

# SERDC NEWS: WE'VE REBRANDED!

WINTER 23/24 VOLUME 9 ISSUE 2

SHAWANO TRIBAL DAYS  
RETURNS: REGGIE LEACH  
DROPS THE PUCK

TURNING DREAMS  
INTO REALITY: FROM  
IT TECHNICIAN  
TO 3D PRINTING  
ENTREPRENEUR

WELCOME IRENE  
LINKLATER, SERDC'S  
NEW EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR



Southeast Resource Development Council

# NOONGOM

## MEMBER COMMUNITIES



**Berens River First Nation #266**  
204-382-2161



**Black River First Nation #260**  
204-367-4411



**Bloodvein First Nation #267**  
204-395-2148



**Brokenhead Ojibway Nation #261**  
204-766-2494



**Hollow Water First Nation #263**  
204-363-7278



**Little Grand Rapids First Nation #270**  
204-397-2448



**Pauingassi First Nation #327**  
204-397-2371



**Poplar River First Nation #277**  
204-244-2267

**HEAD OFFICE**  
**BROKENHEAD OJIBWAY NATION**  
**SCANTERBURY, MB**  
**204-766-2386**

**WINNIPEG OFFICE**  
**360 BROADWAY, WINNIPEG**  
**204-956-7500**

Administration

Advisory Services

Clinical Services  
(Nursing, Home and  
Community Care, Foot  
Care, Children's Oral Health  
Initiative, Diabetes Initiative)

Commercial Tobacco  
Reduction Strategy

STAR Regional

Social Development

Shawano Wapunong  
Investments Corp

Shawano Consulting

**EDMONTON STREET OFFICE**  
**208 EDMONTON ST., WINNIPEG**

Student Services  
(204-953-2120)

Economic Development  
(204-943-1656)

**SOUTHEAST WELLNESS LODGE**  
**225 MASTERS AVE. WEST ST. PAUL**  
**431-977-0720**

Jordan's Principle

STAR

Wellness

Conference/events facility



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## Welcoming SERDC's new Executive Director



“

I am an Anishinaabe speaker with family roots in Little Grand Rapids through my late mother (Keeper), and in Berens River by my late father (Comber), however I was raised at Pikangikum - a community that connects our families along the Berens River system to its outlet into Lake Winnipeg.

I've spent over 25 years' advocating Anishinaabe interests, rights and well-being in research and policy. I have been a professor/instructor in Ottawa, Winnipeg and Saskatoon law schools/universities, legal counsel, and Executive Director at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Grand Council Treaty #3 and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Nishnawbe Aski Legal Services Corporation (NALSC). During these years I have developed a deep understanding of what's possible when staff are empowered in their perspective and experience. I feel it's important to be recognized and be a part of strategies that build relationships within the organization and externally to improve access to, and strengthen, community-based program and service delivery.

Prior to joining SERDC, I worked four years with NALSC on its dual mandate to advance improvements for NAN members' access to the justice system under a renewed legal aid services agreement and restorative justice programming. This involved law reform to support NAN member communities' re-establish their traditional legal systems and legal orders - a process governed by the Chiefs and Councils. I was pleased to be a part of the new five-year Strategic Plan, New Organizational Model and a successful post-COVID 19, All Staff Gathering of over 118 staff from across the 49 NAN communities and the NALSC Board of Directors.

Administrative duties require a lot of in-office attention and paper processing, but my greatest accomplishment is being able to travel to community to meet and converse with the people. From children and youth to Elders, parents and leadership. The capstone of these times is being on the land and waters/ice at any season as I come from generations of fishers, hunters and trappers that taught life skills, self-care and family responsibilities.

Today I am continuing to learn more about bringing cultural ways and teachings into my work and home with my spouse Ron and our little doggie Dipper. I value making special time for our three granddaughters.

Following my graduation from Lakehead University with a major in history and a law degree from Osgoode Law School, I was called to the Ontario Bar and became a member of the Law Society of Ontario in the process of applying for a paper transfer back to the Law Society of Manitoba.

I look forward to meeting and working with the staff and Board of Directors and happy to join the SERDC family!

*Hinklater*

# SERDC Has Rebranded!

*Embracing the winds of change*



### About the Design

The design is an intertwining of five elements: the eagle, the pipe, the sky, the water, and the land in the order pictured above.

SERDC's dedication to fostering economic growth and development while preserving the values and traditions of the region was at the forefront of this design, created by Indigenous graphic design firm Vincent Design. The firm has a reputation for being leaders in Indigenous graphic design in Manitoba and across Canada. Some of their notable work includes projects like the Southern Chiefs' Organization flower motif (as seen on the former HBC building downtown), the Protect Our People COVID-19 vaccine campaign, and the Survivors' Flag for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation honouring residential school Survivors.

As SERDC moves forward with its rebranding efforts, the new logo will be prominently featured across various communication channels. This fresh visual identity will help to create a cohesive and recognizable brand presence for SERDC, supporting effective engagement with stakeholders and community members.

### A Bridge Between Tradition and Tomorrow

The amalgamation of the five logo elements symbolizes a bridge between tradition and the future—a depiction of honouring our cultural roots while embracing progress.





# SHAWANO WAPUNONG Tribal Days returns



Tribal Days, held January 3-5 2024 at Seven Oaks Sportsplex, was honoured to host former NHL player **Reggie Leach, aka "The Riverton Rifle"**. Reggie gave opening remarks at the welcome ceremony, and spent three days graciously signing autographs and assisting with the distribution of game awards.

Reggie's philosophy - "It's about the kids. They're watching, always listening, so be a role model."



