

# ANISHINABEK NEWS

The voice of the Anishinabek Nation



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Over 100 participants, including School Board representatives, First Nation Chiefs, education directors, and Kinooaadziwin Education Board members attended the Niigaan gdizhaami 'We are Moving Forward Together' Forum on February 14-15, in Toronto, to discuss the Anishinabek Education System and the proposed implementation of April 1, 2018.

## Niigaan gdizhaami – moving forward together in education

By *Marci Becking*

TORONTO – School Board representatives from all over Anishinabek Nation territory met with First Nation Chiefs, education directors and the Kinooaadziwin Education Board to discuss the Anishinabek Education System and the proposed implementation date of April 1, 2018.

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee said that colonizers kept First Nations in poverty and uneducated.

"Education is the key to turn this around," said Madahbee at the Niigaan gdizhaami 'We are Moving Forward Together' forum. "We need

to educate ourselves in our own way. We still have colonial policies against us – like the Indian Act. Some of our communities are seeing the last of our 'Status Indians' being registered. This is happening all over our territory."

Mitzie Hunter, Ontario Education Minister, recited an African proverb: If you want to go fast; go alone. If you want to go far; go together.

"We want to go far," Minister Hunter addressed the group of over 100 educators. "The Master Education Agreement will help Anishinabek First Nation student success."

Negotiator Tracey O'Donnell says that the proposed Master Edu-

cation Agreement will be a legally-binding agreement between the Anishinabek Education System First Nations and Ontario beginning on the effective date of the Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement.

"The Master Education Agreement will enhance opportunities for the engagement and participation of students, families, and communities to support student success and well-being," says O'Donnell. "It will also increase knowledge and understanding of Bimaadziwin, Kendaaswin and Anishinaabe languages in the Anishinabek First Nations' schools and provincially-funded schools. The role of the Elders in the community is maintaining the language

and culture. It is important to keep Anishinaabemowin alive."

The MEA allows the transition of students between the Anishinabek First Nations' schools and provincially-funded schools. The MEA will establish a process to collaborate on and monitor, in addition to ongoing alignment of standards between the Anishinabek First Nations' schools and the provincially-funded education system.

Ontario negotiator Jay Kaufman says that the Tripartite Work Plan among the Anishinabek First Nations, Canada and Ontario, lays out a road map to the establishment of the Anishinabek Education System on April 1, 2018.



Customers line up for coffee at the new Tim Horton's/Esso location in Magnetawan First Nation.

## New Esso station and Tim Horton's in Magnetawan

MAGNETAWAN FIRST NATION – Magnetawan Chief and Council are proud to announce the opening of their new Esso and Tim Horton's economic development venture opened on Feb. 6. The new business is located on the busy Highway 69 corridor on the southwest corner of Highways 69 and 529 between Sudbury and Parry Sound. A grand opening is scheduled for Feb 24 at 12:30 pm.

Chief William Diabo is proud of the community venture.

"I am now at the later stage of my third term as Chief of Magnetawan Anishinabek Nation and I certainly wanted to 'leave a mark' on this great community and we could not have accomplished this without the hard work from Council, staff and the support from our citizens," says Chief Diabo.

Economic Development Officer

for Magnetawan Anishinabek Nation, Adam Pawis says he is hoping to see all of the regular customers from other municipalities to come to the Esso/Tim Horton's.

"'Make it so!' was Chief Diabo's direction to staff, which put me in one situation only and that was to make these deals happen and 'make it so!'," says Pawis. "Chief Diabo would not take no for an answer."

Magnetawan is a signatory of the Framework Agreement on First Nation Lands, and ratified its own Land Code June 21, 2015 and became operational September 1, 2015. This legislation assisted in creating an exciting economic development business that will provide own source revenue, along with providing employment for our citizens and citizens of our local municipalities for many years to come.

Approximately three years ago, Chief William Diabo, in his prior term in office, started looking at the profitability of our existing gas station and store. He had staff thoroughly look at the numbers and potential for future sales with a brand-new building, larger capacity and a top selling coffee chain. He made this project his passion and reached for the stars, in order to maximize the potential profitability of any new business venture at the previous location.

