

# NAMING CEREMONY

## Elders Jules Lavallee and Mary Richard Gifted a Spirit Name To The City of Winnipeg's Aboriginal Youth Strategy

In preparation for the naming ceremony, Rhonda Forgues, Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak Coordinator, passed tobacco to Elder Jules Lavallee and talked with him about the ceremony and the responsibilities that come with receiving a spirit name.

*"We talked about the Aboriginal Youth Strategy, its intent, goals, and some of the work, challenges and opportunities. We also spoke about the importance of the way in which we would like to do our work going forward."*

- Rhonda Forgues

The naming ceremony was held on August 7, 2009 at the Miskobik Training Centre with Elders Jules Lavallee and Mary Richard along with two helpers.

The Elders suggested that all key people involved in the Aboriginal Youth Strategy participate in the ceremony, as this was an important step in terms of raising awareness of Aboriginal culture as well as ensuring that staff felt more in tune with this initiative. A major goal of the ceremony was to gain traditional guidance but also to connect the staff as a team.

The name gifted to the strategy was Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak, which means 'Young Aboriginal People Leading' in the Ojibway language.

The Elders indicated that the strategy had to be about engaging the youth more by being present for them and we needed to

remember to not only think of "Youth as the Leaders of Tomorrow" but as "Leaders of Today." Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak should be directed by the youth as they are the ones who will be impacted by it and only they can articulate their needs.

This should happen through ongoing communication and engagement and with programs being designed with heart and spirit not through intellect alone. Our programs need to be more holistic to meet the many needs of the youth. An example shared with us taught us to cater to not only those who are already "smiling" but to provide support to those who may not have too much to smile about.

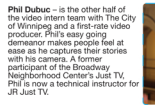
The Elders and helpers also shared their visions. One helper saw two young eagles and explained they had brown heads, as young eagles do not get white heads until they are older, and the wings were at its side and pointing down. An Elder saw a rainbow, which in Aboriginal culture means the Ribbons of the Sun, with the blue color being predominant and so bright that it almost glowed.

The ceremony was a tremendous experience, as it was traditional, spiritual and moving. It impacted those who attended in different ways and deepened the understanding and respect for Aboriginal culture. One staff member shared that this event was significant because she learned that it is important to add heart and spirit to our programming and the way we do business. She added that it was an honour to be a part of a traditional ceremony conducted by Elders in the community - highlighting the importance of working with the community in the community.

**Vanessa Tait** - completed an internship with The City of Winnipeg where she identified culturally appropriate ways to recruit, retain and recognize Aboriginal youth in the civic system. She currently holds a position with the Aboriginal Service Branch team while also completing her Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) degree. Her passions are community development, grassroots community economic development, and empowering youth.



**Erica Daniels** - an extremely talented and gifted individual, Erica is one of two video interns with The City of Winnipeg developing multimedia projects for Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak. Erica comes from the Broadway Neighborhood Center's Just TV; one of our program partners. Erica will be pursuing her post-secondary education once her internship is completed.



**Phil Dubuc** - is the other half of the video intern team with The City of Winnipeg and a first-rate video producer. Phil's easy going demeanor makes people feel at ease as he captures their stories with his camera. A former participant of the Broadway Neighborhood Center's Just TV, Phil is now a technical instructor for JR Just TV.



**Graham Constant** - is completing a City of Winnipeg internship that is responsible for the development of a current and usable website to help Aboriginal youth access information, resources, and employment development and training opportunities provided by Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak. Graham brings an artistic eye for graphic and web design to the team as well as a degree in motion graphics and video production. Outside the office, Graham is a freelance new media designer and an avid skateboarder.



**Michael Redhead Champagne** - while completing a City of Winnipeg internship Michael co-designed the Miyawata program, which continues to operate in city facilities. Since then, he has obtained a job with SAFE Workers of Tomorrow in addition to establishing AYOI (Aboriginal Youth Opportunities). AYOI is a volunteer youth group doing innovative work in the North End.



