

EDUCATION EXCHANGE

NEWSLETTER



Celebrating 10 Years of Education Exchange Newsletter

This issue of *Education Exchange* newsletter marks a significant milestone of the publication: its 10th anniversary!

First launched in January 2015, with three issues published per year, *Education Exchange* has become a vital platform for sharing the latest news and updates from the Faculty of Education with current students, faculty, staff, alumni, education leaders, Associate Teachers, national and international partners, and more.

Over the past decade, the newsletter has featured more than 100 alumni profiles; updates on Faculty awards and publications; highlights of innovative faculty research and pedagogy; success stories from students at the undergraduate, graduate, and PhD levels; announcements of new or retiring faculty; departmental and committee updates; program developments; messages from the Dean, and much more. You can explore the full archive collection [here](#).

“Connecting with our community has always been a central focus of the newsletter,” says Dr. Jan Oakley, Communications Coordinator and newsletter Editor for the past 10 years. “The goal from the start was to keep our education community informed, celebrate our achievements, and highlight our future priorities.”

Dr. Oakley adds that the most rewarding part of working on the newsletter is the opportunity to collaborate with so many people across the Faculty, and beyond.

“It’s inspiring to learn about the successes and innovations within our Faculty and rewarding to share those stories. It is never difficult to fill the 12 pages of each issue; on the contrary, we often have an ‘overflow’ of information to report on. Our faculty is full of exceptional people doing exceptional work.”



Dr. Jan Oakley (left) is the newsletter editor. Rusty Brown (right) is the designer.

Rusty Brown, graphic designer, has been an integral part of the team since the newsletter’s inception. His expertise has ensured that every issue is visually appealing, engaging, and easy to read.

Reaching the 10-year mark is a significant achievement for the newsletter, and we thank you for being part of this journey. *Education Exchange* remains one of our essential tools for communicating the impactful work happening within the Faculty. We welcome your feedback and ideas for future content—your input is always valued!

We welcome your feedback, ideas, and content suggestions.
Email us at newsletter.education@lakeheadu.ca



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A Message from the University President: Celebrating a Decade of Flourishing

I'm so pleased to have this opportunity to congratulate the Faculty of Education on the 10th anniversary of its *Education Exchange* newsletter.

This engaging publication has excelled at connecting with the wider educational community by keeping them abreast of important Faculty developments and by sharing inspiring stories about its students, faculty, and alumni.

The success of the newsletter highlights the vibrancy of the Faculty of Education as a whole and its dedication to training skilled and thoughtful teachers able to help young people thrive in a complex world.

We have abundant reasons to celebrate the past 10 years. At a time when universities struggled to attract students, Lakehead's Faculty of Education grew significantly. The introduction of the two-year Bachelor of Education program allowed it to more than double the number of education students to 1,929, and more than triple the number of Master of Education students in the coursework stream from 92 to 304 students.

Meanwhile, the international student population increased from 8 to 241 students. This growing diversity of students complements the Faculty of Education's pledge to create a more inclusive curriculum and a more inclusive world—a pledge cemented by its adoption of the 2021 **Flourishing as a Faculty** values statement, which outlines strategies to promote flourishing across the learning, social, and environmental realms.

I am inspired by Dean Melville's comment in the September 2024 newsletter that: "Those values call us to cultivate a sense of critical hope and commitment to caring for each other, the places we inhabit, and ultimately the planet."

The Faculty of Education's rebuilding of relationships with Indigenous communities and its collaborations with these communities to redevelop Lakehead's education and language



Dr. Gillian Siddall

programs on the Thunder Bay campus is a crucial part of this undertaking, as is its work to offer these programs on the Orillia campus as soon as possible after they are accredited.

Among the many other accomplishments that have strengthened the Faculty, I'd like to mention the recent endorsement of an Environmental Sustainability policy and the release of an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization policy that will enhance the University's ability to foster equity and social justice.

The excellence of the Faculty of Education is reflected in the most recent Maclean's University Rankings, which recognize Lakehead's Faculty of Education as a top 20 program nationwide in terms of its reputation.

Thank you to the outstanding staff and faculty who make the wonderful work that you do possible!

