





Our History

The Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (NWRCT) began when a dedicated group of Indigenous women recognized the need for a gathering place in Toronto where they could share resources, support one another and practise their traditional ways. In 1985, this vision resulted in the downtown basement office that affectionately became known as "The Pit."

Today, the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto provides a safe and welcoming environment for all Indigenous women and their children in the Greater Toronto Area. We host a variety of cultural activities for our clients and community, including the annual Minaake Awards, Sisters in Spirit Vigil, Winter Solstice and National Indigenous Peoples' Day Virtual Celebration.

As a registered charity, funded by government programs as well as public and private donations, we offer life-enhancing resources, cultural ceremonies and teachings, skill development, and programs to build our capacities and celebrate our cultures.

We honour the vision of our founders as we support urban Indigenous women and children from all walks of life. We build self-sufficiency, develop collective capacity and create real change by providing individual and community support and cultural programming.

Our Mandate

NWRCT is a registered charity funded by government programs as well as public and private donations. Our work and direction are guided by the Seven Sacred teachings: Humility, Bravery, Honesty, Wisdom, Truth, Respect and Love. Our teachings, traditions and cultures inform all our activities.



Our Philosophy

In all that we do, we are guided by the Seven Sacred teachings: Humility, Bravery, Honesty, Wisdom, Truth, Respect and Love. We bring these teachings, along with our diverse cultural practices, into our programming, events and ways of being.

We welcome all self-identifying Indigenous women* (Cisgender, Transgender and Two-spirited people) and their children. We believe strong women equal a strong community. We know that when we invest in our women and girls, we help support not only individuals, but society as a whole. Moreover, this investment has lasting positive effects on future generations.

Culture Statement

NWRCT has been able to increase its cultural ceremonies by offering a virtual and distant monthly full moon, new moon and shake tent ceremonies, along with sharing and drumming circles. Staff continue to have access to healers and participate in sharing/teaching circles to promote healing and wellness among the team.

NWRCT offers an opportunity for reconnection to ceremony and culture to build the confidence and capacity within the woman and to strengthen the family unit. We take a protocol flexibility approach to culture to ensure all are included and some of the most vulnerable or most in need have access. We aim to create a low barrier approach to access and opportunities to engage. The Centre focuses on women's work and empowering the reclaiming of identity.

* NWRCT identifies women as all self-identifying women, Trans, 2S.



From the Executive Director

After such a unique year, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and offer gratitude to each amazing staff member and management staff member for your fearless commitment, creative direction and safe dedication to community. I acknowledge each volunteer; without you, we would not have succeeded in serving community throughout the ongoing pandemic. Every artist, business, foundation and person who supported us, every community member who turned to us and participated with us, we are proud to continue working with you and are dedicated to listening to you, doing better and enhancing our services.

A special note to our amazing funders and donors: nothing would be possible without your contributions and support. You make the work of NWRCT possible through the acknowledgement of our efforts, your kind spirits and your generosity.

Our mission and vision are inspired by community and participants, and your continuous presence and determination strengthen our purpose, which fuels our commitment to evolve in every way possible to help serve community better. Our creativity and determination stem from each of you and it drives the future of NWRCT.

Distinct gratitude is expressed to our two in-house Traditional Practitioners/Healers, Mary Ann Shoefly and Judy Sackaney. We recognize your efforts and the wisdom that you bring to the heart of the Centre and the supports offered to the staff, clients and community. You continue to nurture spirits, offer tools for healing, promote wellbeing and support those most in need. Chi Miigwetch to both of you for preserving and maintaining our culture, for your leadership and for the beauty of evolving in response to the uncertainty we faced this past year. Your teachings and guidance remind us to walk in balance and beauty as Indigenous women.

To the Board of Directors, I offer gratitude for your effort and collective leadership. Thank you for the support you deliver and for the work you put in to provide guidance. The effort is unique, distinct and vital to the operations of the Centre and in the growth of Indigenous women.

Thank you to the TASSC agencies and sister agencies for their personal and agency support. Your great leadership creates collective efforts that serve community swiftly and collaboratively. The quick and supportive action from all was one of beauty.





This past year was a challenge that affected staff, community and the operations of NWRCT. COVID-19 was an unpredictable and unknown circumstance that will have lasting effects on the futures of our community. However, we are honoured to say that NWRCT quickly offered self-directed programs to maintain wellbeing, online programs, and remote sessions with Healers. We pivoted quickly and offered remote access to staff, grocery delivery, an emergency COVID hotline, and safe relocation for women in high-risk or violent situations. NWRCT continues to monitor and navigate the ongoing pandemic while considering and implementing all measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and community members.

This year we report that we supported 40 community members, some with children, in securing permanent housing, and held over 30 Shake Tent ceremonies. We held 12 Full Moon ceremonies and offered naming ceremonies throughout the year. We served over 3,700 hot meals, supported 2,047 clients through the Centre, and 10 Trans and 2S-identifying individuals were directly impacted by our services and programs. More than 30 women who required crisis/trauma supports were wrapped with care through NWRCT. Over 40 devices were provided to create access to programming and offer opportunities for community to stay connected.

We will aim to continue and maintain the services that provide sincere, supportive, capacity-enhancing care. We apply ourselves each year to be innovative and focused to ensure that the community of NWRCT feels empowered and confident in their roles of Indigenous women to lead for the next seven generations for our children and community.

Chi Miigwetch,

Pamela Hart
Executive Director



From the Board

Ahneen, Boozhoo, Tansi, She:kon, Hello to the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (the Centre) membership, funders and supporters.

This past year was unlike any in the history of the Centre. We would like to take this opportunity to reflect on and acknowledge the efforts and dedication demonstrated by the Executive Director and staff members as well as the broader community.

COVID-19 disproportionately impacted women in the workplace and in the home. This is even more evident with Indigenous women, women of colour and the 2SLGBTQ community, who are already living in a society that is structurally oppressive and dismissive of their needs, values and lived realities. At the Centre, we were proud to be able to rapidly adapt programming from in-person to remote and identify the supports that would be needed for the most vulnerable in our community. The Centre has always been and will always be there to provide essential services and connection to community and culture.

We would like to say *chi-miigwetch* to the local artists and small businesses that have held fundraisers and donated their proceeds to the Centre during this time. All of these initiatives have supported the Centre greatly. The response from other non-profits and organizations that have held space for Indigenous women during this time has fostered connections across the city that we could not have imagined.

The work of the Board has focused on supporting the Executive Director and maintaining the overall governance structure of the Centre while it underwent these ongoing changes. We have been inspired by the response of our community and it continues to motivate us to strive to build the capacity and direction of the Centre to reach its full potential.

