



Shki Mii-Kaanhs – New Path: Young Adult Cultural Leadership Retreat that took place over Family Day weekend. The retreat focused on cultural activities and teachings.

Indigenous youth connect through Shki Mii-Kaanhs cultural retreat

By Victoria Racette

Family is a single word with many different meanings. Over this past Family Day weekend, a group of Indigenous youth left the Shki Mii-Kaanhs (New Path) Young Adult Cultural Leadership Retreat carrying with them a new meaning of the word family.

A meaning that will continue to resonate with all of the participants who came together at the retreat, sharing the common desire to connect with other Indigenous youth and the Anishinaabe culture.

The four-day retreat, hosted by the Anishinabek Nation Social Development Department, was held at Northern Edge Algonquin Nature

Retreat & Awareness Centre in South River, Ont. The retreat provided Indigenous youth aged 18-29 with a new opportunity to build their leadership skills by participating in hands-on, culturally-based activities and teachings.

“Shki Mii-Kaanhs means ‘new path’ in Anishinaabemowin and was a huge success,” said Sarah Blackwell, youth coordinator for the Anishinabek Nation. “The participants gained valuable leadership skills as they shared their individual talents with each other during workshops and socially.”

Throughout the retreat, participants engaged in a variety of outdoor and indoor activities that included singing,

dancing and beading. Firekeeper teachings were provided by Perry McLeod-Shabogesic while Gokomis Lorraine Liberty conducted water teachings. The teachings continued with participants learning about the importance of Mukwaa (bears) and the traditional significance of “Bear Moon” – the time of year for renewal. As winter is ending, bears are coming out of hibernation and bringing new life with them as they birth their cubs.

“My sister and I attended the retreat and we loved it! We’re grateful for all of the beautiful teachings and to have made many friends. I appreciate feeling more connected to my culture,” expressed a youth

participant.

Coordination of the retreat was supported by the Anishinabek Youth Planning Committee, consisting of Sarah Blackwell, Youth Coordinator, Gokomis Virginia Goulais and youth members Pierre Bourassa, Mathew Gauthier, Brittney Meunier-Gauthier, Jordyn Cassandra Commanda, Jasmine Michel, and Sarita Bellefeuille.

“As one of the youth mentors that took part in planning this event; it turned out way better than ever expected,” shared Bourassa. “It has reminded me of how powerful our traditions and our culture is. I’m very thankful that I got this experience. Miigwech.”



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‘Now is the time to move forward’

Aanii,

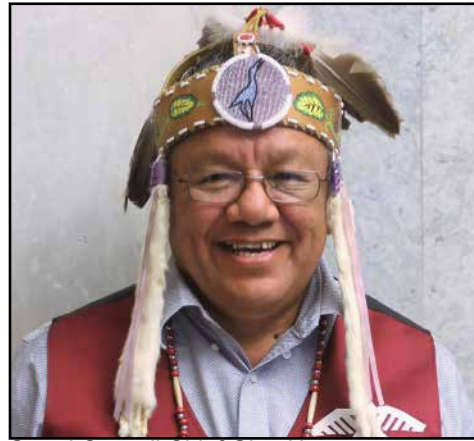
The final half of the year has proven to be increasingly busy as we have been working diligently with First Nations on the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement forging ahead with the Ratification Vote.

As you may be aware, the Anishinabek Nation strives to ensure that Regional Chiefs Meetings occur regularly in addition to Grand Council Assembly. These meetings are a great opportunity to communicate issues, challenges, accomplishments, opportunities or other activity, often community or regional-specific. In the third quarter, we met with the Chiefs of all four Regions.

Anishinabek Nation has met with the federal and provincial governments on several matters, including meeting with Minister Rickford on October 7, 2019. The Chiefs Committee on Economy and Chiefs Committee on Governance met on October 29 and 30, 2019. The Lands, Resources and Economic Development Department hosted its 4th Annual Forum, Kina-Gego-Naabadosin - Everything is Connected, in Nipissing First Nation territory on October 22, 23 and 24, 2019. During this forum, the Regional Deputy Grand Council Chiefs and I participated in a Joint Plenary Session and Discussion, where we discussed primarily climate change and the role academia and sustainability play, but also winter road safety, particularly in northern communities.