## Results & Teams

### 10U All-SERDC (Best of 3)

**Champion:** Black River-Hollow Water  
**Runner-Up:** Berens River

### 12U All-SERDC (Best of 3)

**Champion:** Berens River  
**Runner-Up:** Black River-Hollow Water

### 12U All-Nations (Best of 3)

**Champion:** Berens River  
**Runner-Up:** Long Plain

### 15U SERDC Invite

**Champion:** Long Plain  
**Runner-Up:** Black River-Hollow Water

- Berens River

### Adult All-Nations

**Champion:** Dog Creek  
**Runner-Up:** Peguis  
Norway House

- Long Plain
- Black River
- Hollow Water

### Adult All-SERDC

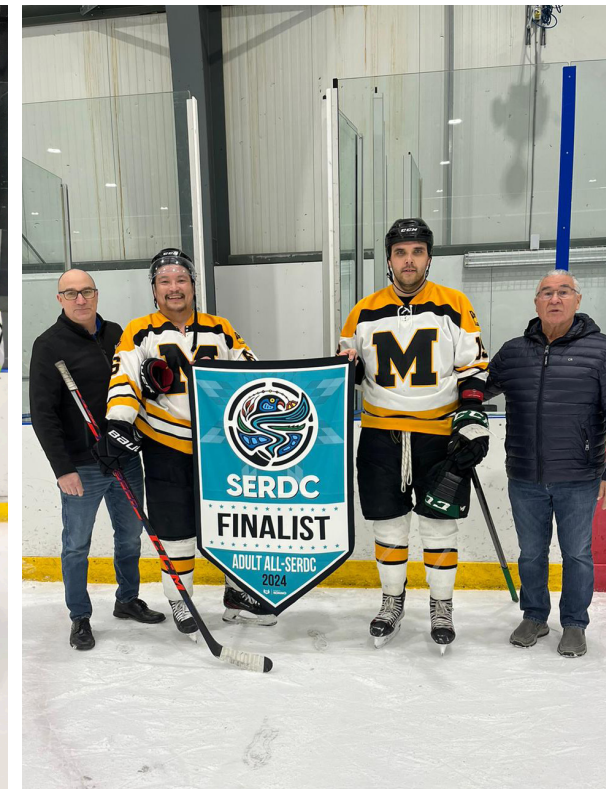
**Champion:** Brokenhead Bisons  
**Runner-Up:** Berens River Bullets

- Black River Tomahawks
- Black River Slashers



Over 30 young players aged 5-8 years old participated in a skills and development mini-camp with four sessions over the three-day event. Sessions were led by the University of Manitoba Bisons (Mens) team and Shoot to Score Hockey.

Participants were provided a commemorative camp jersey and socks branded with the new SERDC logo!



It was a special moment for our communities to gather and see the return of the Tribal Days, which is more than just a hockey tournament. We look forward to returning in 2025, we're excited to have more teams return and to offer more entertainment opportunities surrounding the event. Thank you to all players, sponsors, fans, volunteers, and the tournament committee.

– Kyle Prystupa, CEO, Shawano Wapunong Investments Corp.

# Rediscovering Our Sacred Medicine

Reflecting on a successful first year growing a traditional tobacco garden



The 2023 traditional tobacco garden yielded 500+ plants, and the plan is to expand the project to 2000 plants in 2024 with the same three plant varieties used in 2023.

The garden, grown on the land at the Southeast Wellness Lodge, produced approximately 60 pounds of cured tobacco, which is packaged in three ways:

1. Boxed with enough to make 2 tobacco ties or offerings
2. Bagged loose tobacco for offerings to elders
3. Chubs (the leaves are rolled up and tied)

At October's LIFT Survivors conference, 300 boxes were distributed to event attendees made up of survivors of Indian residential schools and families of missing and murdered Indigenous people.

We received a ton of positive feedback on our tobacco products for bringing tradition back to our communities and reducing the commercial tobacco used in ceremonies and given as gifts. The garden project is also a major cost-savings for SERDC and our communities as we are quite literally growing it in our back yards, and soon, in community gardens.

Our goal is to go into communities and work with folks to grow their own traditional tobacco gardens and bring back a tradition that was commercialized by

the Europeans when they discovered our sacred medicine.

Today's commercial tobacco has been genetically modified and harmful chemicals are added.

Traditional ceremonial tobacco has fewer toxins and no chemicals, as it is organically grown. Traditional tobacco is blended with red willow and bear root to offset the very high nicotine content.

**If your community is interested in establishing a traditional tobacco garden, please contact Jason Leshchyshyn, at: [jleshchyshyn@serdc.mb.ca](mailto:jleshchyshyn@serdc.mb.ca)**



## COMMUNITY VISITS

It was a busy year visiting communities, facilitating booths, attending pow wows and presenting at schools. The tobacco team visited the first nations of:

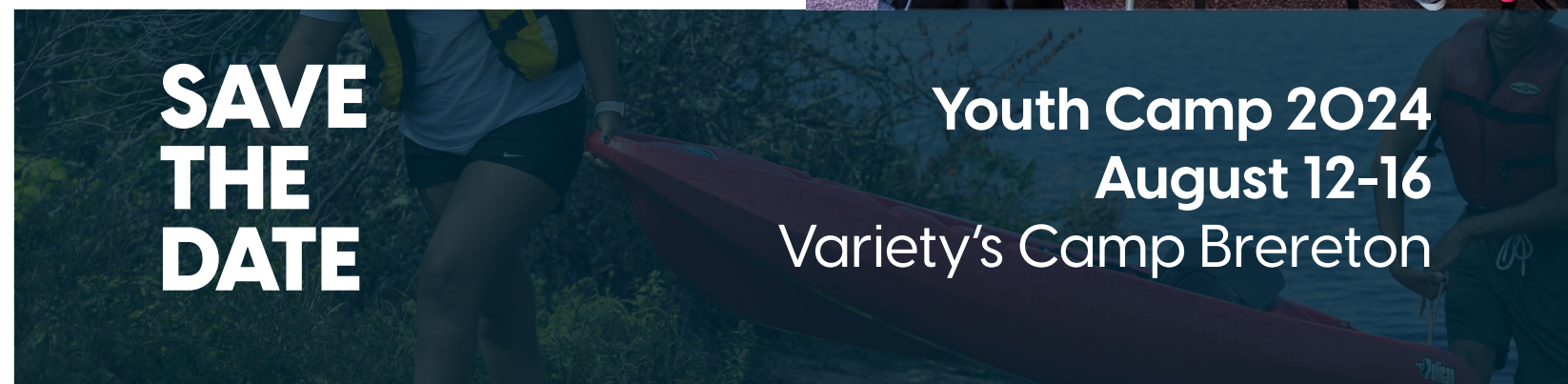
- Berens River
- Poplar River
- Black River
- Hollow Water
- Pauingassi
- Bloodvein
- Rolling River
- Gambler
- Birdtail Sioux
- Waywayseecappo
- Dakota Tipi
- Roseau River

More plans are in the works to visit new communities.