We are deeply thankful to our staff, management, membership and service users, funders, program partners and donors. We cannot wait to welcome a return to the Centre, where everyone can greet, support and uplift one another in person. While things may look different after the pandemic, we have seen resiliency in this time of uncertainty, fear and loss, and we will move forward stronger.

Miigwetch, Ay-ay, Nia:wen, We'lalin, Thank you!

Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto Board of Directors



Traditional Healers/Practitioners

Miigizeh Zhaasko-Mnidoo - Mukwa/Miingaan Clan
(Eagle Blue Spirit - Bear/Wolf Clan)

Mary Ann Shoefly is an Ojibway member of Neyaashiiniming First Nation (Cape Croker), ON.

Mary Ann is a mother of one to an 18-year-old daughter. Mary Ann returned to Toronto (birthplace) in 2000, to complete her post-secondary education. She has an MSW-Specialization Gerontology, and is a Registered Social Worker (RSW) and Certified Grief Recovery Specialist, with approximately 20 years of front line experience. Her background training is in both mainstream and traditional healing practices. Her area of skill is in First Nations health, end of life care, grief and loss. As a healing practitioner, she is active in the community through volunteerism, employment and community capacity building; Mary Ann's goal is to uncover the strength of original values, interconnectedness, identity, healing and self-development: more specifically, identifying, pursuing and implementing alternative healing practices.

Mary Ann's work history within the GTA includes supervision, traditional healing, counselling, community development, project development and traditional supports.

In her current position, she is one of two in-house healing practitioners within a trauma team that supports and works with human trafficking victims, by providing crisis, stabilization and counselling supports through ceremonies and teachings.

She offers spiritual and cultural support to the agency and the team, and ensures access and inclusivity is in place for community to engage in culture and ceremony. Mary Ann offers a spiritual backbone to the operations of NWRCT while ensuring community members have support, ceremony and space to enhance one's capacity within ceremony.

Mary "Judy" Sackaney is a Mushkegowuk Cree from Albany First Nation, Treaty Nine (9) Territory. Her Spirit name is "Wachi Medowin," meaning "Mountain Song." She is of the Wolf Clan and carries a Traditional Pipe. She is a Sundancer of the Three Buffalo Sundance located on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in Montana.

She previously was a Jingle Dress Dancer and is currently a Shawl Dancer and working on designing her Traditional Dress. She loves to sew, drum and sing and being creative. She has designed her son's and grandchildren's regalia and Moss Bags, drums and rattles, and makes Traditional Medicines.

Judy has been employed in government sectors and native organizations for the past 35 years; she is currently self-employed as an Event Planner & Consulting Services, Traditional Counsellor for the Centre of Indigenous Theatre, and the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto, and was previously a Residential Counsellor for a half-way house for women in Toronto.

She utilizes her skills and Traditional Practices and now is expanding her knowledge to the communities and world-wide to empower, learn, share to pass and carry on traditions and healing techniques; educate in gather/harvest medicines and producing medicines; assist in Sacred Bundle teachings for prevention; and promote healthy living with ways of connecting to our Spirit Guides/helpers, Mother Earth and Creator.



Ilana Sutherland – Trauma Support Case Manager



Nicole Balthazar – Investing in Women's Future Worker

Trauma Support

The Trauma Support Program focuses on providing case management, advocacy, access to Traditional Healers, trauma counsellors and peer supports to Indigenous female-identifying survivors and victims of sexual violence, gender-based violence, domestic violence, harassment, discrimination and human trafficking. We also place special emphasis on providing access to traditional healing and ceremonies through a harm-reduction, protocol flexible framework that aims to increase accessibility for clients who would not normally have the opportunity to participate and utilize such support during their healing journey.

The Trauma Support Program includes the Agamiikwe-Trans/Two-Spirit group that provides peer support and advocacy. The Trauma Support Program offers workshops and support groups led by various team members such as weekly Agamiikwe Drumming Group, Seeking Safety, Human Trafficking Awareness Day events and seasonal ceremonies. The program served over 20 women in safe relocation, and offered ongoing crisis supports and referrals to internal programs and services.

Investing in Women's Future

The IWF program offers support to assist women become more aware and heal from violence, historical trauma and other barriers. We aim to promote self-sufficiency through traditional workshops. Small business supports employment and healthy living, free of violence. IWF offers workshops, counselling and access to business and employment supports through creative workshops and access to individuals. These events are unique in that they address the challenges faced specifically by the Indigenous community and promote solutions that are appropriate to Indigenous culture. We assist Indigenous women complete safety planning as well as one-on-one counselling and support. Programming includes elements needed for healthy living: spiritual, emotional, physical and mental. We offer services to women including counselling support regarding workplace labour issues, job readiness including resumé building, review, interview preparation and skill training referrals. This year the Status Card clinic was a massive success, providing community with an opportunity to obtain their ID.



Jocelyn Kagige – Community Wellness Worker

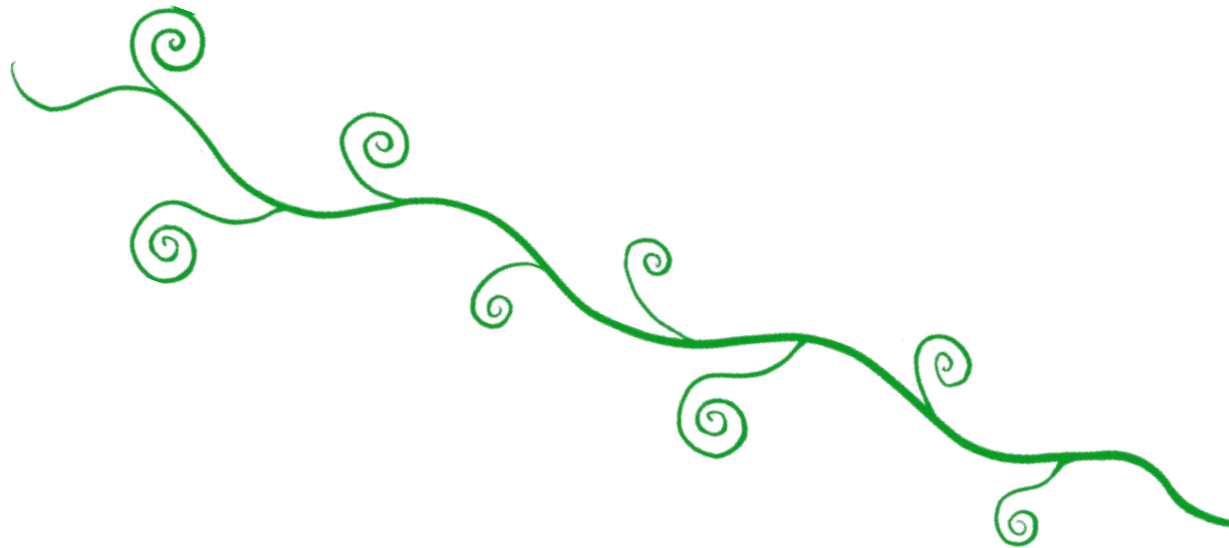


Julia Valencia – Family Support Worker (On Mat Leave)