In preparation for the Fall Assembly on November 5, 6 and 7, 2019, hosted by Chipewewa of the Thames in London, several matters were identified in each region for follow-up which allowed for fruitful discussion during the Assembly. We also excitedly announced the appointment of the first Anishinabek Nation Children's Commissioner who will provide high-level oversight over the implementation, compliance and enforcement of the Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law and the Anishinabek Nation Children and Youth Bill of Rights. The Child Well-Being Working Group met in Curve Lake the following week from November 12 to 14, 2019.

Leading up to the Ratification Vote of the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance



Grand Council Chief Glen Hare

Agreement, there were many First Nations requesting updates and information for the vote in February 2020. We travelled to Red Rock Indian Band, Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg, Long Lake #58, and Fort William First Nation, along with the negotiators and Restoration of Jurisdiction Department Director, to speak to the Agreement.

We continued to build relationships with the Chiefs and Councils that were newly elected in First Nations in the Lake Huron Region. In December 2019, the Assembly of First Nations held its Special Chiefs Assembly in Ottawa. We took that opportunity to meet with the Anishinabek Nation Chiefs and discussed the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement and addressed questions about misinformation that was being circulated. Our negotiators worked to provide additional information to First Nations that required further clarification on the Agreement.

This will be a key year in regards to the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement Votes are scheduled for February 2020 and May 2020. In the fourth quarter, the Restoration of Jurisdiction Department and First Nation Communications Coordinators jointly planned information sessions on the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement throughout the territory. I encourage all Anishinabek Nation citizens to attend the information sessions in their community.

We are developing the implementation plan for the Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law. The Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Working Group and sub-committees will continue to address implementation issues.

The Chiefs of Ontario Special Chiefs Assembly was hosted in Ottawa from February 4 to 6, 2020. We capitalized on the venue to meet with Minister Bennett on February

6, Minister Smith on February 26, Minister Hardeman on February 27, and Minister Elliot on February 28, 2020.

The Little NHL celebrated its 49th anniversary this year! The tournament was held in Mississauga, Ontario, on March 16 to 20, 2020 and was proudly hosted by Nipissing First Nation. The tournament was again a success with a record number of teams in 2020! I wish to acknowledge the efforts and dedication of all of the fans and volunteers who have contributed to the success of the Little NHL tournament.

We have Leadership Table protocols with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (formerly Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada), the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines. We are currently planning future meetings with each of these ministries.

We have four regional meetings scheduled in each region during April as a lead up to Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Assembly in June 2020. We look forward to meeting with all of the Chiefs at these meetings.

We have had some organizational changes recently, which included Gary Dokis retiring from his role as the Chief Executive Officer. We wish Gary all of the best and wish to acknowledge his contributions to the Anishinabek Nation over the past years. We give a warm welcome to Marcia Trudeau-Bomberry who is now fulfilling the role as Chief Executive Officer.

Regional Deputy Grand Council Chiefs and I regularly attend meetings in Anishinabek First Nations and we plan to visit all of our communities this year. If you would like to schedule us for events or meetings in your community, please contact our Executive Liaison.

We have an opportunity to move forward. Now is the time to move forward—our people are waiting for action. It is important that we continue to assert our jurisdiction. There is much to celebrate throughout the Anishinabek Nation territory! We are moving forward in education, child well-being, Anishinabek Nation law development, and constitution development. We intend to continue to focus on implementation activities. I have spoken frequently of the requirement to implement our initiatives, I believe that 2020 will be a successful year for the Anishinabek Nation.

Miigwetch,
Grand Council Chief Glen Hare

Anishinabek vote on Governance Agreement

ANISHINABEK NATION HEAD OFFICE (March 6, 2020) – The work we are doing is the building of the Anishinabek Nation Naaknigewin – our Naaknigewin. This journey began 25 years ago; leadership took the first step and now we are taking that next step.

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Glen Hare said that he is pleased to hear that there were more “yes” than “no” votes for the first group of First Nations voting on the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement.

“Although most of the First Nations didn’t reach the threshold, some were very close and could be eligible for a second vote at a later date. We are beginning internal discussions with those First Nations this week,” says Grand Council Chief Hare. “There will be nine First Nations running a vote in May 2020 and we look forward to seeing the successful outcomes of their votes.”

Each First Nation running a vote on the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance

Agreement must meet the following threshold: a minimum of 25% plus 1 of a First Nation’s Eligible Voters must vote ‘yes’ and there must be more ‘yes’ votes than ‘no’ votes to ratify the Agreement. This threshold is part of the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement protocol for the vote, as it is with many ratification votes for agreements with Canada.