## TOBACCO CIRCLE COMMITTEE

The Tobacco Circle Committee met at Buffalo Point Resort on September 6, 2023 where planning took place for the annual youth camp at camp Brereton, and the traditional tobacco garden. At this meeting, the group also made the decision to pause the annual tobacco conference for two years.

The group met next on January 16, 2024 at the Southeast Wellness Lodge in West St. Paul. We are planning to design a simple questionnaire for our communities about smoking and vaping to gain a better understanding of what type of individual support may be needed.





## Enhancing Capacity of Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative Workers

Over the past six months the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (ADI) workers have been working hard to prevent diabetes, and educate clients from their communities.

Since the rate of diabetes is several times higher in Manitoba Indigenous communities than the general Canadian population, our ADI workers have been working diligently on prevention of loss of life and limb related to diabetes. Our Tribal Diabetes Coordinator has been working to support all initiatives in the ADI program, including the foot care proposal which was successful this year.

The Manitoba First Nations Leadership Council was able to secure continuous yearly funding, whereas previous proposals were only secured on an annual basis.

### SERDC ADI GATHERING

SERDC had its first worker training in years with ADI workers from the Southeast Tribal Council. The gathering had several guest speakers including Gloria Kohinski, Registered Diabetes Education

Nurse on gestational diabetes, Sandy Koropas, Registered Diabetes Education Nurse on how to educate a client with diabetes, Carl Byrne, Shawano Pharmacist on diabetes medication/blood glucose meters, Brikena Dibra, Tribal Diabetes Coordinator on stress management and diabetes, and Tara Latimer, Regional STAR Peer Support and Training Officer on abuse protocol training.

Since ADI is underfunded, the Tribal Diabetes Coordinator is working to expand the practice of ADI workers with the College of Registered Nurses, Association of Regulated Nurses, Manitoba First Nations Leadership Council, and FNIHB.

Currently ADI workers have been trained to teach clients how to use a blood glucose monitor by Shawano Pharmacy, and the Tribal Diabetes Coordinator. In the future, we hope to expand the practice of ADI workers to perform blood sugar readings under the supervision of a Registered Nurse in order to allow ADI workers to work in conjunction with nurses, and ultimately, demonstrate a need for increased funding for the ADI program.

## The Voices Of Our Knowledge Keepers

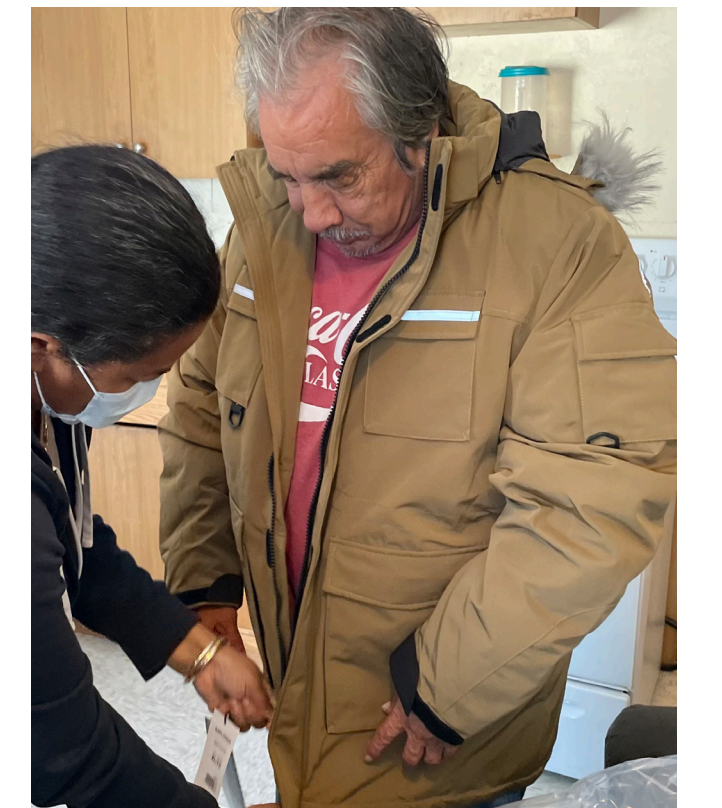
**“It’s not just about learning – it’s also about having a good time! We’re planning fun activities to honor our Elders and bring everyone together to share laughs and enjoy each other’s company.”**

The Little Grand Rapids Home and Community Care program teamed up with the Little Grand Rapids Resource Team to organize a special gathering for our home care clients and community Elders.

**It’s called “The Voices Of Our Knowledge Keepers,” and it’s all about bringing our Elders together to share their wisdom and gifts. We want to create chances for them to tell stories about their community’s history and share their wisdom with our kids and young folks.**

In our ongoing efforts to bring the community together alongside the provision of essential Home and Community Care services, we have recognized the importance of additional initiatives. Currently, Little Grand Rapids Home and Community Care worked to organize Christmas hamper deliveries to enhance the festive season for community members.

As part of our commitment to the wellbeing of the clients, we have outfitted clients with new shoes and winter coats. We want to ensure that our clients receive not only essential care services but also additional support to enhance their overall quality of life.



# COHI Providing New Dental Service : Interim Stabilization Therapy (IST)

Interim stabilization therapy is a temporary procedure that is used to relieve pain and reduce the risk of further tooth damage until a child is able to see a Dentist.

This procedure does not require any needles (freezing) or drills and uses a fluoride-releasing material which helps strengthen (remineralize) the cavity.

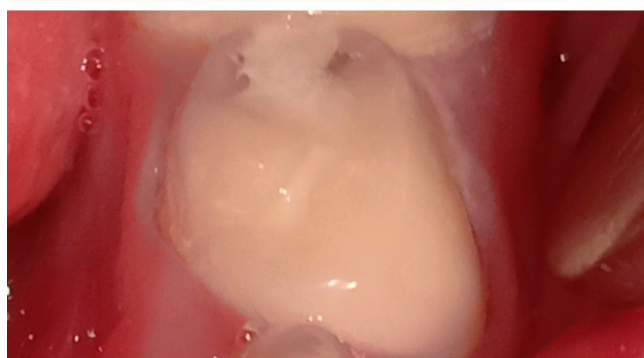
IST can be important to those who do not have regular access to oral health care services as it provides immediate care to reduce further damage and prevent additional health problems.