Community Wellness

The Community Wellness program provides family violence services, referrals, support and case management to clients to address and respond to existing and emerging health, healing and wellness issues or violent situations. The program is designed to deliver primary client- and participant-based services to individuals, families and children. The focus of the online workshops is to provide cultural connection, ceremony, self-empowerment/self-care, information on violence against women, mental health supports, health promotion and illness prevention. The Community Wellness Worker uses a trauma-informed,

holistic and cultural approach when facilitating and working one-on-one with clients to help them address health and wellness concerns by getting to the root cause of illness, using cultural teachings as the very foundation. The program created self-led daily affirmations early in COVID-19 to ensure we were offering positive self-led programming when the city embarked on something never faced before. The affirmations were positive and addressed the emotional wellbeing and mental wellbeing of women and families. The program served over 200 women through programming and supports.





Meagan J. Kelly – Housing Coordinator

Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children

The Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (AHBHC) program is designed to ensure that all Indigenous families and their children (prenatal to age six) needing assistance with physical, emotional, mental and social issues have access to effective, consistent early intervention services. Our goal is to provide the best opportunities for healthy child development through home visits, service coordination, parenting groups, cultural teachings, traditional programs and referrals. As well, we work to ensure that children at risk have proper access to the services and support that they need. The heart of AHBHC programming is preparation for parenting (preconception component), getting ready for the birth of the baby (prenatal care) and taking care of the baby (postnatal care). Through Cultural approaches women have access to empowered community-based support for their journey into motherhood. The program has offered baby food, baby moccasin making and HIV screening and prevention workshops.

Breaking Free from Family Violence – Circle of Care

Breaking Free from Family Violence is a family support program that focuses on Indigenous women and their children who are involved in the child welfare system. The program also supports families who are experiencing or who have experienced violence in their lives. The program is designed to support families in crisis and empower women to examine their current situation and create a safe means of living for themselves and their families.

Program activities include working closely with clients to provide a circle of care that responds to the cultural, mental, physical, emotional and spiritual needs through collaboration with Indigenous and non-Indigenous services in the community. By creating partnerships with other service providers across a variety of sectors, this program can create culturally safe systems for Indigenous women to best support their family's wellbeing. The program also focuses on crisis management and balance, awareness, education, planning, goal setting, referrals and conflict resolution. Through COVID-19 we were able to support women through relocation, basic needs items and self-care workshops.



Nicole Tanguay – Housing Outreach Worker



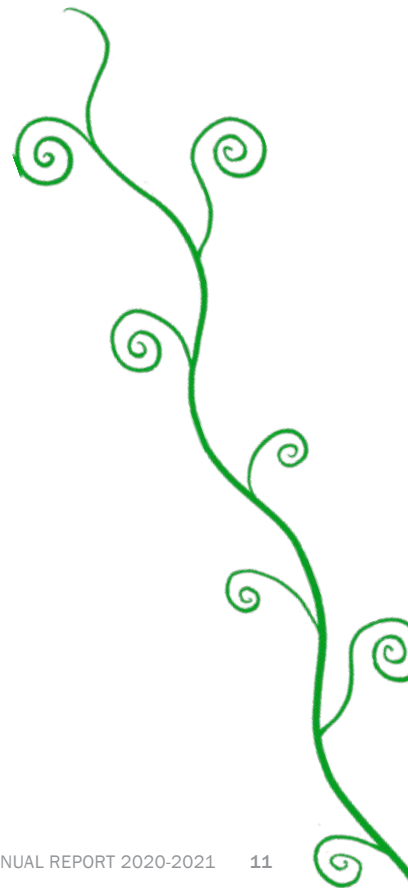
Christina Nakogee – Nutritional Services Worker

Housing Program and Housing Outreach

The Housing Program at NWRCT aids self-identifying Indigenous women, Trans and Two-Spirit people living in the GTA with housing advocacy, housing applications, landlord mediation, looking for housing rentals, shelter placements, eviction prevention and finding housing subsidies. The Housing Program offers a range of life skills, rental rights and home project programming. The Housing Program also offers clothing and hygiene items to women in need in our drop-in programs. This past year we witnessed a unique need for basic need items and housing supports as COVID-19 deeply affected each person in community. NWRCT was able to utilize 36 COHB housing benefits to house 40 women and families. We also support hundreds of crisis drop-in requests and manage the ongoing kindness of donations. We were able to offer seven women and families rental supports for security and safety during this past year.

Nutritional Services

The Nutritional Services program at NWRCT works diligently five days a week to provide hot lunches to-go for clients and community members. The Nutritional Services Worker also provides community-based programming and workshops for food preparation on a budget, supports co-workers and their program events, and supports the administration of our weekly drop-in Food Bank on Fridays throughout the year. Additionally, during this fiscal year, the Nutritional Services program introduced the Alternative Healthy Meals program, which encourages women and their families to try new, healthy meals where all ingredients are included in kits for their use. The Nutritional Services program has served over 3704 hot meals, supporting those on a budget, and ensuring they have a meal each day that is made according to the guidelines provided in Canada's Food Guide. The program also supported a variety of community feasts for various ceremonies and events throughout the year.





Pauline McKay – Pimaatisiwin Worker



Natalie Spence – Program Manager

Nbaakaawin Kwe (Wisdom Woman) Education Program

The Nbaakaawin Kwe (Wisdom Women) Education Program provides educational opportunities to Indigenous, self-identified women.

This program offers one-on-one and group instruction in English, math, workforce literacy and basic computer skills as well as numeracy and literacy skills upgrading, supporting goals of independence, post-secondary education and/or employment within an Indigenous community setting. Our learning centre moved to an online platform to better serve our clients and online community during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program saw an increase in the number of Indigenous women accessing working workshops and online programming due to the reach we were able to access via Zoom, Facebook Live and WebinarJam. One of the new, successful programs introduced was the Indigenous Women Book Club, seeing women come together to read and support one another as they read through Tanya Tagaq's novel, *Split Tooth*. This program enabled the women to read a book by a female Indigenous author, on topics that were familiar to the Indigenous community.

