



OSHKI-WENJACK

OSHKI-PIMACHE-O-WIN
THE WENJACK EDUCATION INSTITUTE

Eagle's Echo

A newsletter by
Oshki-Pimache-O-Win:
The Wenjack Education Institute

Spring 2025



IAESC Approves Oshki-Wenjack as Accredited Indigenous Institute



We're proud to share that Oshki-Wenjack has officially received approval for accreditation from the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC), a major milestone in our ongoing commitment to delivering high-quality, culturally grounded post-secondary education.

The accreditation site visit took place during a late-March snowstorm, where we warmly welcomed IAESC representatives to our campus. The site visit provided an opportunity to showcase our organization's achievements, programs, student support services, and deep community connections.

President Lorrie Deschamps highlighted the importance of strong community connections, accessible education, and meaningful relationships; key values that continue to guide our efforts in student recruitment, retention, and our overall mission and vision.

Miigwetch to everyone who contributed to this success.

Oshki-Wenjack Celebrates the Class of 2025



Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute proudly celebrated its 2025 graduates on Friday, June 13, at the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium. The ceremony honoured 113 graduates from a variety of post-secondary and community-based programs, including certificate, diploma, degree programs, Trades, and Basic Radiological Technicians. The event brought together families, friends, and community leaders from across the region to recognize the hard work and achievements of each student.

Graduates represented a wide range of backgrounds and communities, including many from First Nations across northern Ontario. The diverse Class of 2025 stood united in celebration, each student having completed a unique journey marked by dedication, perseverance, and growth.

The graduation ceremony was a meaningful milestone, reflecting not only academic success but also the strength of the relationships and support systems that helped make it possible.

Oshki-Wenjack continues to offer accessible, culturally grounded education that supports students and communities throughout the North. We extend heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2025. Your success is inspiring, and we support your continued success as you pursue your future career pathways.

MMIWG2S Awareness Walk



Earlier this May, the Oshki-Wenjack staff gathered in solidarity to honour Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S). Staff, students, and other supporters came together to walk with purpose, reflection, and remembrance; amplifying a collective call for justice, healing, and change.

We were joined by Sharon Johnson of Seine River First Nation, who walked with us in memory of her sister, Sandra Kaye Johnson, who was murdered at the age of 18 in February 1991. For more than two decades, Sharon has been sharing her sister's story and advocating for justice for all MMIWG2S.

This national crisis is not something that happens elsewhere; it has touched our community directly. Last December, we lost one of our students to violence. Deborah's memory, along with Sandra's and so many others, underscores why we walk: to remember, to honour, and to demand that every life be valued and protected.

The MMIWG2S Awareness Walk was a powerful moment of connection, grief, and resolve. Oshki-Wenjack remains committed to standing with survivors, families, and communities as we continue the work of truth, justice, and reconciliation.

Instructor Appreciation



Oshki-Wenjack hosted its annual Instructor Appreciation Night on May 14 at the Chanterelle, bringing together faculty, staff, and leadership to celebrate the vital role instructors play in our learners' success.

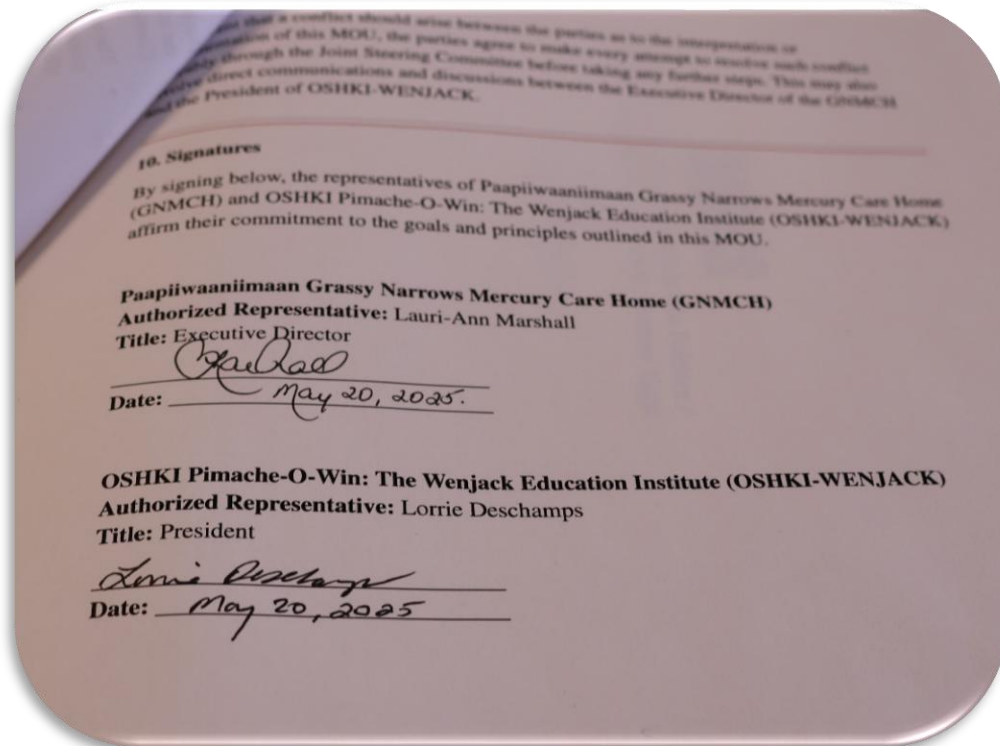
The evening offered a chance to thank the instructors who guide and support students across all programs and communities served by Oshki-Wenjack. From in-person classes in Thunder Bay to remote and community-based learning, instructors are central to our mission of delivering high-quality, culturally grounded education.