There were many challenges that had to be dealt with prior to negotiating with a brand name fuel supplier (ESSO) and a successful selling coffee/restaurant (Tim Horton's). There were challenges such as lot size, building design, fuel tank storage, access from snowmobile trail, drive thru requirements, three phase power,

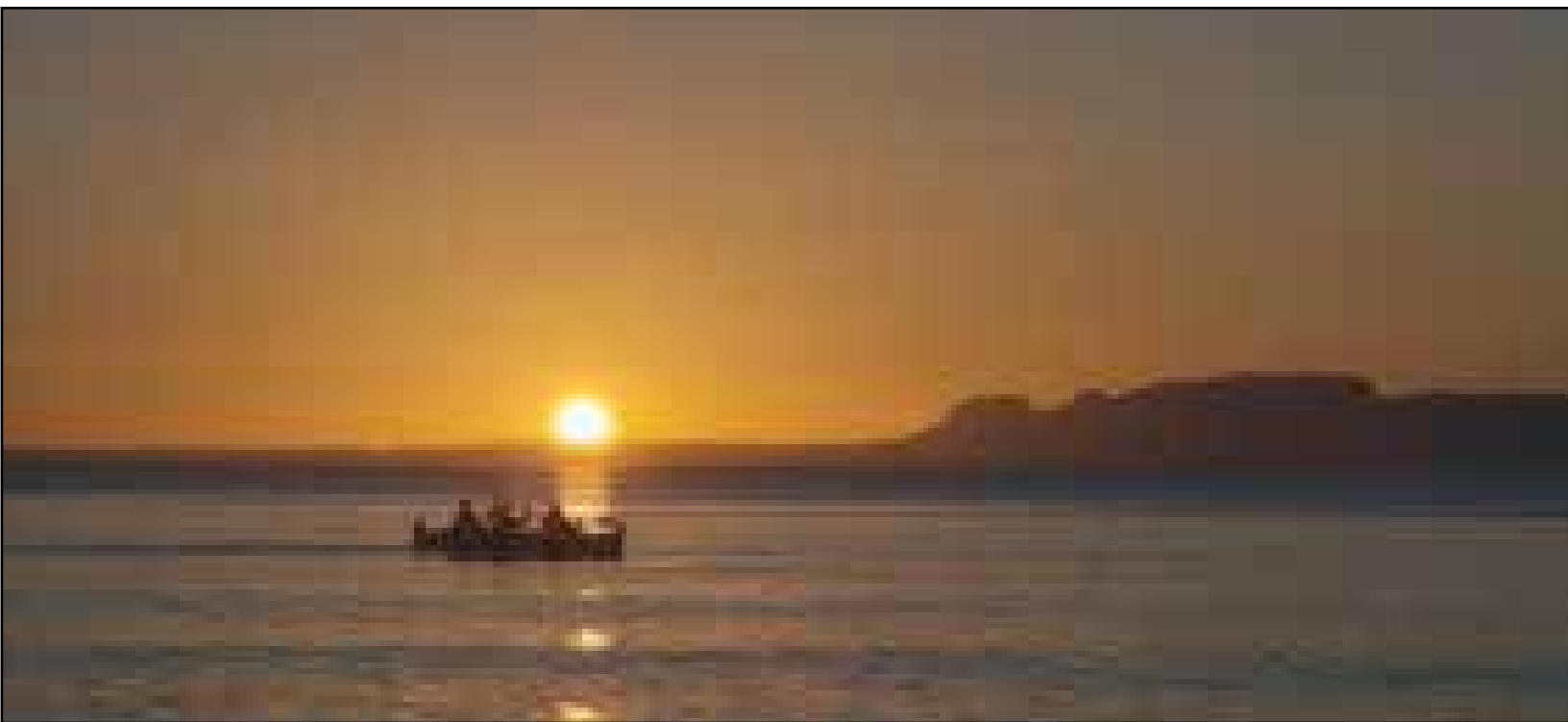
old building demolition, staffing etc.