# OSHKI ANNISHINABE NIGAANIWAK:

## YOUNG ABORIGINAL PEOPLE LEADING



*"The City of Winnipeg's Aboriginal Youth Strategy"*

### PROFILING OUR YOUTH



The mission of Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak is to give Aboriginal youth positive opportunities in the community and civic system by bridging and providing culturally appropriate programs and supports related to employment, literacy and recreation to increase resiliency, self-sustainability, pride and future opportunities.

Investing in opportunities for Aboriginal youth ensures the City of Winnipeg is laying a solid foundation to build a stronger tomorrow. In 2008, City Council adopted Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak, the City of Winnipeg's Aboriginal Youth Strategy. It is an innovative program designed to increase positive opportunities for Aboriginal youth in the community and the civic service. The strategy is implemented in two ways.

The first stream fosters partnerships with community organizations that offer youth focused programming and provides financial and in-kind supports to continue and sustain these initiatives. Three-quarters of the annual funding is flowed to our partner organizations to implement their programs. These include training programs such as construction technology, recreation and visual arts, programs that provide supports such as career planning, job readiness and skills development, and a program that provides physical activity opportunities.

The second stream focuses on enhancing the civic system and its processes and policies to allow easier access for Aboriginal youth. This materializes as internship opportunities within civic departments, career exploration camps, evolving outreach, recruitment and interviewing practices, cultural awareness training for civic staff, and program development that specifically relates or is directed to Aboriginal youth and their participation. One-quarter of the annual funding is allocated to these initiatives.



**Anthony Beach and Jason Chartrand** - both completed internships with the City of Winnipeg's Community By-Law Enforcement Services and have since been offered jobs within the division. Anthony and Jason had the opportunity to access training and job shadowing to develop the competencies required for their positions.



**Clairissa Kelly** - while participating in a City of Winnipeg internship with the Aboriginal Services Branch, Clairissa designed both the Next Step Award Program and an interactive Aboriginal Cultural Awareness session. Clairissa is completing university studies to become a teacher.

For more information visit our website or contact us!

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# PARTNERSHIPS

**Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Secretariat Inc. Eagle's Nest Aboriginal Youth Resource and Recreation Centre**  
The Eagle's Nest Aboriginal Youth Resource and Recreation Centre works with Aboriginal youth, aged 15 to 30 years, in leadership developmental activities that include areas of physical, mental and emotional skills that will assist them to transition towards successful participation in continued education or employment.

**Boys & Girls Clubs of Winnipeg Inc. Youth Recreation Activity Worker Program**  
The Youth Activity Worker Program provides formal education, training, work experience, and life skills development to inner-city adults aged 18 to 29 years with the aim to empower students to further their education and ultimately obtain work in community-based youth serving agencies.

**Broadway Neighborhood Centre Inc. Just TV**  
Just TV aims to provide education and hands on experience related to video production, and the development of other artistic talents, as well as support and activities that foster positive options for youth.

**Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, Inc. Aboriginal Construction Technology Program**  
The Aboriginal Construction Technology Program is a 36-week program that prepares participants for employment in the construction industry by providing training to achieve their Accredited Level 1 Carpenter certificate as well as the opportunity to achieve their mature student grade 12 diploma.

**Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. Honouring Gifts**  
The Honouring Gifts program provides Aboriginal mothers, aged 15 to 30 years, opportunities to discover their gifts and talents through individualized life planning and career aspirations.

**Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Inc. The Future is Yours**  
The Future is Yours initiative provides at-risk youth, aged 15 to 30 years, with employability skills, volunteer experience, job shadowing, personal development, and Aboriginal cultural awareness training.

