPRECIATION FROM COMMUNITY:



## COMMUNITY MEMBER SIOUX:

"2-Spirits has been very dear to my heart...they have been there when I've lost any family members...when I sat on the board of directors 18-20 yrs ago...for myself I feel the organization has done a amazing work in the community and the members too...I'm very excited to have been connected with the organization and the staff that works at 2-Spirits are just amazing an do awesome work for the community members...the programs I'm involved with are exciting to me...keep me busy and enjoy them very much they are needed during this Covid 19 time."



## COMMUNITY MEMBER AMANDA PENNEY:

**"She:kon,**  
I cannot express how much 2 Spirits has helped me and my family. I found 2-Spirits during the pandemic with a young baby boy. They welcomed me with open arms and are always there to help and genuinely do care. Even waiting for deliveries is exciting during these hard times. All of the activities that we do weekly really has helped get through this tough time as well as teaching us our beautiful heritage. 2 Spirits always go above and beyond (even bringing me a tablet when my son broke my computer). Medicines whenever I need. Self-care classes and fitness classes to keep us motivated. I feel like I have joined a beautiful community. Cooking with Robin I look forward to all week. It's like you have your girlfriends in your kitchen with you. Traditional teachings is also one of my favourite things to participate in. I deeply love this organization and thank you deeply.  
**Nya:wen"**



OUR YEAR  
AT A GLANCE

# OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE:

2-Spirits land based and food sovereignty initiatives:

We have started a community garden where we grow food and medicines to add to our food hamper and medicine deliveries.

We provided healthy, home cooked meals to our community weekly!



# OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE:

2-Spirits semaa research and knowledge sharing project:

Our goal with this project was to provide our community with access to traditional semaa, knowledge around semaa and to begin a discussion around our tobacco use as a community. We thank you all for your participation.

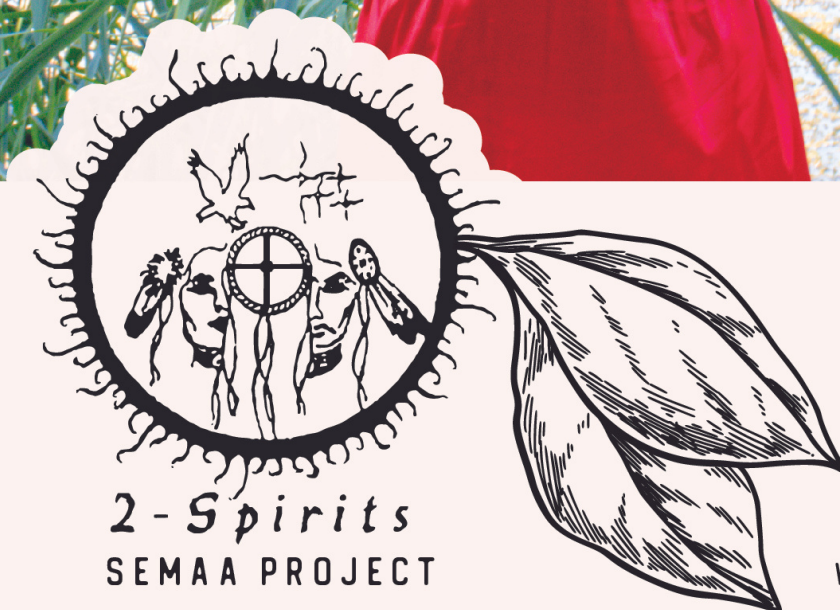


SHARON



**“MY MEDICINE IS MY TELEPHONE TO CONNECT  
WITH MY ANCESTORS, TO ALL MY RELATIONS.  
I USE MY MEDICINE BOTH IN MY HAPPINESS  
AND SORROW MOMENTS.”**

**"I USE IT AS AN OFFERING. I USE IT IN PRAYER. AND MOST IMPORTANTLY TO ME, I USE IT WHEN I WOULD LIKE TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE."  
-JENNE**



TO LEARN MORE,  
VISIT [2SPIRITS.ORG](https://2SPIRITS.ORG)

# OUTREACH:

Our team worked tirelessly over the last year to support the houseless community and those living in encampments. We supported the Moss park Dawes Rd Youth Encampment and Trinity Bellwoods encampment residents with access to medicines, food, water, sleeping bags, socks, hygiene supplies, engagement in our consultations, harm reduction supplies and more.



# PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS:

Throughout the last year our teams has delivered and partnered with various community members to deliver a wide range of virtual programming and knowledge sharing workshops. Below are a few pictures from our programs. To check out our up-to date programming , visit our facebook or our website!