The official results of the vote will not be available until after the 10-day Appeal Period has passed. On March 11, we hope to be able to communicate the official results and what the next steps will be. If an appeal is submitted within the 10-day window, the Appeal Board will then have another set amount of time to determine their decision. It could be more than 10 days that official results are announced, depends on any appeals.

The proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement recognizes, not creates, the Anishinabek First Nations’ law-making powers and authority on how they will gov-

ern themselves, and removing them from the governance provisions of the Indian Act. The First Nations that ratify the proposed Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement will have the power to enact laws in the following areas: leadership selection, citizenship, language and culture, and operation of governments.

Under the proposed Agreement, certain provisions of the Indian Act that deal with governance will no longer apply to the First Nations that ratify. The First Nations will pass their own laws for how they select their Chiefs and Councils; determine who their citizens are without interference from external governments; allocate necessary financial support dedicated to the restoration and preservation of their language and culture; and manage their First Nation government operations. The funding amounts are significant enough to ensure there is positive change in the communities and is a first step away from financial and administrative control by Canada over Anishinabek.

Elders and youth take in hide preparation teachings from traditional moose hide tanner

By Rick Garrick

FORT WILLIAM FIRST NATION— A Fort William youth was among a group of people who learned how to create moose bone scraping tools and how to prepare hides during a six-day workshop in Fort William.

"Making the bone tool out of a moose leg was pretty fun," says Keewaedin Crews, a St. Patrick High School student and Fort William citizen. "You cut it off at the joint of the foot and then you've got to shape the bone into the tool with a hacksaw."

Coty Crews, Keewaedin's mother and employment counsellor and responsibility officer with Fort William, says the Feb. 10-15 workshop was a "great experience" for her and her three children.

"It was a great way to gather and learn some of the old ways of harvesting hide and just interacting with other First Nation members," Coty says. "It's amazing — everyone has been great."

Melaw Nakehk'o, a traditional moose hide tanner from the Northwest Territories, says it was "really beautiful" to have the Elders and youth participating in the workshop.

"A lot of the youth made tools out of the moose legs," Nakehk'o says. "We were working on the moose hides with a couple of different techniques just to build

skills and to give people in the community an idea of the different tools they need to continue doing hide work."

Patrick Pelletier, employment and training administration assistant with Fort William and a member of the team that facilitated the workshop, says the workshop focussed on the process from stripping the hide from the animal to preparing it for tanning.

"Learning things about hide and new tricks and new ways of preparing those animals and honouring those animals, that's always a fun part of these programs," Pelletier says. "But for me, it's the interaction, seeing faces you haven't seen for a long time."

Brandy Morris, Ontario Works case manager with Fort William, says her two children participated in each of the steps of the workshop.

"They did very well. Yesterday when I took them home from here they wanted to make sure they thanked the Knowledge Keepers," Morris says. "So it was nice to see that they appreciated what was being offered to them and absorbed it."

Jayce Morris, a St. Patrick High School student and Fort William citizen, enjoyed learning the hide preparation skills during the workshop.

"I liked getting the hair off the hide,"

Jayce says. "You get to push on the sharp [edge of the tool] to get all the long hair off and then you turn it around and push [with] the dull side to get all the shorter hairs off. It was really fun."

Crissy Wells, a Fort William citizen, says the workshop was "very meditating."

"I was able to take the fur off and the membrane off," Wells says. "It is a long process, learning different techniques to do it. Everyone helped everyone, there was lots of support."