The Nbaakaawin Kwe Program aims to support clients in finding balance within all four quadrants of the medicine wheel of life – Mental, Spiritual, Emotional and Physical. This is done by providing learning opportunities from an Indigenous perspective, honouring the Seven Sacred Teachings, offering cultural programs, and by making referrals to other community resources.

This year special features included Anishnaabemowin language classes that were high in demand, which led to an increase in classes, and a creative writing component. In addition, this year's Anishnaabemowin language classes saw participants in the fall session continue their learning with Traditional Language Keeper John Roy, evolving from simple speaking terms to full-on sentence structure and speaking assignments.



Melisa Marco – Finance Manager



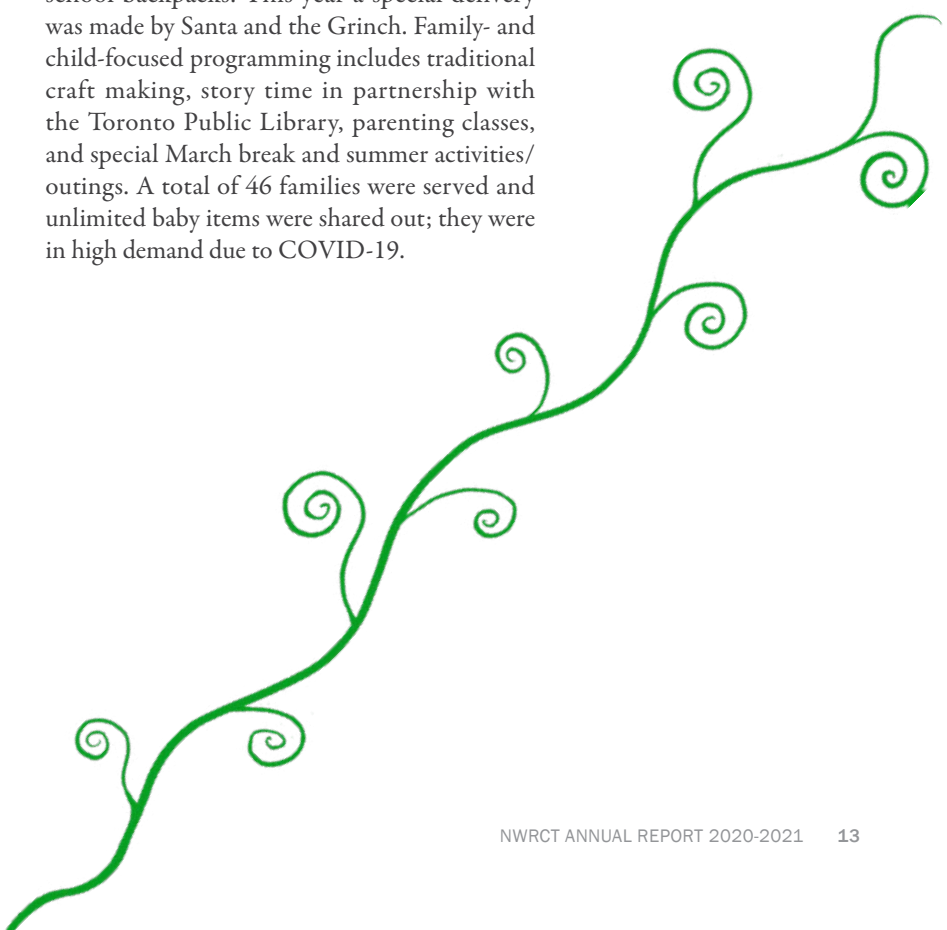
Tesla Hunter – Education Coordinator

The Pimaatsiwin Program

The Pimaatsiwin (A Good Way of Life) Parenting Program is a CAP-C program designed for primary caregivers who identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis women with children 0-6 years old or primary caregivers of children 0-6 years old who identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis.

The Pimaatsiwin Program is a safe and comfortable place for birth families and chosen families, to gather, learn and grow. It was created to provide women and their children and pregnant women the opportunities that encourage healthy living; physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing; and emotional support. The focus of this program at NWRCT is that it is to be from an Indigenous lens, with culturally specific programming and traditional supports. We offer individual parenting support, emergency baby supplies once a month, childcare for onsite programming, and weekly access to grocery support. Support comes

in various forms depending on family needs. The program pulls together an annual winter solstice event, with the support of RBC, to provide gifts for women for their children as well as back-to-school backpacks. This year a special delivery was made by Santa and the Grinch. Family- and child-focused programming includes traditional craft making, story time in partnership with the Toronto Public Library, parenting classes, and special March break and summer activities/outings. A total of 46 families were served and unlimited baby items were shared out; they were in high demand due to COVID-19.



Here are some of the programs we hosted over the past year



SNIWWOC & NWRCT PRESENTS:

4 Week Workshop "Grandmother Moon"

with Michaela Shannon & Jocelyn Kagige

IN LIGHT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

- 4 Weeks via Zoom
- Grandmother Moon Teachings
- Building Self-Esteem & Identifying Violence
- Boundaries & Healthy Relationships
- GIVEAWAYS & INCENTIVES PROVIDED

WEDNESDAYS IN NOVEMBER | 12:00PM EST
TO REGISTER: communitywellness@nwrct.ca

COMMUNITY WELLNESS PRESENTS:

A Journey to The Heart DENAAGDENJIGENG

with Embodiment Coach
Brittney Guimond

- Women's Empowerment Circle
- Heart Chakra Healing/ Expansion
- Traditional Teachings on "Love"
- Self Connection Practices

4 WEEKS STARTING FEBRUARY 10TH, 2021
1:00PM - 2:00PM EST VIA ZOOM

TO SIGN UP:
communitywellness@nwrct.ca

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT SERIES 2: MISSING PERSONS

In Honor of our MMIWG
Special Guest: Det. Mary Vruna
Feb 10 1-2pm
Facebook Live
To Register:
housing@nwrct.ca

MOTHERING MILESTONES

Join us in the spirit of sisterhood as we gather to discuss our accomplishments, our struggles and our hopes in motherhood. Engage with other mothers in the community and share your stories in truth, safety and love.