# SOLSTICE FESTS & PRIDE:

This year we were able to hold two amazing virtual gatherings for solstice and two pride events (one for children and families, and one for 'after dark'. All four events were so wonderful and we were able to watch our community sing, dance, perform drag, share teachings, and show us their gifts. As this was a virtual event, we have few pictures, however here are just some of the amazing talent who joined us!



Crystal Shawanda



Tygr Willy



Jeremy Dutcher



Quanah Style



Miss Kitty

# SOLSTICE FESTS & PRIDE:



# ABINOOJIINHS (Little Spirits) NEVER FORGOTTEN:

Though we as a community have long been aware about the atrocities of the IRSS, the discoveries of unmarked graves of our little ones over this last year have stuck our community. In response to this news, we decided to provided 211 pairs of shoes to children and youth within our community who are in need. As well, we provided backpacks for children and youth going back to school this September to ensure they have the supplies needed to be successful. Our staff also participated in the Every Child Matters march this July.

**215 ABINOOJIINHS  
(Little Spirits)  
Not Forgotten**

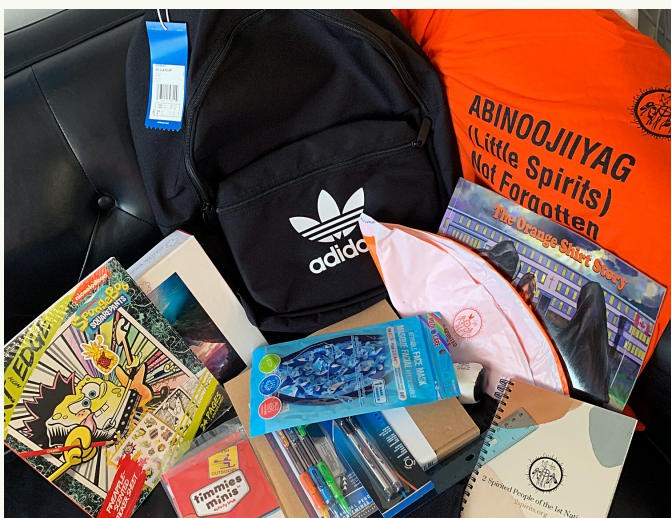


Photo taken by: Natasha Hermann, from: Council Fire's Website

# VACCINATION CLINICS:

2-Spirits along with OAHAS, Equitable Action for Change, Sanctuary, St. Michaels, Holy Trinity, and Maggie's were able to put on 3 vaccination clinics for our community. The clinics were barrier free, and we were able to vaccinate over 1500 people.



**2 BARRIER FREE  
VACCINE CLINICS**





COUNSELLOR TINA COPPENACE



COUNSELLOR TARA KOBLITZ



ELDER BLU WATERS

Chi Miigwetch to our Mental Health support team: Tina, Tara and Blu who have supported our community and our staff through this year through 1 on 1 counselling, family counselling, child and youth counselling, talking circles, and more. Your efforts and care for the community are so appreciated and we wanted to take a moment to show our appreciation for you.

If you or anyone in your family is in need of mental health supports please send us a message and we can get you access to one of the members of our mental health support team!

# OUR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM:



# Volunteers and Student Placements:

We wanted to share some appreciation for all our volunteers, student placements and all those that donate to our organization. Without your invaluable support we would not be able to do all the great work that we do alongside community.

Outreach, food hamper deliveries, program deliveries, facilitating programming, office support, purchasing of necessary materials and many more are just some of the ways in which our volunteers, student placements and private donors help support us and the work we are doing alongside community. Here we are highlighting some of those efforts and the time people have put into 2-Spirits!