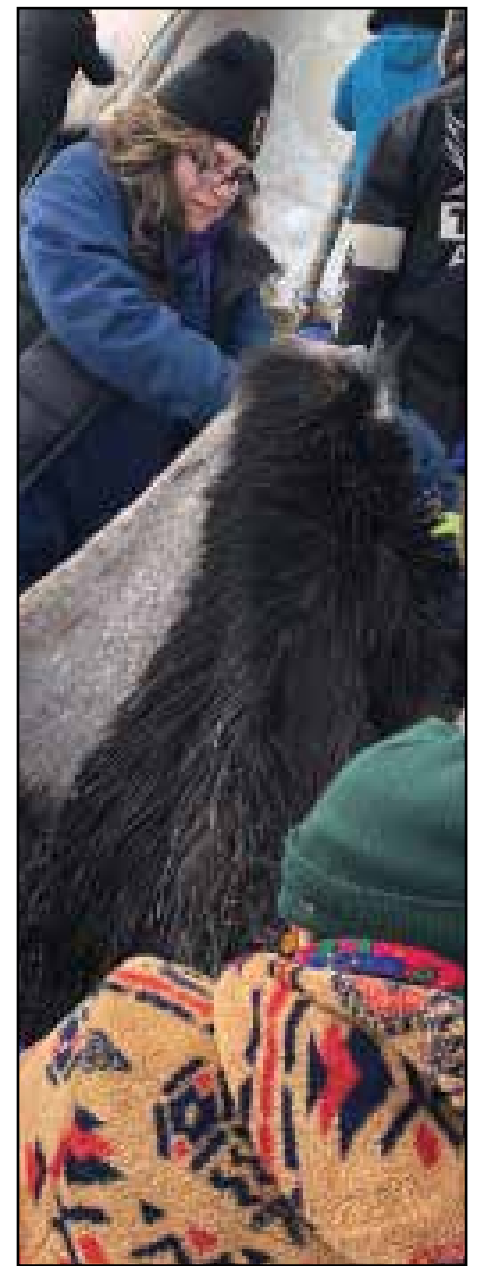
Andrew Mandamin, a Wiikwemkoong citizen, says the workshop was "very educational."

"It's not easy— it's hard work," Mandamin says. "You really appreciate the work that goes into the moose hide, right from the start to the finished product."

Alyssa Gagnon from Smooth Rock Falls says she loves doing hide tanning work, noting she has been working on hides since 2018 along with Jean Marshall, a Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug citizen who lives in Fort William, and Nakehk'o.

"It's really good work," Gagnon says. "It's challenging and it's also a part of reclaiming my identity as a Mushkego Cree woman."

Gagnon prepared the brain paste, which is a softening solution for the tanning process, during the workshop.



A group of participants learn how to scrape the moose hide during the Feb. 10-15 hide preparation workshop in Fort William.

First legal Indigenous cannabis shop Kana Leaf open

By Kelly Anne Smith

NIPISSING FIRST NATION— Kana Leaf's business partners are very excited to be Ontario's first legal Indigenous cannabis shop. Kana Leaf is set to open at the end of February.

It's a real family venture. All citizens of Nipissing First Nation, Curtis Avery, Carrie Avery, Gary Avery, Garnet Avery and Noreen Nichol are Kana Leaf partners.

There have been 12 people hired for the shop already, both part-time and full-time positions. Noreen says 80% of staff are Indigenous.

"We are happy to offer employment and create more jobs. We hope to do more hiring. We have to gauge things."

Curtis explains that the family had been thinking of a group venture for a long time.

"The opportunity came and we figured if we didn't do it, somebody else would. So, we started it."

Noreen says the new building has been waiting for the right opportunity.

"When cannabis became legal, it was like a whole brand-new industry and we were all in."

Curtis talks of the range of expertise of the Kana Leaf partners.

"Each one of us brings a different set of skills that work together. Some of us are good at [human resources] and some of us are great at construction and owning busi-

nesses and others are great at writing proposals and dealing with different parties, getting things to work."

Garnet Avery is enthusiastic about the opening. Garnet says in the past, he would never have dreamt to be opening a cannabis store. He and wife Deborah Avery have business experience with Yelleck Self Storage and TPI Blue Sky Travel.

Nipissing First Nation has set the legal age for cannabis use at 21 years of age and proper identification will be required when shopping Kana Leaf.

Safety is a priority says Curtis.

"The safety aspect is a huge reason why we want regulated product. We want to know where it's coming from, what's in it, and how it's manufactured. Those answers are super important. We have a one-stop shop for that."

There will be a variety of product to choose from. Customers will be able to see a sample up close with a magnifying glass on the clear container and remove the sniffer shield for a whiff.

Curtis says the thing about product is all about how fast you can get it.

"People want service and a product and to be able to go get it, having access to it right away."

The business has passed the final inspection after ensuring a multitude of regulatory measures have been put in place.



Curtis Avery with arms around aunt Noreen Nichol and grandfather Garnet Avery. The three are partners in Kana Leaf along with his mother Carrie Avery and uncle Gary Avery.

Noreen says the partners are aiming for the end of the month for the opening of Kana Leaf.

"We are waiting for our store authorization. We are hoping we get that early next week. That's our 'for sure' that we proceed with the 29th."