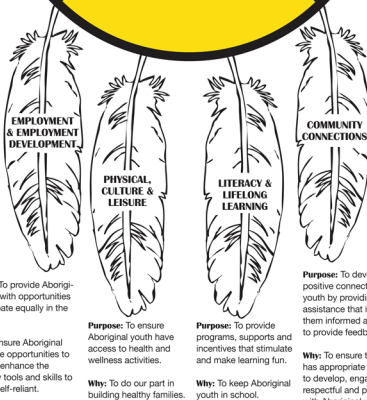
**Ndinawemaaganag Endaaawaad Inc. Youth Resource Centre Recreation Program**  
The Youth Resource Centre Recreation Program objective is to train youth in several sports so they learn proper techniques to participate at which ever level they choose. Focus is on physical fitness, well-being, reducing self-destructive behaviours, building a stronger community and teaching life skills.

**Resource Assistance for Youth, Inc. Growing Opportunities Program**  
Growing Opportunities works with street-entrenched and homeless youth. The program helps participants reduce their barriers to employment and to sustain employment once it is obtained by addressing the varied personal circumstances that keep youth out of the labour market

**Spence Neighborhood Association Inc. First Jobs 4 Youth Project**  
First Jobs 4 Youth aims to strengthen the capacity of Spence neighbourhood youth to find and keep employment. The project provides youth with job skills training, part-time summer employment, and a part-time fall work placement with a local business.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To give Aboriginal Youth positive opportunities in the community and civic system by bringing and providing culturally appropriate programs and supports related to employment, literacy and recreation to increase resiliency, self-sustainability, pride and future opportunities.



**Purpose:** To provide Aboriginal youth with opportunities to participate equally in the economy.

**Why:** To ensure Aboriginal youth have opportunities to build and enhance the necessary tools and skills to become self-reliant.

**Purpose:** To ensure Aboriginal youth have access to health and wellness activities.

**Why:** To do our part in building healthy families.

**Purpose:** To provide programs, supports and incentives that stimulate and make learning fun.

**Why:** To keep Aboriginal youth in school.

**Purpose:** To develop and maintain a positive connection with Aboriginal youth by providing the support and assistance that is required to keep them informed and to have the ability to provide feedback.

**Why:** To ensure the City of Winnipeg has appropriate connections in place to develop, engage and maintain respectful and positive relationships with Aboriginal youth and people.

# OPPORTUNITIES

**Next Step Award**  
Provides support to Aboriginal youth to attend training and/or to acquire equipment, tools or uniforms required when starting a new job.

**By-Law Internship**  
This is a one-year internship incorporating training and work experience for Aboriginal youth interested in the by-law enforcement field.

**Post-Secondary Scholarships**  
Open to Aboriginal youth living in Winnipeg who are registered with a post-secondary institution. Scholarships are \$1,000.00, which are applied to tuition only.

**Animal Services Internship**  
This internship is designed to expose Aboriginal youth to the Animal Services Agency's programs and operations while assisting with the rollout of a community awareness campaign on dog licensing.

**Miyawata Program**  
Is a program that celebrates cultural awareness and provides opportunities to participate in Aboriginal dance, sports and leadership activities through an eight-week youth club format.

**Career Camps**  
These include three one-week career exploration summer camps that allow Aboriginal youth to learn about the various careers available in the City of Winnipeg, including those within the Fire Paramedic and Winnipeg Police Services.



## STATISTICS

**Accomplishments achieved with community based initiatives include:**

- 809 Aboriginal youth participated in employment-based programs
- 470 participants graduated or completed their program
- 181 job specific certificates obtained, including GED upgrading
- 142 participants secured employment
- 86 participants went on to further their education
- 68 participants obtained identification or opened bank accounts
- 16,711 participant visits to a supported recreation program at a community facility

## STATISTICS

**Accomplishments achieved with civic based initiatives include:**

- 422 Aboriginal youth involved in civic employment specific initiatives including 80 summer career camps participants, 19 interns and 24 Next Step Awards recipients
- 20 Aboriginal youth received post-secondary scholarships
- 503 participant visits to Library's Elder-in-Residence and Princess White Dove programs
- 1,295 participants or participant visits to recreation initiatives within City facilities