All challenges were dealt with one at a time and then it was full steam ahead to consult with, then negotiate fuel supply agreements with ESSO and supply and franchise agreements with Tim Horton's. Chief Diabo, working closely with staff, was directly involved with all aspects of the project from beginning to the Grand Opening and should be applauded for his unrelenting effort to guide this journey to establish a new gas station and store.

Magnetawan Anishinabek Nation appreciates the support received from all of our valued customers over the past 20 years. We look forward to their continued patronage and to attracting and servicing new customers and acquiring new friends from the travelers of Highway 69/400 that pass through our Nation.

## Ready to pow-wow?

It's that time of year! Please submit your community's upcoming pow-wow information to [news@anishinabek.ca](mailto:news@anishinabek.ca) to by April 15 to ensure that your community's pow-wow makes it into the 23rd Annual Great Lakes Pow-wow guide! Pow-wow listings are free so get your committee together and send your information to us!



Three Fort William youth paddle the birch bark canoe that was made last summer on Mt. McKay in a screenshot from the film *The Canoe*, which was filmed by Goh Iromoto, Ontario Tourism. The film is available at [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net).

## Fort William youth canoe builders featured in Ontario Tourism documentary film

By Rick Garrick

**FORT WILLIAM FIRST NATION**—The Fort William canoe builders who created an 18-foot birch bark canoe last summer are featured in *The Canoe* documentary film that is available online.

“It was really cool because we got to do a bunch of scenes and camera shots,” says Georgia Bannon, an 18-year-old youth from Fort William who worked on two birch bark canoes over the past two years. “We had a lot of laughs and it was a really good time. I would like to do it again and I would like to get more youth involved with it.”

Although Georgia had to wake up early in the morning to paddle the canoe along with two other youth on Lake Superior with the rising sun and the Sleeping Giant behind them for filmmaker Goh Iromoto, she says the experience was ‘pretty good’.

“Watching these youth go out and paddle the vessel they created with their own hands, sweat, and blood, as the sun rose in a perfect orange glow was an emotional and powerful moment for sure,” Iromoto says. “Turning back and watching Gail gaze over proudly at the youth was equally as moving. It was a moment I’ll never personally forget and one that I am lucky to share with the world. A story about a mentor and a strong-willed group of youth who displayed a true sense of pride and effort into building something so simple yet magnificent.”

Georgia enjoyed working with the other youth on the birch bark canoe.

“It was one of the best experiences I could ever have; knowing how to go to pick the right roots and learning how to make a boat,” Georgia says. “It’s something more people should get involved with because we don’t see [birch bark

canoes] very much anymore. They are strong boats and I think they are better than man-made boats.”

The film project also featured Fort William’s Charlene Bannon, Shaylah Fenton, Tanya Fenton, Dylan Bannon, Bess Legarde, and Gail Bannon as well as canoe builder-instructor Darren Lentz.

“I’m just so thankful for the opportunity and how it presented itself that Fort William youth and the projects and programs that they are doing were highlighted in such a beautiful way,” Gail says.

Gail wants to keep the canoe-building project going for a few more years to continue building skill levels among the youth. Another canoe build is scheduled for this upcoming summer.

“It’s not just about a canoe,” Gail says. “By doing the canoe project, they are learning so much more skills along with it. They know now that they can do something like this

— it’s not impossible.”

Lentz says the film was part of the canoe project that Gail initiated two years ago.

“She always puts the kids first and that is what I really respect about Gail,” Lentz says. “It’s her vision and her work that has led to this opportunity to show her community to the rest of the world.”

The *Canoe* trailer and *The Mentor* film were screened on Jan. 26 during writer James Raffan’s presentation on *Canoe Country: A Lovingly Skewed Sesquicentennial Geography of Canada* at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay.

“I think the film is going to win awards — Goh’s imagery is amazing,” Raffan says. “I’ve never seen anything quite like that trailer. It was released a week ago Tuesday, and for a canoeing film, more than 100,000 people have looked at it all over the world.”

## Looking for a new career or first job?

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