Noreen points out the art adorning the walls are all by artist Brian Waboose of Whitefish River First Nation.

"We wanted to have the modern look with the cultural feel and nice and bright. It's really important to have natural light."

Situated on Osprey Miikan, their exposure on Hwy 17 is a plus says Noreen.

"There's a lot of traffic on this highway. We know word is out there. We've been told there is a lot of excitement," she says. "We are really excited to open our doors to the community, Nipissing First Nation and North Bay and area, and for being the very first First Nation in Ontario to have a legally licensed establishment. We are very excited about that!"

Kana Leaf will be open seven days a week from 9:30 am to 10 pm.

A person with glasses is looking down at a document, with a pen resting on it. The background is a blurred office setting.

ANISHINABE NATION GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

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Alderville honours athlete

By Chief David Mowat

ALDERVILLE – I am proud to say that Mississauga Ojibway marathon runner Fred Simpson Sr. (1878-1945), was inducted into the Cobourg and District Sports Hall of Fame on Mar. 1. Miigwech to Fred Simpson III, Stewart Richardson, Ross Quigley and Committee members for this posthumous honour.

Simpson was a true pioneer during a short career between 1906-12. He was born and raised in Alderville, under the influence of the Methodist Church. He was the great-grandson of early signatories to Treaty 27 (1819) at Kingston.

His grandfather John was a student of William Case, converted to Methodism at the Bay of Quinte in 1828, and toured New York City as one of Case's examples of the Methodist experience amongst the Mishisagiig (Mississauga) of the Bay.

The pinnacle of Simpson's career was his 6th place finish in the 1908 Olympic Marathon in London, England. Simpson turned professional in early 1909 and raced in Georgia, New York City, Newark, Chicago, Toronto, and Fort William. He died in 1945 in Alderville.


More on the life of Fred Simpson Sr.:

Fred Simpson Sr. (1878-1945) was an Alderville Mississauga Ojibway marathon runner born and raised on the Alderville Indian Reserve. He was the son of James and Mary Simpson, and was raised in the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Alderville, while also learning the traditions of the people such as the gathering of wild rice, fishing and hunting. He lost his parents at a young age and was raised thereafter by his paternal




Fred Simpson Sr. 1878-1945 grandmother, eventually taking on manual labour and soon leaving Alderville for the Hiawatha Indian Reserve situated on the north shore of Rice Lake where he married Susan Muskrat around 1900.

A noted lanky, lithe and strong man, Simpson took up road racing by 1906 and within a year was racing in notable events such as the Hamilton Herald Road Race. By 1908, his talents were worthy enough to be invited to the provincial and national Olympic marathon trials for a berth on the Canadian In 1909, he turned professional and raced on a circuit that took him to Georgia, New York City, Newark, New Jersey, Chicago, Buffalo, Montreal, Toronto and Fort William. He raced professionally until 1912, and retired back to Hiawatha to continue raising his family with Susan.



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Kettle & Stony Point First Nation to see faster internet connectivity by end of 2020

By Colin Graf
CHIPPEWAS OF KETTLE & STONY POINT FIRST NATION — On-reserve citizens of Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation will soon be getting faster fibre-optic internet connections.

The community along the Lake Huron shore north of Sarnia, will have the improved service in place by the end of 2020.

Direct fibre connections will become available to approximately 900 homes and businesses within the territory, as well as to nearly 130 homes and businesses in the surrounding area, according to a news release from Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology Inc. (SWIFT), a non-profit regional broadband project that is subsidizing construction of high-speed broadband networks across Southwestern Ontario, Caledon and the Niagara Region by 2021.

The project is estimated to cost around \$2.7 million and will be the first of its kind for the community, according to SWIFT.

Kettle & Stony Point First Nation has up to now relied on “particularly poor internet service,” with some areas still dependent on dial-up connectivity, SWIFT’s release says.

“We welcome the introduction of fibre-optic infrastructure, which will bring high-speed internet to our community”, says Kettle & Stony Point Chief Jason Henry. “This investment is a game-changer for our community that will open the door to economic and educational opportunities widely available elsewhere and improve quality of life for residents.”

The work will be performed by Execulink Telecom who will install the new lines along 35 kilometres of road.

SWIFT is making the investments through the New Building Canada Fund –



Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation Chief Jason Henry says new fibre-optic internet connections will open new opportunities for the community.

Small Communities Fund (NBCF-SCF), a joint federal and provincial infrastructure funding program.