Aboriginal Healthy Babies/Healthy Children
1st Monday of every month
4:00pm-5:30 pm

REGISTER TO ATTEND VIA
AHBHC@NWRCT.CA
(416) 963-9963 EXT.235



ALPHABET THEME

Virtual Storytime with Sam from TPL
 Wednesday, December 2 @ 2:00pm
 Wednesday, December 16 @ 2:00pm

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To register email: pimaatisiwin@nwrct.ca





NWRCT PRESENTS:

Community Empowerment Series 3: Domestic Violence

March 10, 2021
 1-2PM
 Facebook Live

Guest Speaker Detective Corey Crawford

housing@nwrct.ca / traumacoordinator@nwrct.ca





PIMS & BFFV

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Tikanagan Teaching and Craft Workshop
 with Judy Sackaney
 Wednesday, January 27, 2021
 5:30-7:00pm

Limited spots available..
 Pre-registration required!
 email: pimaatisiwin@nwrct.ca







NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY
 COMMUNITY WELLNESS
 PRESENTS:

FAWN WOOD

*performing live on NWRCT
 webinar platform*

Plains cree / Salish Singer | Aritst




FRIDAY, JUNE 19TH | 1:00 PM EST

ADDICTION & HOUSING 2 PART WEBINAR SERIES



NOVEMBER 9TH & 13
 10AM-11AM
 REGISTER TODAY
housing@nwrct.ca






A Member

A community member became a part of NWRCT at the end of 2020 when joining the “Grandmother Moon: In Light of Domestic Violence Awareness Month” 4 Week Program with Community Wellness. She was in an emotionally abusive relationship at the time and wanted to reach out for support, and also to get connected to her culture and become involved with community. She was later connected with one of our Traditional Healers, where she received cultural guidance and insights, while also taking part in the full moon ceremonies. Later she would receive weekly wellness check-ins from our Community Wellness Worker, where she would work through areas of her life from a holistic and cultural perspective. She set goals, and she showed a determination to achieve them. On one wellness check-in, this community member expressed that she had ‘good news’ – and it was that she got the courage and strength to leave her emotionally abusive relationship. She was supported through this process and received help to cope through times of loneliness, getting rent support for her new place, and would constantly partake in NWRCT online programming.

She also participated in “A Journey to the Heart,” a program that helped women heal their heart chakra, find forgiveness and practise compassion through visualization and embodiment exercises. She also participated in “Project Uplift,” a program designed to help women cope through the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs gave her structure, and a reason to do things during the day, she says.

Today, this community member has moved on from her past relationship, and states she is in a better place mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically. She is thankful for the programs and services that NWRCT offers to women of the community.



Thanks to Our Funders

A special Miigwetch to our program funders for their ongoing support.

Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle
- Reaching Home

Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle
- Reaching Home - Emergency Funding for COVID-19

City of Toronto - Community Service Partnerships (Women and Youth Circles)

City of Toronto - Housing Program

City of Toronto - The Healing Paths Project

Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development - Literacy and Basic Skills

Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services - Community Wellness Worker

Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services - Community Wellness Worker - COVID-19 Relief

Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services - Equity

Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services - Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking

Ontario Ministry of the Status of Women - Ginoози Trauma Support 4

Ontario Ministry Responsible for Women's Issues - Investing in Women's Issues

Ontario Native Women's Association - Breaking Free from Family Violence Program

Ontario Native Women's Association - COVID-19 Emergency Community Supports

Ontario Native Women's Association - Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison Program

Ontario Native Women's Association - Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison Program (COVID-19 Support)

Public Health Agency of Canada - Pimaatisiwin

The Métis Nation of Ontario - Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program

Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council - COVID-19 Funding

Women and Gender Equality Canada - Disability Research





Amber

Amber was homeless, living in a motel in East Scarborough. This motel is not known for its safety. Amber was residing there with her three children while trying to work part-time as a nurse at North York General Hospital. When NWRCT staff reached out to speak with her, Amber was in tears. Her children at this point witnessed violence, drug use, drug overdoses and various other horrific situations that no children should be a witness to. Amber's car was damaged by other tenants of the motel, and she was harassed daily by motel staff and other tenants. Her son was having a very hard time at school due to trouble sleeping. Amber tried to work with the housing team established at the motel but found feelings of disrespect and worthlessness. Amber was missing the compassion for her Indigenous culture. NWRCT and the housing staff showed empathy to her plight and had various meetings with her to make her feel validated for all the horrendous incidents that she and her children were subjected to. Amber worked with the housing team to locate suitable housing and started focusing on her wellness. Since moving into her two bedroom plus den, her children are happy and healthy. Amber's depression vanished and she has her confidence back. In Amber's words, "NWRCT gave me my life back."



National Indigenous People's Day Virtual Celebration

On June 21, 2020, NWRCT hosted their first major public event amidst the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. On this day, the staff organized a virtual celebration for National Indigenous People's Day to highlight and showcase the wonderful talent and teachings of our Indigenous culture and history. Each program was responsible for an activity throughout the seven-hour virtual event, which included Indigenous recording artist Fawn Wood, Traditional Language Keeper John Roy, Jingle Dress Dancer Mary Beth Robichaud, Indigenous artist Karen Cull, along with a traditional craft for the children. The reach for this event was unlike any other NWRCT has previously hosted, as it was virtual and reached the homes of Indigenous people and their allies across Turtle Island.

Sisters in Spirit Vigil

Every October, communities across Canada come together to honour the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) and to stand alongside their families to offer support, educate the

public, and commemorate the lives of our Indigenous women and girls. This gathering is to honour our stolen sisters and provide medicine and support to sisters in spirit and their families still with us. An annual event at NWRCT, the Sisters in Spirit Vigil was adapted to an online platform in 2020. The event showcased community youth drummers and a Jingle Dress Dancer for healing and honouring ceremony. A sacred fire was kept for the duration of the event. Attendees joined by virtual platform to listen to powerful speakers who provided words of justice, strength and sacredness.

Winter Solstice

The Winter Solstice is an event that brings the community together, that aligns with the winter holidays.

Preparation for the Winter Solstice begins at the end of October/early November and leads right to the event in mid-December. Clients and community members have the option to sign up in advance for assistance over the holidays, and the event in 2020 gave clients and their children an opportunity to gather with friends and community members. The event was hosted virtually this year but still offered amazing giveaways and a medicine teaching, Santa Claus and traditional drumming.





Latoya

Latoya has been a client of NWRCT for a couple of years and re-registered with the Housing Department in August 2020. Latoya's children at the time of intake were living with her mom and her youngest twins were in care. Latoya was in early recovery and a victim of domestic abuse. She reached out to the Housing Coordinator and stated that she needed to move from her apartment, where the abuse took place, for her wellbeing and safety. Latoya worked hard with NWRCT staff to secure housing that was close to all her supports, something that even had an extra bedroom where her mother could stay and assist her. Through the advocacy efforts of NWRCT supports and services, Latoya was able to move into her new home in December 2020, just in time to have a home visit with all her children for Christmas. Latoya was so ecstatic about this turn of events, she said, "Native Women's is such an amazing agency. You guys never judged me no matter what I said. You are always there to help."