Dr. Gillian Siddall, President and Vice-Chancellor



Message from the Interim Dean, Dr. Tanya Kaefer

Welcome to 2025! I am honoured and delighted to be temporarily taking over the position of Dean for Dr. Wayne Melville as he embarks on a well-deserved leave. I'd like to



thank Dr. Melville for his mentorship as I prepared to take over this position and invite everyone to join me in wishing him a restful and rejuvenating break! Although I'll only be in the position for six months, I expect it to be a busy and exciting time for the faculty.

Joining me in a new role, I'd like to welcome Dr. Pauline Sameshima to the role of Acting Chair of Undergraduate Studies in Education for Thunder Bay. She takes over from Dr. Meridith Lovell-Johnston, who took over

this position for the Fall term. Thank you to Dr. Lovell-Johnston for all her work in the position.

In 2025 we will be continuing with the excellent work the faculty has been engaged in over the past few years. The Keewatinase Indigenous Teacher Education Program has recently been approved by Senate and now continues the process of accreditation by the Ontario College of Teachers. Led ably by Dr. Paul Cormier, I'd like to thank the entire Keewatinase team for their tireless work on this endeavour. This program will allow us as a faculty to better serve the communities in Northwestern Ontario, as well as Simcoe and surrounding communities. We would like to thank those communities for their collaboration and assistance in bringing this project to fruition.

We will also be continuing with our other projects. Our program and assessment reviews continue apace, as does our administration realignment process. Our Environmental Flourishing and Climate Action Plan and our Faculty of Education Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization Action Plan are both in the process of being approved by the faculty, and we are excited to begin to enact each of these plans.

Expansion plans for the Orillia campus continue to progress, with the intention for the Faculty of Education to join our colleagues on the main Orillia campus. We've also been continuing the plans for the *Kakina Nindanawe Maaganuk* teaching lodge in Thunder Bay.

Overall, 2025 promises to be an exciting year for the Faculty of Education, and I'm thrilled to be a part of it.

Dr. Tanya Kaefer, Interim Dean, Faculty of Education

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Anyone with assets should have a Will to:

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- establish a legacy and safeguard future generations

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- **CHANGE LIVES**
- remove barriers to a post-secondary education
- sustain important programs and initiatives

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SOMETHING YOUR FUTURE
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For more information contact Jennifer McKeown
T: (807) 343-8010 Ext. 7792 | E: jennifer.mckeown@lakeheadu.ca

“The support I received through the estate of Florence Shuttleworth-Higgins has allowed me to focus more on my studies, bringing me closer to my career goals and dreams.”

MARINDA TRAN, Bachelor of Arts, Recipient of the Florence Higgins Music Scholarship



All requests remain confidential with no obligation.

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Above: MEd students and instructor Mohit Dudeja on stage.



Salonee Merchant (left) and Mohit Dudeja (right) were co-directors of the play. They spoke with local media following the performance.

“Divided by Borders, Bound by Struggles”: International Education Students Share Powerful Stories in Theatrical Performance

As part of the Master of Education “Activism in Education” course, taught by Mohit Dudeja (Contract Lecturer and PhD student), international students wrote and performed a powerful one-hour play titled “Divided by Borders, Bound by Struggles: The Journey of International Students in Canada.”

The performance, attended by students, faculty, staff, and Thunder Bay community members, was a free event that vividly portrayed the challenges and resilience of international students. The play broadly explored themes of migration, identity, and activism, offering personal students’ perspective on these issues.

“The students were deeply passionate about this play because it is grounded in their own lived experiences,” says Mohit.

Portraying Emotional, Cultural, and Financial Challenges

Mohit explains how the project came to life: “On the first day of class, I gave students two options: the traditional academic route of submitting papers and presentations on themes related to activism, or the unconventional path of collaboratively creating and performing a theatre play. The students unanimously chose the latter.”

Through brainstorming and discussions, the class—which was comprised entirely of international students—discovered they had many shared experiences. This realization guided the focus of their play, which blended insights from academic research into the script.

“The script is supported by academic literature and media references. It draws on the themes we studied in class, such as resistance to inequitable educational practices, the creation of inclusive spaces, and the role of educators as change agents,” says Mohit.