IST is a consideration when there is discomfort, a history of pain and/or experiencing difficulty eating, fracture, lost filling, a cavity, or when access to a permanent filling is not immediate.

## THE PROCEDURE

With IST, the affected tooth is prepared by a dental hygienist by removing any plaque or food particles. The IST material is placed in accordance to the manufacturer's instructions. IST should not be performed on teeth with abscesses or infection, including any swelling or bumps on the gum.

IST is temporary and includes a referral for further treatment.



Since September, the beginning of the new school year COHI has screened 502 children throughout our eight SERDC communities which includes a fluoride varnish treatment.

- 38 Brokenhead
- 81 Black River
- 40 Pauingassi
- 83 Poplar River
- 50 Little Grand Rapids
- 64 Hollow Water
- 66 Bloodvein
- 80 Berens River

With the introduction of COHI in our eight SERDC communities, we are seeing a decline in the need for dental surgery referrals.

In 2021-2022, 19% of children enrolled in COHI, required dental surgery referrals, whereas in 2022-2023, 17% required dental surgery referrals.

## Dental surgery is considered a last resort for a number of reasons:

**1. Anxiety & Fear:** Being in an operating room is scary - especially for kids. These experiences may make them scared of seeing healthcare providers in the future.

**2. Tooth development:** Sometimes during dental surgery, teeth need to be pulled. This can cause crowding and a child's bite to be off, thus potentially causing jaw pain.

**3. Cost & Resources:** Dental surgery is expensive. It is also difficult for parents to leave their other children at home while in Winnipeg with their child needing dental surgery.

**4. Time:** There are limited number of specialists such as pediatric dentists and anesthesiologists available to provide surgery. Wait times for surgery vary from 1 month to 1 year.

**5. Risk of complications:** Any surgery has its' risks. Children require specialized care and surgeons must make sure there are no risks of infection, bleeding or reaction to anesthesia.

**6. Long term health:** Regular preventative care such as dental check ups and good oral hygiene at home are important and reduce the chances of serious dental issues.

## CONSENT FORMS

Parents/Guardians who wish to enroll their child in our program must fill out a consent form as detailed as possible. Please indicate on the form If your child is not treaty or does not have their treaty number yet, they can still be seen as long as they are living on-reserve.

Please note that there are two parts to the consent form, the second page is for the silver diamine fluoride (SDF) treatment which requires a second signature.

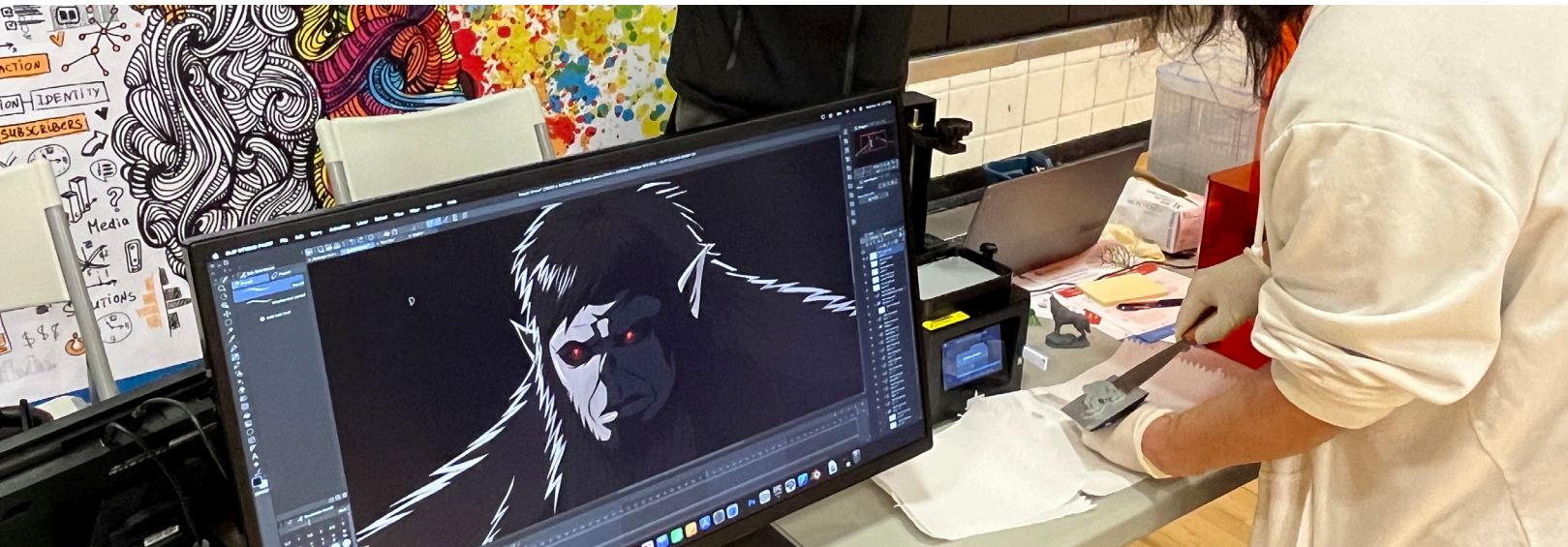
The children's oral health initiative team travels throughout all 8 SERDC communities. If you have any questions for our COHI team regarding services, feel free to call 204-956-7500. Leave your name, child's name, way of contact, which community you are from, and we will be sure to return your call as soon as possible.

## COHI DENTAL HYGIENISTS

NICOLE ARCH  
nicolea@serdc.mb.ca

AMBER DANIELS  
adaniels@serdc.mb.ca





## Turning Dreams into Reality: From IT Technician to 3D Printing Entrepreneur

Ramsey Desjarlais has always been an ambitious, driven individual. A member of the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, he started training to become an IT technician through an exciting new program, which helped him discover he was destined to craft another pathway for himself – and today he’s spearheading his own 3D printing venture, launching in the new year.