Since moving into her new home, her youngest twins have returned home. The family is reunited and participates in Centre activities to keep building that bond. Latoya is working on her 12 steps; she started her own Narcotics Anonymous group for women and she is going to school virtually, taking the Addiction and Mental Health Worker course, so she can support others who face similar situations. Latoya keeps staff informed of her school progress and currently has a 91% GPA. NWRCT is so proud of Latoya and all her hard work. She is an inspiration to all those who have battled addiction and fought to get their life back on track. Latoya has gained her independence from an abusive partner; she has gained her confidence back and has become that beautiful mother she always was.

International Women's Day

The IWF program had the privilege to hold the International Women's Day Celebration for the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto. The event commenced with an opening prayer and teaching from the Centre's Traditional Healer, Mary Ann Shoefly, followed by Jingle dancing from Danielle Migwans. She explained the teaching behind the Jingle dress and its healing properties. This later transitioned to hand drumming with Sara Luey and Danielle Migwans. The event ended with closing remarks from the Executive Director and the Investing in Women's Future Worker. The commentary from various individuals in the community was both uplifting and liberating. Overall, despite the challenging times the world is undergoing, and the uncertainty tomorrow might bring, one thing remains the same: the solidarity amongst Indigenous Women every day.



Grandmother Moon Workshop

A four-week workshop called "Grandmother Moon" was held in light of Domestic Violence Awareness Month in November 2020. This program was partnered with the Support Network for Indigenous Women and Women of Colour, and facilitated by the Community Wellness Worker, and the Mental Health Support Worker at SNIWWOC. The program reached over 100 participants in the first session, with

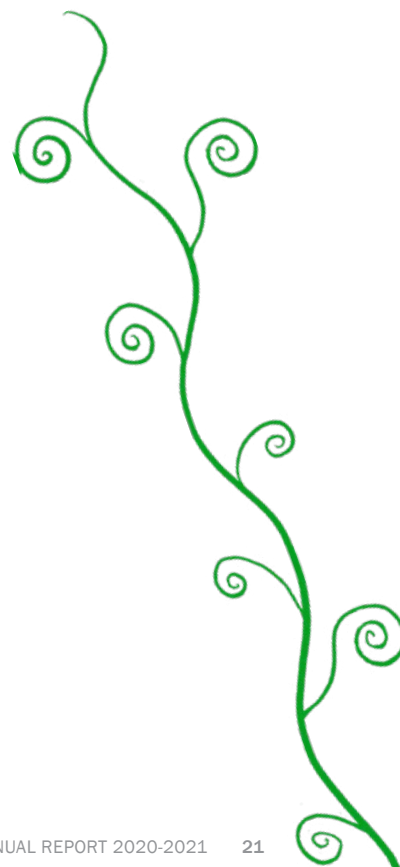
about 250 shares on social media. Participants learned information on domestic violence and violence against women, colonization, the types of violence, and knowing the signs and symptoms. The program explored "breakout rooms" where participants were able to break up into smaller groups on Zoom and have a sharing circle amongst one another, to feel a sense of community and to have a support group. The subsequent sessions had information on healthy relationships, Grandmother Moon teachings, our role as women, setting boundaries, self-care and creating a safety plan. NWRCT provided an incentive and a 'Certificate of Completion' that was mailed out to individuals who completed the program.

Staff Circles And Traditional Healer Access

This has been introduced to offer the team of NWRCT an opportunity to connect, share, learn and heal as a unit with the in-house Traditional Healers. Circles offer at times a focus on themes such as lateral violence or women's issues but are also open for addressing any matter the team may need to unpack. The circles are a cultural approach to conflict resolution, debriefing from situations and serving as an opportunity for team building. The staff also have access to the Traditional Healers for one-on-ones to work on their spiritual growth and knowledge. With the support of the management team we are aiming to provide spiritual and emotional development along with professional enhancement opportunities to promote a four-directional enriched staff member and team dynamic.

RBC Christmas Highlight

In December, the Royal Bank of Canada donated to NWRCT wrapped children's toys and speciality gifts for families and mothers for the Christmas holiday season. A total of 500 families and mothers, with an additional 89 children, benefited from the generous donation from the Royal Bank of Canada. Many of the RBC branches also came together to provide NWRCT with extra food hampers for our community members in the holiday season. Thanks to the Royal Bank of Canada, many community members were able (*Continued on page 23*)





Tamara

Tamara first became a part of NWRCT in February 2020 after wanting to connect to her culture and see what resources are available. Tamara is Mi'kmaq, a single mother of two children, and is originally from Newfoundland. She did not grow up knowing her culture, as it was kept from her by her father, who was a part of the residential school systems. Throughout her life, Tamara felt unsure of who she was, and where she belonged. She was struggling to maintain balance within herself during the pandemic, and that's when she made the decision to reach out to NWRCT. Tamara was able to receive a laptop and Wi-Fi kit right away, from the Toronto Public Library program, to finish her education in accounting – and to fulfill her dream of providing a bigger home for her family. She was a successful participant of “Project Uplift,” a four-week program designed to help participants manage stress through the mind, body and spirit. She also received services through the grocery support program, so she no longer feared where her next meal would come from. Tamara's real healing began once she and her children received their Spirit name, clan, and her colours by Mary Ann Shoefly. As she learns more, she continuously shares the songs and language with her daughters, so they know who they are as they grow older. Being welcomed into the community has made Tamara realize that people can never take away who she truly is in her roots, and feels like her life has changed since becoming a part of NWRCT. She plans to continue attending programming, connecting to her culture, and empowering herself and her children. Tamara is in an Indigenous Studies and Psychology/Sociology program. She states: I have a sense of community now that I never had before, and a feeling that I am worthy. I honestly do not know where I would be mentally without the guidance and help I have received. I am in a place now where I am excited what the future holds.

(Continued from page 21)

to have subsidiary assistance for the Christmas season. The program made special deliveries (with COVID protection) from Santa, his elves and a sneaky appearance by the Grinch.

Project Uplift

Project Uplift was in response to the COVID-19 lockdown and meant to provide mental health supports and a wellness care package upon completion of the program. The Community Wellness and the Breaking Free from Family Violence programs facilitated the program. Content was centred around how to manage stress through the body, mind and spirit, with group sharing circles and topic discussions. The program ran from February 2021 – March 2021. There was a total of 11 participants who were a part of this program.