The play featured several vignettes, each highlighting different aspects of the international student experience, including:

- **Emotional struggles:** feelings of hope, loss of hope, isolation, marginalization, and loneliness
- **Cultural and academic challenges:** difficulties adjusting to Canadian culture, language barriers, unfamiliar academic expectations, and a lack of culturally responsive support from universities
- **Financial struggles:** the burden of high tuition fees, housing costs, and living expenses, often compounded by an expectation that students will help to support their families back home
- **Racism and discrimination,** including a pervasive social narrative that partly blames international students for economic challenges in Canada.

All students played an active role in writing and developing the script, while class member Salonee Merchant took on a directing role in conjunction with Mohit. Everyone in the class contributed to the live production, either as actors, directors, or members of the backstage crew.

Theatre as a Vehicle for Activism

Mohit emphasizes that creative forms of expression, like theatre, can be powerful tools for activism. As such, the play was not just a reflection of social issues but also a call to action for students, educators and government policymakers.

“The play sought to inspire those who may be struggling in silence, fearing that raising their voices against unjust policies—such as the recent policy changes affecting international students in Canada—could jeopardize their status in the country or even lead to deportation. It also sought to sow seeds of courage and solidarity, urging educators and policymakers to advocate for fairness and to speak up and seek justice for international students.”

Overall, Mohit notes that this project gave students the opportunity to engage with critical social justice issues in a meaningful, activist-oriented way, as befitting an Activism in Education course.

“I’m incredibly proud of the way the students embraced this project. It was truly rewarding to share their creativity and hard work with the wider community.”

Collaboration between Lakehead and Agder University in Norway Focuses on Integration of Indigenous Perspectives in Teacher Education

A developing partnership between Lakehead University and Agder University in Norway is fostering the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and practices related to Indigenous and community-based education.

This collaboration, facilitated through the “north2north” program of the University of the Arctic and supported through Lakehead International, enables both universities to share ideas and explore research opportunities. The north2north program connects universities and colleges across the circumpolar north—including Canada, the Nordic countries, and beyond—with the goal of empowering northern communities through education and shared knowledge.

Bridging Continents and Cultures

In May 2023, a delegation of 10 faculty and staff from Agder University travelled to Lakehead University’s Thunder Bay campus to learn about Lakehead’s programming and how it might inform their own curriculum development. Then, in October 2024, Dr. Wayne Melville (Dean, Faculty of Education), Dr. Paul Cormier (Chair, Keewatinase Indigenous Education), and Tyler Armstrong (Anishinaabemowin Languages Program Coordinator; PhD student) visited Agder University’s Kristiansand campus to continue the exchange.

Their visit included site tours, seminars, workshops, and discussions centered on Indigenous education, land-based



Left to right: Tyler Armstrong, Dr. Paul Cormier, and Dr. Wayne Melville visited Agder University in Norway in October 2024.

learning, language revitalization, and the integration of Indigenous perspectives into teacher education programs. These exchanges provide Keewatinase, and the wider Lakehead community, with invaluable international perspectives on Indigenous education and truth and reconciliation.

“We’re very excited to explore learning opportunities for our Indigenous students and Indigenous community partners with other countries,” says Paul. “With the ongoing redesign of our Indigenous language and teacher training programs, this opportunity has provided us with the possibility of integrating an international Indigenous perspective into our program design and course structure.”

The partnership has also sparked discussions about future research collaborations. Potential topics include land-based learning, story preservation, language revitalization, and the development of joint research projects in the field of Indigenous Peace and Conflict Studies, along with co-authored publications.

Return Visits and Future Collaborations

Looking ahead, the collaboration between Lakehead and Agder will continue. A return visit to Canada by Agder faculty is planned for June 2025, with discussions centering on timeframes to coincide with Indigenous community events such as graduation and powwows.

In Fall 2025, Lakehead faculty may travel to northern Norway to learn about the Sámi people, with a focus on partnering in community-based research projects. Both universities are committed to ensuring these exchanges remain reciprocal, involving Indigenous community contacts and school representatives in the research and learning experiences.

“I think it’s great that the work we do in Keewatinase can help inspire other universities around the world in their efforts towards reconciling with their Indigenous peoples,” says Tyler.

Wayne adds: “We are looking forward to seeing how the partnership will evolve. This collaboration, with the support of Lakehead International, demonstrates the commitment Lakehead University has for creating unique learning opportunities for our students, staff, and faculty.”



Above: A group photo of staff and faculty from both Agder and Lakehead University.