Ramsey’s story is one of hope and confidence, and is a testament to how the right support and opportunity can be a catalyst for entrepreneurship.

Ramsey is one of the participants of the IT training program put together by Southeast Resource Development



Council Corp. (SERDC) and IDfusion and funded through the Future Skills Centre. The 15-month long paid employment and training program has aimed to grow Indigenous ICT capacity with a vision to build a self-sustained industry for communities across Canada where youth can support their communities’ current and future IT needs, rather than relying on outside IT providers.

him in learning more about the opportunity, and helped him put together a plan for his side business. It’s not just a success story for Ramsey as an individual, but for his entire community.

“They’ve exposed us to a lot of technology we’re not aware of in our communities. We always relied on outside resources for technology support,” Ramsey explains.

**Ramsey is planning on creating 3D figurines of the animals that represent the Seven Teachings and is looking forward to incorporating technology that will allow each figurine to link to a website that will also provide an educational element. Ramsey is also planning to speak to students about the opportunities in IT and to demonstrate, 2D and 3D animation and printing (wolf example pictured left).**

The program has provided hands-on work experience, training and support through mentors delivered in the community. IDfusion, through the program, offered Ramsey the exposure he needed to develop his business, along with the confidence and skillset to become an entrepreneur. When the mentors saw Ramsey’s talent and passion for animation and drawing, they introduced him to 3D printing, supported

“This program is going to help us in the long run, especially when we will be in a place to provide training to our community members.”

“The good thing about the program is a lot of hands-on experience,” Ramsey adds. “I have gained insight into multiple technological aspects including website development, cybersecurity, GIS systems and a lot more. It definitely helped me build the skills I needed to build a business.”

The IT Program hopes to touch many more lives through digital transformation, with a goal to create communities that rely on their own talent for technology support and innovation – talented people like Ramsey.



# Over \$2M in programs and activities: Jordan's Principle Off-Reserve Program

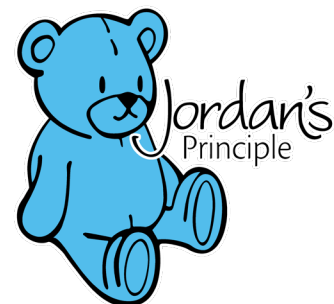
From spring through to fall, the Jordan's Principle off-reserve program has serviced over \$2 million in programs and activities from furniture, utility, and rental support, to sports equipment, books and homelessness prevention through stays at the Southeast Wellness Lodge.

This support also includes activities provided through our cultural sports and recreation department. We have encouraged children to be physically active and involved by providing financial support that allows families to attend the Red River Ex, the Zoo, corn mazes, and theme parks. We aim to fill all gaps possible which is also intended to support the mental, spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of families and children.

Our recreation and land-based coordinator, Curtis Garson, had a full calendar of events in the second half of 2023 and has been

facilitating activities through online events as well. Each activity parallels a holiday and/or the season. In June, we set up bouncers at the Southeast Wellness Lodge and in Berens River. All who attended had a blast!

Families were given the opportunity to take part in a tour of the Winnipeg Jets locker room, the commentator seats and the wide-angle view of the Canada Life Centre.



Pictured here is a team from the "Family Adventure Race" day held in Berens River where folks gathered to showcase their team-building and athletic skills.

There were over 100 participants that arrived from other SERDC communities for the "Family Adventure Race" day as well. Families paddled with a loaded canoe full of camping supplies across the lake and back, unloaded the canoe, made bannock and tea and ended by creating a 15-person human pyramid.

SERDC Jordan's Principle will continue to ensure that we are working for our children and youth in all areas to support their skill-development and wellbeing. We have an exciting line up of events over the next year.

Currently, we have an average of 70 to 100 applications coming in daily. SERDC Jordan's Principle Intake is available five days a week, 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday-Friday.

**FOR INTAKE CONTACT:**

Mindy Brooker  
Phone: 431-977-0832 Fax : 431-997-0852  
Email: serdcjordansprinciple@serdc.mb.ca

FNIHB intake: Available 24 hours, 7 days a week  
Jordan's Principle Call Centre: 1-855-572-4453

**OUR STAFF**

- Richard Dumas, Tribal Service Coordinator
- Tanya LaPratt, Administrative Assistant
- Nicole Strocen, Off-Reserve Case Manager
- Lauren Edwards, Off-Reserve Case Manager
- Madison Cole, Off-Reserve Case Manager
- Erin Skene, Off-Reserve Case Manager
- Melanie White, Off-Reserve Case Manager
- Curtis Garson, Recreation & Land-based Coordinator
- Mindy Brooker, Intake Coordinator
- Nikeesha Williams, Child & Youth Navigator
- Jenna Holowachuk, Respite Coordinator
- Kara Williams-Thomas, Respite Worker
- Trevor Anderson, Driver
- Kyle Tanner, Regional Database Coordinator
- Kaitlyn Yurick, Nurse Practitioner

# SERDC's Environmental Health Officers: What is their role?

Environmental Health Officers (EHO's) provide advice, guidance, education, public health inspections and recommendations to First Nations and their leadership to help them manage public health risks associated with the environment.

They gather data required to analyze what steps can be taken to promote public health in First Nations communities. Some EHO's are employed by Health Canada and some by First Nations or Tribal Councils.

All EHO's working in First Nations communities must have a Certificate in Public Health Inspection (Canada).

EHO's visit First Nations to do inspections, investigations and provide education and training sessions. Routine activities are provided as per community work plans that are agreed upon by EHOs and Chiefs and Councils. Other activities

are completed as required, upon the request of Chiefs and Councils and community health staff. Southeast Tribal Council has two EHOs who service all eight communities - Mike Fontaine and Keenan Fernandes.