Services Provided During Covid-19

In early March of 2020, COVID-19 hit the City of Toronto, which in turn had the Native Women's Resource Centre making drastic changes in how the community was served. During the first lockdown, management and leadership worked diligently to ensure NWRCT kept the community on the forefront during trying times. Various packages with entertaining activity kits for the whole family's use, care products, smudge kits and food support were made all by delivery in the Greater Toronto Area. The NWRCT team worked quickly to get regular in-person programming suitable for online platforms. The Traditional Healers were able to provide remote sessions with community members. NWRCT was able to offer safe relocation for women fleeing high-risk and violent situations. With a slow start, NWRCT became fully operational online in April 2020. NWRCT continues to monitor the current pandemic to ensure the wellbeing of staff and community members. We have been able to expand the reach of community participants to across Canada, remote locations and even some states as more and more community members sought our connection, ceremony and programming.

COVID Details

Over

3,000 meals served

1,265 food hampers provided

40 emergency hampers provided

600 hygiene/survival kits provided

12 tents and survival gear provided

48 families and women offered safe shelter or housing

Summarized Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Current:		
Cash	\$ 1,979,693	\$ 1,167,027
Accounts and Grants Receivable	135,019	152,591
Prepaid Expenses	6,520	6,224
	<u>2,121,232</u>	<u>1,325,843</u>
Property and Equipment (Net)	<u>1,595,757</u>	<u>1,506,389</u>
	<u><u>\$ 3,716,989</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 2,832,232</u></u>
LIABILITIES		
Current:		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$ 254,874	\$ 315,649
Deferred Revenue	415,667	86,490
	<u>670,541</u>	<u>402,139</u>
Deferred Capital Contributions	<u>1,421,853</u>	<u>1,322,482</u>
	<u>2,092,394</u>	<u>1,724,621</u>
NET ASSETS		
Operating Fund	1,349,836	862,954
Building Fund	173,904	183,907
Internally Restricted Reserve Fund	100,855	60,750
	<u>1,624,595</u>	<u>1,107,611</u>
	<u><u>\$ 3,716,989</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 2,832,232</u></u>

Summarized Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

For the Year Ended March 31	2021	2020
REVENUES		
Grants:		
Federal	\$ 103,427	\$ 102,833
Provincial	396,548	655,020
City of Toronto	261,067	252,823
Other Funders	1,005,075	489,689
Other	605,551	300,499
	<u>2,371,668</u>	<u>1,800,864</u>
EXPENSES	<u>1,876,278</u>	<u>1,674,736</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	\$ 495,390	\$ 126,128
OTHER REVENUES (EXPENSES)	21,594	(8,111)
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ 516,984	\$ 118,017
NET ASSETS - OPENING	<u>\$ 1,107,611</u>	<u>\$ 989,594</u>
NET ASSETS - CLOSING	<u><u>\$ 1,624,595</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,107,611</u></u>

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR ON THE SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

To the Members of Native Women Resource Centre of Toronto, Inc.

Opinion

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, and the summary statements of operations and changes in net assets for the year then ended, and the relating note are derived from the audited financial statements of Native Women Resource Centre of Toronto, Inc. (the “Organization”) for the year ended March 31, 2021.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the financial statements, on the basis described in Note 1.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor’s report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the Organization’s audited financial statements and the auditor’s report thereon.

The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated August 19, 2021.

Management’s Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the summary financial statements in accordance with the criteria disclosed in Note 1 to the summary financial statements.

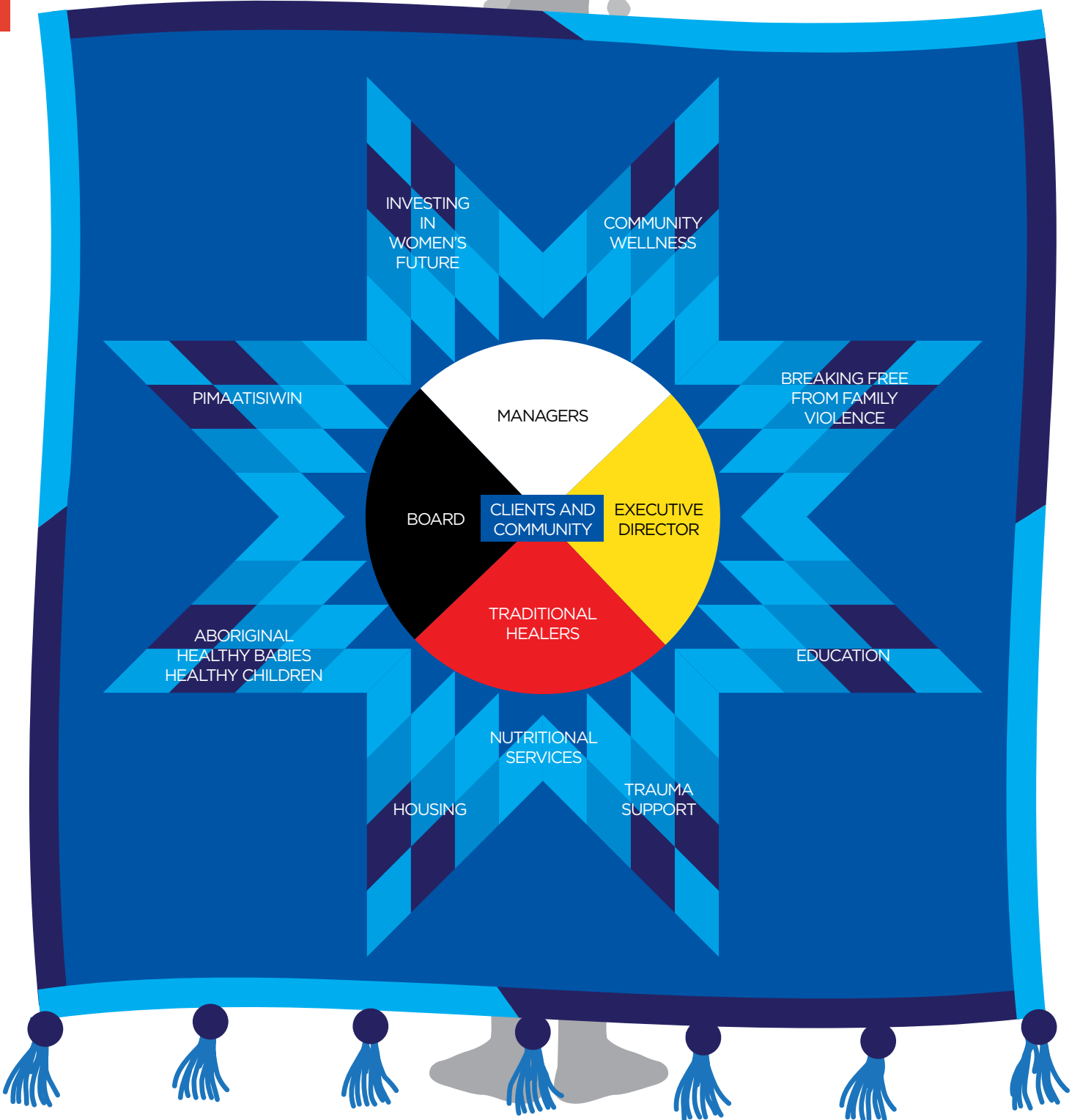
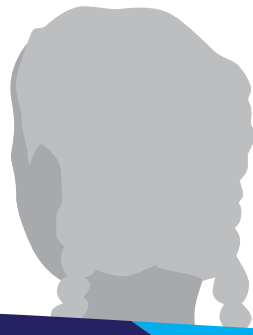
Auditor’s Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