A highlight of the night was the presentation of the Delbert Horton Instructor Award from the Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC). This year's recipient was Eugema Ings, recognized for her outstanding dedication to Indigenous education, her deep care for students, and her ongoing commitment to excellence in the classroom.

"Eugema represents the best of who we are as an institute," said President Lorrie Deschamps. "She brings passion, patience, and knowledge into every course she teaches. We're proud to see her work honoured in this way."

Miigwetch to all of our instructors for your knowledge, guidance, and care. Your work is making a lasting impact.

Mercury Care Home



On May 20, Oshki-Wenjack President Lorrie Deschamps and Lauri-Ann Marshall, Executive Director of the Paapiwaaniimaan Grassy Narrows Mercury Care Home, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support community-led education and workforce development.

The MOU outlines a proposal to deliver Personal Support Worker (PSW) training in Grassy Narrows through a “living classroom” model. This initiative aligns with the community’s goal of preparing a local healthcare workforce ahead of the Mercury Care Home’s opening.

Earlier this year, Oshki-Wenjack Directors Dorothy Roberts and Susan Sinclair visited Grassy Narrows to discuss training opportunities with community leaders. Interest was expressed in several programs, including PSW, Pre-Health Sciences, Practical Nursing, and Mental Health and Addiction Worker.

“We’re proud to support Grassy Narrows in building a skilled local workforce,” said Susan.

This partnership reflects Oshki-Wenjack’s ongoing commitment to supporting Indigenous communities through accessible, culturally based education.

Habitat for Humanity



On May 28, Erika Eckert and Nicole Bell proudly represented Oshki-Wenjack on 99.9 The Bay and Country 105 as part of the 12-Hour Habitat Home Drive, a major fundraising event in support of Habitat for Humanity Thunder Bay.

Broadcasting live from the radio station, Erika and Nicole helped amplify the importance of affordable housing in our region. They spoke passionately about the need for safe, stable homes and the impact that Habitat for Humanity has on families in our community. As part of their on-air appearance, they also issued a friendly challenge to other local businesses and organizations to step up and contribute to the campaign.

Their message was clear: every dollar raised brings a family closer to having a secure place to call home. By joining the fundraiser and encouraging others to do the same, Oshki-Wenjack helped inspire broader community involvement and support for this meaningful cause.

We're proud to support initiatives that strengthen our communities, and we thank Erika and Nicole for being such enthusiastic ambassadors for change.

Staff Spotlight – Raven Linklater



Raven Linklater is from Couchiching First Nation and was raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Her traditional name is Mishkobinesii, which means Red Bird. She received it at 18 months old in Roseau River, along with the teaching that she would carry and spread knowledge far and wide.

She grew up attending ceremonies with her grannies and aunts, helping with water prayers and laying out sacred bundles. Identified as gifted in elementary school, Raven went on to study Native Management and Economic Development at Trent University. She worked in banking after graduation but felt disconnected from her identity and chose to move to Ontario to reconnect with her culture.

She began with community involvement and enrolled in the Indigenous Women in Leadership program at St. Francis Xavier University. Her teaching journey began with H&R Block, followed by roles at Confederation College supporting Indigenous artists and curriculum development.

At Oshki-Wenjack, Raven ensures programs reflect Anishinaabe values and represent the Nations within the NAN territory. She continues to fulfill her name through her work in education.

Student Success Story: Shirley Tyance:



Shirley Tyance proves that it's never too late to follow your dreams. A proud member of Long Lake #58 First Nation, Shirley went back to school at the age of 50, and in 2024, she graduated from Oshki-Wenjack's Business Diploma program with Honour Roll distinction.

She studied through the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, completing her courses online from her community while managing a personal emergency. She's incredibly thankful for Oshki-Wenjack's flexible online delivery model, which made it possible to keep learning and stay connected. Like many adult learners, Shirley faced fears, anxieties, and doubts when she returned to school, but she didn't let them stop her. "If you have a seed of desire to fulfill the dream of education, then go for it," she encourages others.

Today, Shirley serves as the Indian Registration Administrator (IRA) for Long Lake #58. In this important role, she supports her community on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), helping members apply for registration and status cards, maintaining the accuracy of the Indian Register, and managing membership lists.

She's also in her third term as a council member for Long Lake #58, continuing to serve with leadership, heart, and deep commitment to her Nation.



Apply Today for Fall 2025

Business (General) Diploma

Early Childhood Education Diploma

Mental Health & Addiction Worker Diploma

Personal Support Worker Certificate *funded

Pre-Health Sciences Pathways to Certificate (online) *funded

Social Service Worker – Indigenous Specialization Diploma



To learn more about our programs,
contact our Recruitment Office.

Toll Free: 1-868-636-7454 | 1-807-626-1880 | recruitment@oshki.ca

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