Rock Your Mocs: Honouring Indigenous Culture and Traditions

Keewatinase hosted a powerful celebration of Indigenous culture on November 15, marking the global initiative **Rock Your Mocs**. The event, held at the Bora Laskin building on the Thunder Bay campus, featured stories, drumming, songs, prayers, and a potluck feast, bringing together community to learn, honour and reflect on Indigenous heritage.

Attendees were invited to wear their moccasins as a symbol of unity, pride, and cultural resilience. This act was a way to embrace the significance of the day and come together in celebration of Indigenous culture.

Rock Your Mocs is a worldwide social movement that was started in 2013 by Jessica Jaylyn Atsye (Laguna Pueblo), aimed at celebrating Native American and Indigenous cultures through collective action and reflection.



Above: Elder Tina Armstrong stands at the front of the auditorium at the Rock Your Mocs event.

Stories of Strength and Resilience

Elder Tina Armstrong, a residential school survivor from Bearskin Lake First Nation, opened the celebration with a smudging ceremony and prayer. She shared her personal connection with moccasins, describing how they represent a spiritual and cultural link to land, ancestors, and family.

She spoke about the deep significance of moccasins as a reminder of the walk we must all take in this world—a walk of intentionality, respect, and healing.

“This social movement is much deeper than a day to wear our beautiful moccasins,” Elder Tina explained. “It’s about making an intentional commitment to walk in a good way, to walk in a kind way, and to honour our ancestors and the teachings we receive. It’s about honouring our connection to Land (Aki) and the animals that have given their lives for us. We are walking this road of life with purpose, pride, and respect for the traditions that shape us.”

Reflecting on Personal Journeys

Throughout the event, personal reflections were shared by students and Keewatinase faculty and staff. Students Summer Lavallee and Maya Oversby shared stories about the moccasins they made and what they represented to them on their respective journeys—symbols of personal growth, healing, and reconnection to their cultures.

Tyler Armstrong (Anishinaabemowik Languages Program Coordinator; PhD student) also shared a moving story reflecting on his own struggles with racism and identity as he was growing up. He explained that it took time to understand and appreciate the moccasins and mittens his grandmother would make for him, year after year.

“Part of my journey has been about breaking cycles and rejecting myths. Wearing moccasins is a step toward reclaiming and celebrating my identity,” he explained.

A poster for the 'Rock Your Mocs' event. It features a large yellow moccasin in the foreground, with a colorful patterned sock above it. The text on the poster includes: 'Lakehead UNIVERSITY Indigenous Student Services Centre', 'EVERYONE IS WELCOME', 'KEEWATINASE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION', 'When: Friday Nov. 15 11am - 1pm', 'Where: Faculty of Education Bora Laskin Building Auditorium', 'ELDER TEACHINGS PRIZES FEAST', and 'ROCK YOUR MOCS' in large letters at the bottom.

Drumming and song sharing followed the sharing of stories. A collective practice of sharing gratitude closed the ceremony and led to a potluck feast, with traditional moose meat and many other foods.

This event underscored the ongoing work of Keewatinase, a program that fosters cultural reconnection and healing for Indigenous students. As Dr. Paul Cormier (Chair, Keewatinase) explained: “Keewatinase is about family, community, and healing. It is about connecting with culture within ourselves, being true to who we are, and walking a purposeful path together, privileging our Indigenous practices and traditions.”

Alumni Profiles

Bryana McKenley

Secondary Teacher and Course Developer, Peel District School Board; Contract Lecturer, Lakehead University

Graduated from the Bachelor of Education program, 2020; Master of Education program, specialization in Social Justice, 2023

“My teaching philosophy is grounded in intersectional and equitable education, which seeks to mindfully meet students where they are at and focuses on their well-being.

I am currently a secondary teacher of Health & Physical Education and Global Studies—and a coach of Varsity Girls Flag Football and Senior Boys Basketball in the Peel District School Board (PDSB). Providing opportunities for students to engage in physical activities that may not otherwise be accessible to them is one of my goals of teaching. It is also about offering increased physical, social, emotional and mental health benefits to students, along with a chance to further develop their teamwork and leadership skills. Equally importantly, it’s about ensuring that students have fun! I try to inspire them to embrace a passion for healthy active living through enjoyable movement.