**EHO's identify potential public health risks in First Nations communities and provide reported recommendations on how to correct them. Chiefs and Councils are responsible for addressing the recommendations provided.**



## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Environmental Health Officers inspect public and private facilities such as:

- food processing, preparation and service establishments
- waste management systems
- workplaces
- housing
- hotels, motels and other public accommodations
- schools
- child care facilities
- long term care facilities
- animal facilities
- private and public water supplies
- swimming pools, whirlpools and water spray parks
- public beaches and recreational camps
- places of entertainment
- personal services facilities (for example, tattoo shops)
- work camps



In general, Environmental Health Officers assess the environmental health risks to community members. They provide advice and recommendations to Chief and Council and pertinent Health staff in mitigating these risks, regarding:

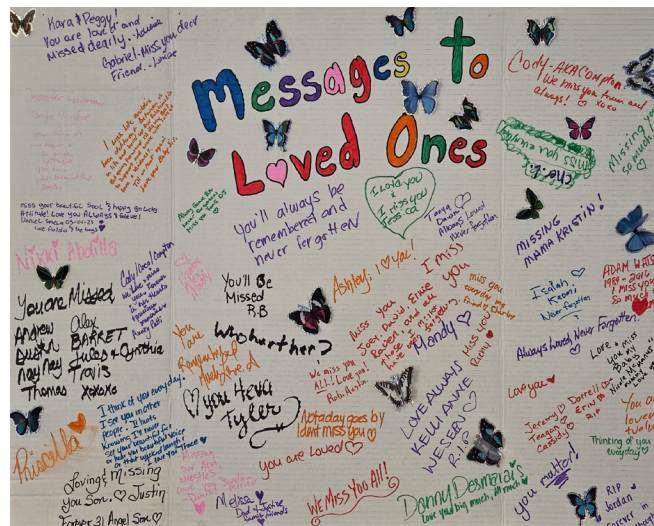
- food and water borne communicable diseases
- insect and rodent control
- food problems and institutional sanitation
- public health complaints
- outdoor and indoor air quality
- contaminated land

EHOs also educate community members to help people understand regulations and the need for proper health protection. For example, they may be involved in food safety training, water safety workshops and other health promotion programs.

**Any SERDC community member(s) experiencing public health, environmental and/or safety concerns can contact our EHOs anytime at 204-956-7500 for further assistance.**

# Empower, Educate, SAVE LIVES: Opioid Poisoning Prevention Through Naloxone Training & Distribution

In Southeast communities, the momentum of Naloxone awareness has been steadily building



In a solemn yet powerful ceremony, SERDC Health extended condolences to the families and friends of those lost to drug poisonings. The event included a touching tribute. A poster board at the SERDC table allowed attendees to write messages to their loved ones, emphasizing the profound impact of lives lost.

Amidst these challenges, our commitment to Naloxone education and distribution remains unwavering. With the assistance of FIRE with FIRE Peer Mentors, we've successfully conducted 130 Naloxone training sessions reaching 193 individuals, and distributed a remarkable 3,710 kits within our SERDC communities. This collective effort reflects a crucial step forward in our mission to save lives and promote safer practices.

In Southeast communities, the momentum of Naloxone awareness has been steadily building through the dedicated efforts of the Harm Reduction Program and FIRE with FIRE Peer Mentors engaging in impactful 1-on-1 outreach and workshops. These initiatives have not only increased awareness but have also uncovered a noteworthy trend during group workshops—community members who use substances shared instances where Naloxone was crucial in preventing accidental opioid poisoning or “overdose.”

The heightened awareness is in response to the alarming potency of street drugs, often laced with fentanyl and other potent fillers. Recognizing the severity of opioid-related poisonings, there is a growing understanding that a single Naloxone kit may not be sufficient to address the unique challenges faced by our communities.

On August 31, 2023, International Overdose Awareness Day served as a poignant reminder at the Legislature.

## PROJECTS, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS

- June - Pride Celebrations (SERDC Health joins the largest Pride Parade this year in Winnipeg and pride celebrations in Little Grand Rapids)
- July - “Hot Summer Daze” sexual health education series in partnership with Brokenhead Health
- July & Aug - participated in various Treaty Days celebrations in all communities and distributed harm reduction information, workshops and resources
- August 31 - International Overdose Awareness Day
- Sept - A small group of students at SEC welcomed Tribal Health Educator to facilitate an introduction to Harm Reduction. The students shared personal stories and concerns about high-risk behaviours discussed.
- Oct - FIRE with FIRE Project presentation at the National Summit on Indigenous Mental Wellness
- In the last 6 months, FIRE with FIRE hosted a total of 11 First Aid training sessions

## MENTAL WELLNESS BOOKLETS CREATED FOR SERDC COMMUNITY MEMBERS

By Germaine Bear, Mental Health Therapist

### Boozhoo!

My name is Germaine Bear and I am an Anishinaabe woman from Peguis First Nation. I have over 20 years experience in the helping field and feel blessed to be here at SERDC. I love the team I work with as I see how much everyone cares about the people we support.

At the end are personal stories of healing from SERDC community members. This booklet should be an evolving resource that can be updated upon request. If you would like to have your personal story of healing included, please reach out to Germaine.

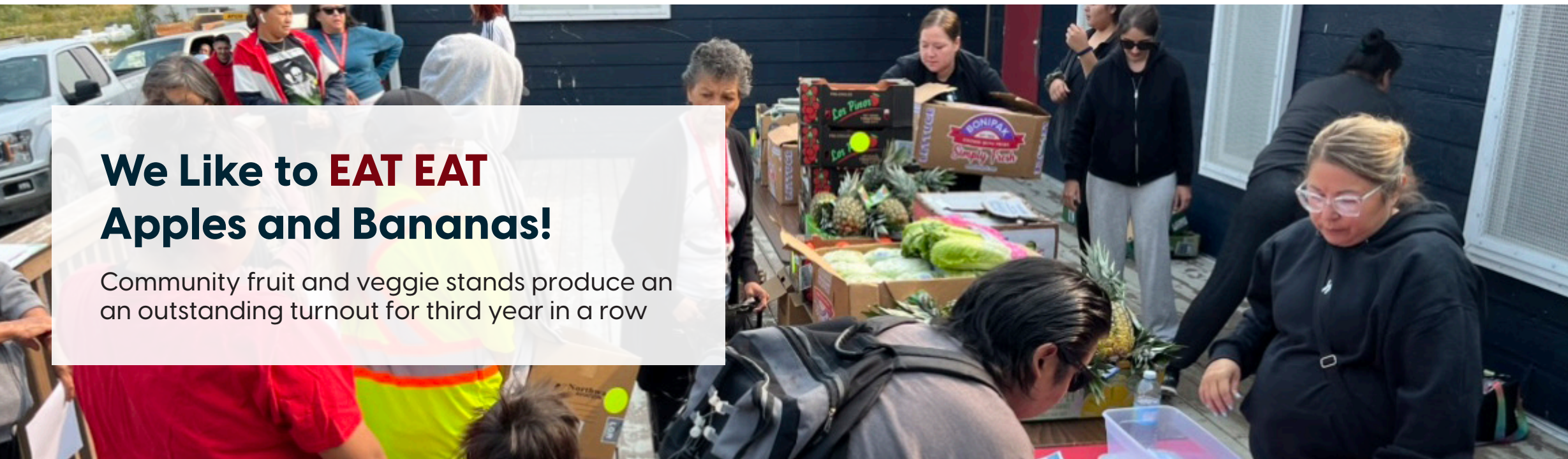
My caseload hovers around 25-30, which keeps me very busy. In my work with clients, I utilize a variety of therapeutic theories. One being psychoeducation, which led me to create the Mental Wellness Booklet.