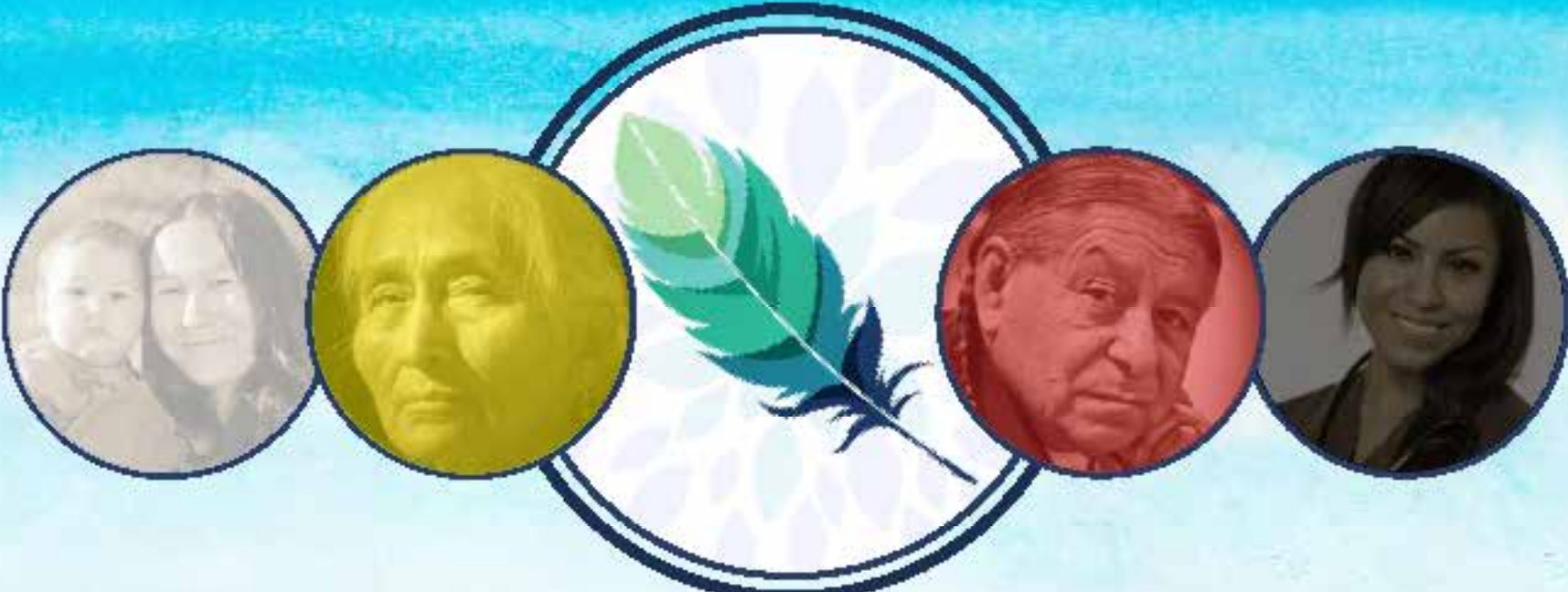
“The broadband infrastructure investments we are making will significantly boost internet speeds and support the digital needs of families and businesses across Lambton County and within Kettle and Stony Point First Nation both today and into the future,” says Barry Field, SWIFT Executive Director.

The organization has also signed agreements with Execulink and Cogeco

Connexions to deliver faster internet speeds to more than 3,900 households and businesses across 17 communities near Kettle Point, including Lambton Shores, Plympton-Wyoming, and St. Clair Township.

SWIFT has awarded \$6.5 million in provincial and federal funding to support the two companies in the work.


The total value of the newly announced projects is approximately \$11.4 million, including \$4.9 million in contributions from the service providers.



Building a Health Care System by Anishinabek for Anishinabek

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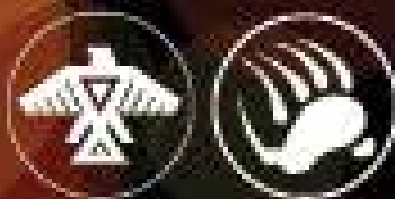


Involving communities in the planning and design of the Health Care System to ensure their ideas and concerns are reflected in alternatives and recommendations.

Validating what we have heard from listening to our leadership, management, front line workers, and citizens.

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Jess Pamajewon, Health Transformation, Administrative Coordinator
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