Course Development: “Blackness within the Canadian Context”

A couple of years ago, PDSB mandated that every secondary school offer a Black Studies course by June 2024. I developed a Grade 12 course titled “Blackness within the Canadian Context.” This course offers a counterspace of celebration that centres Black students and promotes unity, allyship, and participatory action by allowing all students to learn about theories, histories, and stories of Black resilience and advocacy. Anti-Black racism serves as an entry point for examining Eurocentric ideals in the Canadian context, and the course seeks to disrupt racism by recognizing the value of all cultures and empowering students to move in their world as brilliant and capable agents of change.

This course development connects to both my first-hand experiences and my MEd thesis: **Black Girls and School Disciplinary Mechanisms**. My research focused on the disproportionate discipline of Black girls in Ontario’s K-12 publicly funded schools. My findings highlight the inequitable disciplinary challenges for Black girls stemming from educators’ lack of compassion, Black girls’ hypervisibility within their schools, and distorted self-perceptions regarding their voices. These challenges are *still* evident in my teaching experiences, and I actively seek to address them in order to create safer learning opportunities for Black girls.

I also work as a Contract Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, teaching the Social Difference in Education course. I am passionate about guiding teacher candidates to critically examine our educational culture through a lens of



power relations. It is crucial for new teachers to recognize the substantial impact their social location has on their attitudes, perspectives, teaching practices, and learning experiences.

Outside of my work endeavours, I love spending time with my dog Rocky and travelling/experiencing the world with my partner. I enjoy regular physical activity, whether that is working out at the gym or playing tennis or pickleball. I am continually exploring ways to live mindfully and embrace gratitude, self-love and intention... especially during the busier seasons of life!

My advice to students in educational programs is this: You are capable of much more than you realize! Challenge yourself to pursue difficult tasks. Don’t hesitate to take the next step in your personal or professional journey, as you never know where it might lead you.”



Christopher Britt

**Associate Director,
Education
Downie Wenjack Fund**

Graduated from the Bachelor of Education program, 2010 (Thunder Bay campus)

“As the Associate Director, Education for the Downie Wenjack Fund, I lead initiatives to advance reconciliation through education. With a focus on fostering meaningful connections between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, the Downie Wenjack Fund develops impactful programs, including workshops and curriculum resources, that

integrate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives. We are dedicated to empowering educators and students to engage in truth and reconciliation efforts across Canada.

My undergraduate degree at Lakehead was in Outdoor, Recreation, Parks and Tourism (ORPT). For me, the ORPT program was a life-changing experience. It helps frame your understanding of who you are and how to work with others. In addition, I have always been drawn to the outdoors (I love to ski and have long held a love of the living world and a desire to see as much of it as possible), so the program was an extremely meaningful educational experience for me. Pursuing certification in Education was a natural choice, as well, as I come from a family of teachers. Having an option to pursue environmental science and teaching together presented a natural fit for me.

My desire to work in reconciliation-related education came from my experiences in Thunder Bay, and a bit by chance. I was fortunate to have been able to work and live on unceded Lil'wat Territory, where I learned of the importance of this work, and became eager to participate in some way toward collective reconciliation.

I encourage others to reflect on their goals and this famous quote by Mary Oliver (1992), who asked in her poem, *The Summer Day*: “What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”



Gurjyot Kaur Sohal

Grade 3 Contract Teacher, Grand Erie District School Board

Graduated from the Bachelor of Education program (2020); Master of Education program (2022)

“I love the relationship building with students that can happen year after year in teaching. I’m grateful to be working in the same school for my third year, as it has given me the opportunity to reteach some students from my first year here. Seeing their growth has been amazing. I also really enjoy the sense of fulfilment I feel at the end of a week, even when it has been challenging. No two days are the same in teaching, so we can start each day with a clean slate. The supportive staff and administration have also been integral to my development in the first few years of my career as an educator.

An important part of my work relates to representation and inclusion in the school community. We are a very diverse community, students and staff alike. I am multilingual and can help other staff in meeting the needs of multilingual students, and I often communicate with parents or grandparents in their language at pick-up time.

I made some strong connections at Lakehead and friendships that remain today. We are there to listen to each other and support each other professionally! I was initially apprehensive about completing the Master of Education program, but the research that I was able to complete in those two years helped me to understand the impact that I want to make as an educator.