Our hope is to have a positive impact on every individual it comes into contact with, whether you are a community member, employee of SERDC, helper, friend, or family member. This booklet is available to all 8 of the SERDC communities, so if you require some, please do not hesitate to reach out and we can ship some your way!

Thank you to Helene Estrada, our Harm Reduction Response Coordinator, for contributing the Harm Reduction pages! In this booklet is a brief overview on the Stages of Change, the value of Self-Love, information on triggers and grounding techniques, the flow of Grief and medical information on addiction, as well as guidelines on healthy relationships.

For those who wish to order Mental Wellness Booklets, please contact Germaine Bear via email at: [gbear@serdc.mb.ca](mailto:gbear@serdc.mb.ca)





## We Like to **EAT EAT** Apples and Bananas!

Community fruit and veggie stands produce an outstanding turnout for third year in a row



Summer 2023 kicked off with our 3rd annual fruit and veggie stands project. We had an outstanding turnout in all of our communities delivering to 522 members. The stands carried a variety of fruits and vegetables including "APPLES and BANANA's".



During our event members would engage in conversations about our program deliverables and received valuable information about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) and the dangers of consuming alcohol during pregnancy.

STAR sponsored door prizes accompanied by facts sheets about alcohol and pregnancy for the Poplar River Youth Symposium on September long weekend. Thank you to Teresa Gibson for the collaboration work.

We would like to thank SERDC's children's oral health initiative and harm reduction programs and other resources within the communities for joining us over the summer during these events.

We joined forces with Pauingassi First Nation's CPNP (Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program) to deliver 60 pumpkins to the community for their halloween pumpkin carving event. Thank you to Miss Peggy Owen for the collaboration work.

As usual, STAR Advocates were busy through the summer months with regular home visits and volunteering with resource service providers in Southeast communities.

We are very proud of the families who were involved in our "Lets Grow Together Gardens". They had a successful summer with their mini gardens which

gave them the confidence to start bigger gardens come spring 2024.

Our team was active through summer providing information at booths during community treaty days events which is always a great way to engage with members.

We continued to collaborate with the Commercial Tobacco Reduction team at their youth camp and the Jordan's Principle program at their canoe races.

**Be on the lookout for posters advertising our 3rd annual "Break FASD" events, which would not be possible without funding from Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries.**

*Break FASD*   
STAR PROGRAM



# Emergency Response

In August we successfully graduated seven students from the first Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) program.



The EMR program is a 300-hour course instructed at the Southeast Wellness Lodge by CritiCare EMS. Students started the course in March and put in countless hours of learning and studying to be ready for their final national licensing exam. On behalf of Southeast, I would like to congratulate our students on your hard work and a job well done.

## First Nations Advanced First Aid

St. Johns Ambulance in collaboration with SERDC has created a First Nations Advanced First Aid Course. This course will provide students with knowledge and skills in Advanced First Aid, Wilderness First Aid, and Marine First Aid in a 15-day course.

For more information on the course please email [dschellenberg@serdc.mb.ca](mailto:dschellenberg@serdc.mb.ca)

## 2023 WILDFIRE REPORT

*It was a record year for wildfires in Canada, however Manitoba come out below average. In total there were 300 wildfires in our province this year, which burned 198,633 hectares. The Southeast tribal council region saw 56 wildfires.*

*There was only one First Nation community evacuated in the province this year; Cross Lake was evacuated for a 24-hour period. None of our Southeast Communities were evacuated due to wildfire.*

*The biggest issue we faced in 2023 in all of Manitoba was the large amounts of wildfire smoke that made its way through the province from Northern Alberta, and Northwest Territories.*

**IN 2023, AN SERDC EMERGENCY RESPONSE FACEBOOK PAGE WAS CREATED TO ALLOW US TO SHARE INFORMATION MUCH FASTER WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS. THIS INCLUDES WEATHER WARNINGS, SAFETY TIPS, AND OTHER PROGRAM UPDATES. IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY, GIVE US A FOLLOW.**

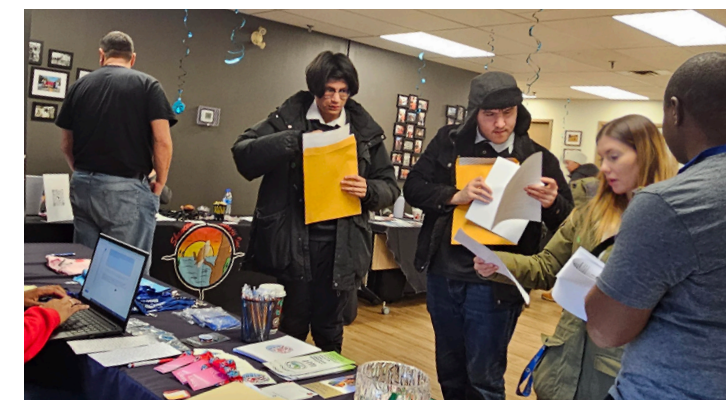


## First Annual Career Fair: Collaboration

Shawenim Abinoojii, Southeast CFS and SERDC come together to host a career fair aimed at attracting community members

November 24 and 25 2023 marked the first annual career fair hosted by SERDC, Shawenim Abinoojii and Southeast Child and Family Services. The event was held at the Southeast CFS building at 470 Notre Dame Ave and saw over 100 attendees.