Hogg, Shain & Scheck PC

Toronto, Ontario
August 19, 2021

Authorized to practise public accounting by the
Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario



INVESTING
IN
WOMEN'S
FUTURE

COMMUNITY
WELLNESS

PIMAATISIWIN

BREAKING FREE
FROM FAMILY
VIOLENCE

MANAGERS

BOARD

CLIENTS AND
COMMUNITY

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

ABORIGINAL
HEALTHY BABIES
HEALTHY CHILDREN

EDUCATION

TRADITIONAL
HEALERS

NUTRITIONAL
SERVICES

HOUSING

TRAUMA
SUPPORT

HUMILITY

BRAVERY

HONESTY

WISDOM

TRUTH

RESPECT

LOVE



The Seven Grandfather Teachings

At NWRCT, the Seven Grandfather Teachings are our guiding principles, as a moral stepping stone and cultural foundation of the work we do within the Centre and community. The Seven Grandfather / Sacred Teachings are commonly shared between Indigenous groups. Although their origin may differ, the concept of respect for all living things remains constant.

Dbaadendiziwin – Humility

The wolf represents Dbaadendiziwin. The wolf finds his greatest purpose is a life lived for his pack and the ultimate shame is to be an outcast. Dbaadendiziwin is to acknowledge that you are a sacred part of creation and something larger. To know Dbaadendiziwin is to find balance within yourself and all living things. At NWRCT, we acknowledge that our staff, clients and community members hold a sacred place in creation, operations and community. Everyone must be included and treated fairly. We aim to maintain humility and accept feedback and recommendations from all who enter the Centre.

Aakwa'ode'ewin – Bravery

Aakwa'ode'ewin is represented by the bear. The mother bear is courageous and has the strength to face her fears while protecting her young. The bear also represents how one can live a balanced life through rest, survival and play. Programming at NWRCT encourages women to find their inner strength and face the difficulties of life while finding the courage to be themselves. With direction from program coordinators, clients can make positive choices and do what is right for themselves, their family and community. NWRCT will aim to support one's sense of bravery when facing life's challenges and decisions.

Gwekwaaziwin – Honesty

The raven or the sabe represents Gwekwaaziwin. Both the raven and the sabe understand who they are and understand their place in creation. Sabe represents being honest with ourselves and refraining from trying to be someone we are not. Ravens accept themselves and know how to use their gifts. Like the raven and sabe, NWRCT encourages staff and clients to be themselves and to utilize their gifts to thrive. NWRCT will seek to maintain honesty with all who enter the Centre, within the community, the services we offer and the approach to operation.

Nbwaakaawin – Wisdom

The beaver who uses his natural gifts wisely to survive in his environment represents Nbwaakaawin. Like the beaver, the services at NWRCT will support women through programs to identify their inherent gifts, and provide the tools and resources to recognize them. Women who visit NWRCT are encouraged to observe the life of all things around them, to listen with clarity and to respect the limitations of themselves and their surroundings along their journey. We will lean on our Traditional Healers for wisdom and teachings, and our Board Of Directors for wisdom in guidance and governance. We will share this wisdom through all aspects of the Centre.

Debwewin – Truth

The turtle represent Debwewin. The turtle carries the creation of Earth and carries the teachings of life on his back. The turtle understands the importance of both the journey and the destination. The Centre runs programs that encourage women to have trust in their journey, even during times when it feels slow. Through programs offered at NWRCT, women find ways to trust their journey and honour each step along the way. We will honour people's truth on their respective journeys.

Mnaadendimowin – Respect

The buffalo represents Mnaadendimowin. The buffalo gives every part of his being to sustain the human way of living because he respects the balance and needs of others. To honour all of creation is to have respect. At NWRCT, we live honourably in teachings and in our actions towards all things. We are mindful of the balance required for programs and services. We will respect all those who enter the Centre, their placement and identity.

Zaagidwin – Love

The eagle, who has the strength to carry all the teachings, represents Zaagidwin. The eagle has the ability to fly highest and closest to the Creator and has the sight to see all the ways of being. The eagle's teaching of love is rooted at the core of the other six teachings. To know love is to know peace. NWRCT aims to have the women who visit view their inner self from the perspective of the Seven Grandfather Teachings. This allows women to know love and to love themselves truly. When our staff, clients and community can be in harmony with themselves, the balance of life and Creator align. NWRCT will show love to all those who enter the Centre, and demonstrate this through our programs, services and operational team.

Your Donations Make a Difference

When you support the work of the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto, you are helping hundreds of First Nation, Métis and Inuit women in the Toronto area, and your kindness greatly impacts community and the Centre in a good way.

NWRCT is a registered charitable organization, and your donation will be eligible for a tax receipt.

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Finance Manager

Natalie Spence
Program Manager

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Nutritional Services Worker

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Nicole Balthazar
Investing in Women's Future Worker

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Community Wellness Worker

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Client Testimonials

“I’ve attended Finding Motivation when feeling in a slump, Project Uplift, Diabetes and COVID-19, A Happier Me and Full Moon Ceremony through Jocelyn. All her workshops have been of benefit to me and I’m sure to the other participants as well. They were especially of benefit in the last year with COVID-19 isolation and lockdowns. It gave me an opportunity to connect with people while still staying safe in my home. It also gave me ideas to lift my spirits and become a healthier version of myself. Jocelyn’s upbeat attitude is inspiring. Her workshops were very beneficial in helping me with depression and loneliness during these difficult times. So, I say Chi Miigwetch for all that the Centre does. I thank you for allowing me to participate in your workshops and look forward to future ones.”

“I have a sense of community now that I never had before, and a feeling that I am worthy, and deserve the same as others do. I honestly do not know where I would be mentally without the guidance and help I have received. I am in a place now where I am excited what the future holds, and not depressed and hating myself every day.”

“ I just wanted to say ‘thank you’ for all of the groceries and recipes, the delicious lunches, the Presto card (!!) and all of the goodies in the hygiene kits and hats & gloves...the creams, shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste, everything! It's all so needed, so if you're able to, can you please thank the Centre's ED and all the donors as well somehow?”



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