I am very grateful for having had the opportunity to work with Lakehead instructor Kim Goodwin (as a Graduate Assistant) and with Dr. Gary Pluim, my research supervisor. My thesis, titled **Say My Name: Name-Based Racial Microaggressions in Ontario’s K-12 School System**, explores the impact of name pronunciation in the classroom on the development of student identity and their wholistic well-being. Names have long been connected with an individual’s perception of themselves and their identities, and studies have shown that negative experiences with one’s name can impact a student’s sense of self and belonging. This is a topic I am still passionate about and hope to take further in the education system (e.g., through proposals for the integration of a name pronunciation tool within classroom attendance procedures). I hope to be able to put my research into practice, and influence change.”



Teacher Candidates Support Environmental Education in the Community

A unique assignment in Devon Lee's (Contract Lecturer and PhD candidate, Thunder Bay) Environmental Education class has proven to be a powerful example of how hands-on, community-based teaching and learning can shape future teachers while contributing to local sustainability education initiatives.



Instructor Devon Lee designed an assignment that saw students volunteering at local environmental education organizations.

The assignment asked Bachelor of Education teacher candidates to spend 8 hours volunteering and contributing to environmental education programming at their choice of three Thunder Bay organizations: Ecosuperior, Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA), or the Climate Northwest Gathering.

Each organization plays a vital role in promoting sustainability in the region: Ecosuperior is an environmental non-profit dedicated to building a healthy future through programs and services; LRCA is a community-based environmental non-profit focused on conservation, restoration, and management of natural resources in the Lakehead Watershed; and Climate Northwest Gathering works to connect communities in Northwestern Ontario to positive, solution-oriented climate action.

Teacher candidates' contributions to the organizations were diverse, including delivering a one-hour waste program in local schools, facilitating circular economy workshops, guiding birding expeditions, coordinating nature hikes, leading a labyrinth walk on campus, and

more. Several students in the class chose to create their own sustainability initiatives, which included organizing a community clean-up and a clothing swap event.

Powerful, Positive Impacts

The assignment offered numerous benefits to students. Some had the chance to step outside their usual teaching divisions, working with different age groups and gaining exposure to new teaching environments. Some led outdoor programming and noted the experience of working outside was refreshing and beneficial to their mental well-being. Others shared in their assignment write-ups that the experience solidified their desire to pursue a career in environmental education, and/or pursue a future teaching placement in the field.

Teacher candidate Shalini Ramdharry volunteered at LRCA as part of the assignment, leading groups of children on guided marshland nature walks. They identified birds and trees and explored a local lagoon.

"We were teaching the children how to be scientists—identifying and classifying what we found and learning about different inhabitants of the conservation area we were exploring. This included identifying several types of birds, trees, and inhabitants of the lagoon, such as baby crayfish, green plankton, water boatman and snails," she says.

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Above: Photos from guided nature walks, led by teacher candidate Shalini Ramdharry, as part of her volunteer work at Lakehead Region Conservation Authority.

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She adds, “These experiences were profound and enriching to my environmental education knowledge. They also gave me the confidence to plan and carry out day trips with future classes of my own one day.”

Building Strong Community Partnerships

Devon emphasizes the value of the community partnerships formed through this project, which built upon a previous work-integrated learning grant that was a collaboration between Devon’s class, CEWIL Canada, EcoSuperior, and Lakehead’s offices of Sustainability and Career Services. While setting up

these collaborations required considerable effort, coordinating the assignment was one the most rewarding aspects of teaching the Environmental Education course.

Looking ahead, Devon hopes to continue expanding these partnerships, as they not only enrich students’ learning experiences but also strengthen ties between the Faculty and the Thunder Bay community. Devon notes, “Whenever we can offer authentic learning and teaching opportunities to our students which also bolster the capacity to deliver accessible and high-quality environmental programs in our community, it’s a win-win for everyone!”

Anishinaabemowin Phrases and Language Revitalization

Anishinaabemowin Boodawe means lighting the fire (*boodawe*) to keep the Ojibwe language (*Anishinaabemowin*) alive—and language revitalization is at the heart of the work of the Anishinaabemowin Boodawe Committee, an educational group in partnership with Red Rock Indian Band, Kinooaadziwin Education Body, Superior Greenstone District School Board, Superior North Catholic District School Board, the Ministry of

Education, and the faculty’s Keewatinase (Department of Indigenous Education).