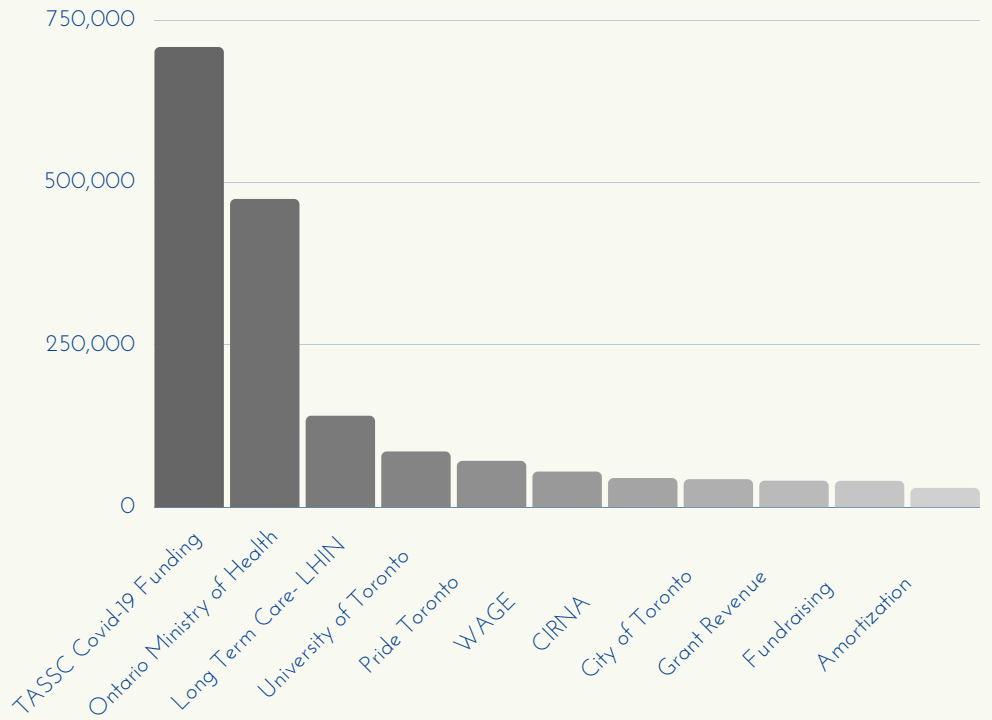
Chi Miigwetch!



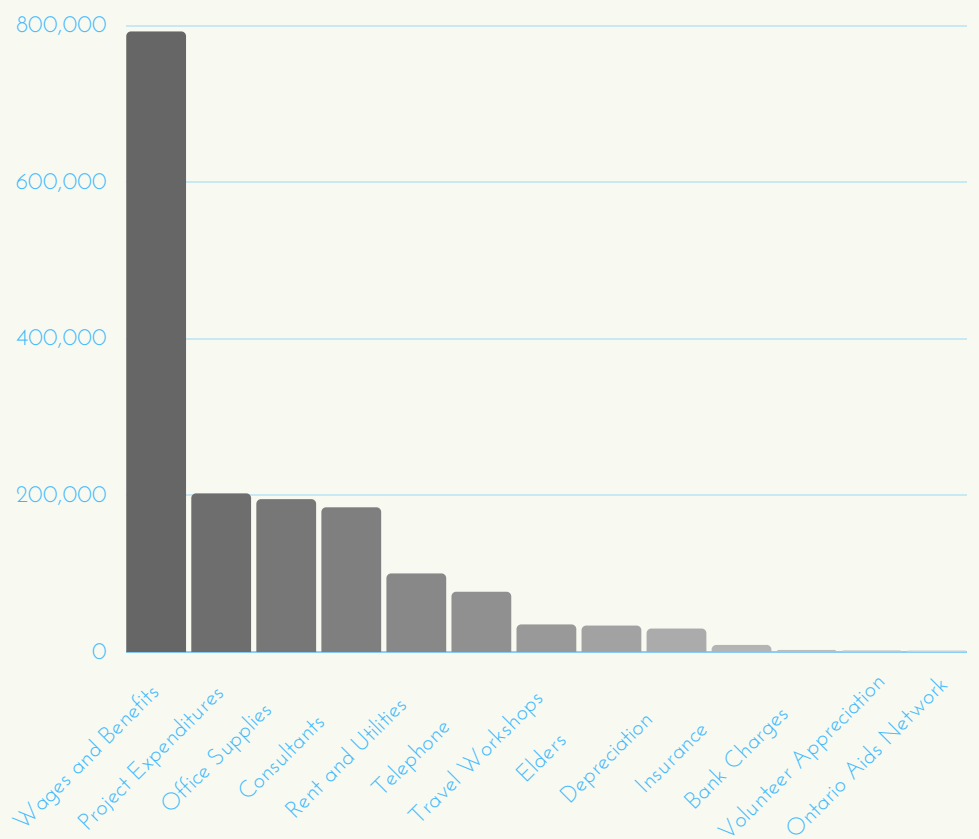
# 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS FINANCIALS



## 2020-2021 Revenue



## 2020-2021 Expenses





**Lastly, chi miigetech to all of you. Our community,  
who guide us and all the work we do.  
To our funders, who support us in all the work we do.  
Our partners, who work alongside us in order to do  
the work we do.  
Our Elders and Knowledge Keepers, who teach us  
how to do the work we do.  
The youth, for showing us the work that needs to be  
done.**