The goal of the fairs is to attract and hire members from Southeast communities. We spoke to many folks who showed a keen interest in working in the health sector - something that is much needed within First Nations people in Manitoba.



## We're HIRING!

SERDC and its affiliate organizations are looking for folks to join our team! We prioritize qualified SERDC or First Nation members who voluntarily self-declare in their application.

VIEW AVAILABLE JOBS AT [serdc.mb.ca/careers](http://serdc.mb.ca/careers)

## Accreditation Journey Continues

Since summer 2023, the accreditation program has been providing advisory services to Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (BON) and Pauingassi First Nation health centers in an effort to achieve accreditation status for their health programs. Currently, BON is well under way in preparing program standards, self-study documents, and a packed training schedule all in preparation for their on-site evaluation that is scheduled for June 25th, 2024.

Pauingassi worked through their self-study documents that were due January 24th, 2024 and their on-site is scheduled for April 23rd, 2024. In addition Black River First Nation and the Adam Hardisty Health Centre in Hollow Water First Nation are also undergoing accreditation.

As a peer reviewer for the Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC) I was tasked with reviewing the self-study submission for Ochapowace Nation. I took part in the on-site from January 15th - January 19th in Whitewood, Saskatchewan. Being a peer reviewer allows me to visit other health organizations and to learn about their best practices. I can then share this with the SERDC communities.



## The Power to Save Your Feet is Within Your Control

As part of our ongoing commitment to access to foot care for our members, we actively engage in the recruitment of additional foot care nurses to join our team. For those interested in contributing to our foot care program, we encourage contacting Tynesa Wells, our Tribal Home and Community Care Coordinator and Foot Care Supervisor, for further details on potential opportunities.

The sooner foot care treatment begins the greater the chances your feet will last a lifetime (from Indigenous Diabetes Health Circle).

**Follow these recommendations carefully and bring even minor, unhealed foot irritations to the attention of your nurse or doctor:**

1. Wash your feet everyday with mild soap and lukewarm water.
2. Check your feet everyday. Inspect the tops and bottoms of your feet. If you cannot see the bottoms of your feet use a mirror.
3. Protect your feet. Do not walk barefoot, even indoors.
4. Take care of your toenails. See a foot care nurse regularly for necessary trimming and appropriate care.
5. Keep your blood flowing. Avoid wearing tight socks.

To book an appointment with a certified Foot Care Nurse in your community, call your local Nursing Station, Health Centre or Christina Harper, Southeast Resource Development Council nursing admin 204-956-7500.

## Firefighting Equipment For Communities & Winter Fire Safety

SERDC Advisory Services continues to support our communities with fire prevention awareness and increase fire department capacity. Our communities are constantly under threat to wildfire during the warmer months and we worked hard in 2023 to increase the local response capabilities of the fire departments.

We were able to secure funding from Indigenous Services Canada to purchase wildland firefighting equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) for 5 communities; Black River, Hollow Water, Bloodvein, Little Grand Rapids and Pauingassi. The equipment included the basics of pumps, hoses and hand tools, to sprinklers, radios, chain saws, blowers, portable water tanks and head-to-toe PPE to outfit ten firefighters.





## Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Program: Community Workshops & Role Model Campaign

The Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs (IWE) program would like to congratulate Dorothy Monkman of Brokenhead Ojibway Nation as the first successful candidate for the IWE Role Model campaign!

Dorothy is a perfect candidate, considering her outstanding work with her business, *Heal Your Soul Therapeutic Services Reunification & Restorative Centre*. Heal Your Soul is a business founded and operated by Dorothy herself and is aimed at culturally appropriate and relevant psychotherapy and mental health services for individuals, as well as psychotherapy, mental health services and a reunification center for families. Dorothy opened her own business in community that is aimed at bridging an important gap between mental health services and First Nations communities, especially considering the cultural trauma some of the clients may have experienced.

With Dorothy's specialization in reunification and First Nations Aboriginal counseling, she offers a unique and holistic approach to Indigenous mental health services, including a unique environment for those without the means to travel to Winnipeg for services, or those individuals wanting a reprieve and recharge away from the cities themselves.

Dorothy and Heal Your Soul is a perfect example of an outstanding achievement in First Nations businesses by providing an innovative solution for First Nations families and individuals seeking mental health services and support. Dorothy is an inspiration and the directors and staff of Southeast Economic Development wanted to congratulate her on her success as an IWE Role Model for 2024!

”

### IWE IN-COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

The IWE program has been working on hosting in-community workshops to further delve into what the program offers and how it benefits current or future Indigenous women entrepreneurs. As well, they give a more in-depth look at the micro-loan application and additional resources and funding for Indigenous women entrepreneurs.

The Southeast IWE program presented in one community in October 2023. The workshop had eight attendees for a “lunch and learn” about the IWE program. Our business support officer was able to have a more thorough conversation with future and current IWE's about the program, address any questions and concerns, and provided resources for starting their own businesses.

If you're a Southeast community member and are interested in an IWE lunch and learn or workshop, please reach out to our BSO at 204-943-1656 ext 6.



# CONGRATULATIONS

- TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GRADUATES -

**Jaime Reimer** – HWFN, Heavy Equipment Operator - Neeginan College

**Pam Smith** – HWFN, Divergent Oilfield Pre-Program

**Eric Peebles** – HWFN, Educational Assistant - Urban Circle

**Autumn Boulette** – HWFN, Electrician Program - First Peoples Development Inc.

**Laurelle Mckenzie** – HWFN, HCA/HUC - Urban Circle Training

**Brandon Bird-Finch** – BRFN, Heavy Equipment Operator – OETIM

**Jordan Fontaine** – BRFN, Welding - Neeginan College

**Elisha Berens-Hawkins** – PRFN, HCA/HUC - Urban Circle Training Centre

**Jesse Valiquette** – PRFN, CVE Plumbing - Seven Oaks

**Amanda Brown** – PRFN, Carpentry - Clan Mothers Healing Village



**Megan Lambert** – PRFN, Health Care Aide - Red River College

**Draydan Swan** – BON, SAI Youth Training & Employment Program





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