Below are some of the committee’s recent “Anishinaabemowin Phrases of the Week.” For information on events and language revitalization initiatives happening in schools, please see their [Facebook page](#).



Anishinaabemowin Boodawe Committee

Anishinaabemowin Phrase of the Week

Goon ji-ombaashid.

“The snow blows upwards.”



Anishinaabemowin Boodawe Committee

Anishinaabemowin Phrase of the Week

**Gichi-minomaasige awe
gaa-abaabasiged zhebaa.**

“That person who smudged the place this morning really left a good aroma.”



Anishinaabemowin Boodawe Committee

Anishinaabemowin Phrase of the Week

**Ayengwaamizin. Aapiji
ozhaashikwaa iwidi ezhaayin.**

“Be careful. The ice is very slippery where you’re going.”



Anishinaabemowin Boodawe Committee

Anishinaabemowin Phrase of the Week

**Nibowa ategin
giizhikaandagoog.**

“There are many cedar boughs there”

Welcome: New Members of the Placement Team



Alexis Paulusma

Placement Officer, Thunder Bay

Alexis Paulusma has recently joined the Faculty as Placement Officer in the Department of Undergraduate Studies, Thunder Bay.

Alexis is no stranger to Lakehead, having worked in the Education Library in 2022-2023 and in the Chancellor Paterson Library for many years prior. She is also a graduate of the Faculty's Bachelor of Education program.

In her new role, Alexis performs extensive outreach with local and provincial school boards, to carefully match and place teacher candidates for the practicum components of the Bachelor of Education program.

Alexis shared some details about herself, including highlights of her new job:

"I enjoy helping our students secure teaching placements, as they are the difference makers! I had so many teachers in school that left lasting impacts on me and guided me to teaching, and my love of history. Helping others, so they can in turn make a difference in students' lives, is a great reward.

"I am a mom to a spunky, outgoing and intelligent nine-year-old. She is currently in French immersion and often likes to correct my pronunciation of French words. I love to travel with my daughter and partner. In the Spring, Summer, and Fall you can find us hiking, fishing or just enjoying the great outdoors. I also like to paint in my spare time and do arts and crafts with my daughter."



Marley Lauro

Administrative & Placement Assistant, Orillia

Marley Lauro recently joined the Faculty and its placement team, as the Administrative and Placement Assistant. Working out of Orillia's Simcoe Hall, Marley's role involves securing teaching placements for students in the Intermediate/Senior and Technology Education programs in Orillia. This involves working with school board coordinators to match students to their teaching placements—and working closely with other staff on the placement team in Thunder Bay.

Marley holds a Bachelor of Arts from Laurentian University and a Master of Library and Information Science from Western University. She grew up in Orillia, attending elementary and high school in the region.

"Professionally I love finding students' placements and helping students in any way I can. And personally, I am loving a change of scenery with this new position. I really enjoying working at Lakehead," she says.

"In my time away from work, I love spending time with my dog Fawkes, a rescue from Mexico, who loves walks. I am also an avid reader, and I like to craft!"



Lakehead Secures Top Spot in Maclean's Ontario Rankings

Faculty of Education Highlighted in Terms of Reputation

Lakehead University has been ranked Ontario's #1 primarily undergraduate university and the **fifth best primarily undergraduate university in Canada**, according to the 2025 Maclean's Magazine annual rankings.

Further, within the University, the Faculty of Education was the only faculty to be recognised in the **national top 20 in terms of reputation**. This is an achievement the Faculty takes some pride in, as it reflects the work we have been doing over the past years.

"Students choose Lakehead for its welcoming atmosphere, beautiful surroundings, liveable communities, and ultimately,

to realize their full potential," said Dr. Gillian Siddall, President and Vice-Chancellor. "We meet students where they're at and help them achieve their dreams. We do this through our uniquely accessible pathways to entry, student support programs, and extensive opportunities for experiential learning and research. This year's Maclean's rankings recognize the important investments made by Lakehead's passionate faculty, staff and community partners dedicated to creating an environment where every student can thrive."

Congratulations to the Faculty and wider university!

We welcome your feedback, ideas, and content suggestions.
Email us at newsletter.education@lakeheadu.ca



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