

# ANISHINABEK NEWS

The voice of the Anishinabek Nation



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Kinoomaadziwin Education Board of Directors. Back row: Vicki Ware, Lauri Hoag, Lisa Michano, Catherine Pawis, Judy Desmoulin. Sitting: Evelyn Ball, Nicole King, Janice Cada and Jeanne Naponse. Missing: Marianna Couchie and Elaine Stewart.

## First Nations assert jurisdiction over education

**By Marci Becking**

**TORONTO** – The 22 First Nations going forward with the Anishinabek Education System made the selection of the Kinoomaadziwin Education Board this week in Toronto.

The decision was made to have four Regional Education Councils with three representatives, making the 12 representatives until April 1, 2018 until it is reviewed again.

For Regional Education Council #1 which includes Biitigong Nishnaabeg, Long Lake #58, Pic Mobert, Red Rock, and Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinabek selected Elaine Stewart (Pic Mobert), Lisa Michano (Biitigong Nishnaabeg) and Judy Desmoulin (Long Lake #58) were selected.

Regional Education Council #2 (former regions #2 and #3 combined), which includes Atikameksheng Anishinabek, Mississauga #8, Sheshegwaning, Aundeck Omni Kaning and Zhibahaasing selected Janice Cada (Sheshegwaning), Jeanne Naponse (Atikameksheng) and Debbie Mayer (Mississauga #8) as board members

Regional Education Council #3 (formerly #4) which includes Henvey Inlet, Dokis, Nipissing, Wasauksing, Wahnapiatae, Magnetawan and Moose Deer Point selected Marianna Couchie (Nipissing), Catherine Pawis (Wasauksing) and Nicole King (Moose Deer Point).

Regional Education Council #4 (formerly #5) which includes Chippewas of Rama, Mississaugas of Scugog, Chippewas of Georgina Island, Aamjiwnaang, and Munsee Delaware selected Evelyn Ball (Rama), Lauri Hoag (Georgina Island) and Vicki Ware (Aamjiwnaang) as board members.

Board director Lauri Hoag has high hopes for the Anishinabek Education System.

“It is our hope to see an Anishnaabe empowered body that can effectively and efficiently assist communities smoothly transition to an education self-government system that will allow more meaningful education programs and plentiful resources for our students.”

Debbie Mayer, board director from Mississauga, says she is hop-

ing for unity moving forward.

“After being involved in the education system imposed upon First Nations by the federal government, this new, innovative and self-directed agreement will be beneficial for my grandchildren and those next generations to come,” says Mayer. “There is still much work to do ensure there is on-going success of the AES in a cooperative and cohesive way and working in unity going forward.”

Judy Desmoulin, board director for REC #1 says that she is happy to move forward in education.

“We are in a very exciting time,” says Desmoulin. “All of our perseverance, pushing and pulling over the years has come to fruition! We have come a long way and the base is set. Now we can continue to build for increased success.”

Board director Catherine Pawis says that the KEB is founded upon and is empowered by the strong communities that it represents.

“It will build upon the hard work and accomplishments of the Anishinabek Nation in creating, collec-

tively, an education system that is uniquely suited to and responsive to the needs and aspirations of our communities.”

Request for proposals will be going out to find out where the Anishinabek Education System office will be housed. The permanent home for the Kinoomaadziwin Education Board staff will be required to be in a First Nation that is in the Anishinabek Education System.

The next step for the First Nations is to develop and ratify their own Education Law by April 1, 2018.

Legal Counsel Tracey O’Donnell reminds us that First Nations have jurisdiction over education.

“The negotiations were about Canada to recognize the jurisdiction we already have,” says O’Donnell. “Anishinabek First Nations have full authority to make decision of First Nation education. Education is our responsibility for our members. First Nations control the Anishinabek Education System, not Canada.”



The Child Well-Being Working Group met on January 18-19 to share and discuss ideas and strengthen child well-being in the Anishinabek Nation.

## It's important that families stay connected: Madahbee

**By Marci Becking**

AUNDECK OMNI KANING – The Child Well-Being Law Working Group met Jan. 18-19 to share ideas and strengthen child well-being in our communities.

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee says that the word Biinoji doesn't just mean "child".

"The Creator placed a Little Spirit here on Mother Earth and that it takes everyone – aunts, uncles, parents, grandparents and the community – to raise that

spirit. This working group work is very important," says Madahbee. There is probably no one who hasn't been impacted by Children's Aid Societies and colonialism in general. Colonizers did a few things to anywhere they uneducated, kept them in poverty and took the children. 'Get the Indian out of the Child' that is all the policy and legislation has gotten us."

"When you know who you are and where you are from, you grow up as a stronger person. Identity is important. We need to go visiting

more and need to be more social. We aren't talking anymore. The family is broken down. We need to maintain our family connectivity. We need to keep our families intact. CAS takes the kids out of the community. Children who have been away for many years don't know who they are. They come back with baggage coming out of care. Our Child Well-Being Law is a good solution to our child well-being needs," reminds Grand Council Chief Madahbee.

So far, there are four communities who have submitted

a Band Council Resolution stating that their First Nation is ready to move forward with the Child Well-Being Law.

These communities are: Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, Magnetawan First Nation, Nipissing First Nation, and Dokis First Nation.

Meetings are being booked now for any community who would like to hear more about the law. To book, call Social Services Director Adrienne Pelletier at 705-497-9127 or email [Adrienne.pelletier@anishinabek.ca](mailto:Adrienne.pelletier@anishinabek.ca)

## 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!

# Mino Mshkiki – Maawnjidwing– ‘Good Medicine’

By Lynne Brown

SAULT STE. MARIE—“Many issues affect our communities today,” shared Garden River Chief Paul Syrette in his welcoming remarks to delegates attending the three-day Anishinabek Health Conference 2017 in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, from January 24-26, at the Quattro Hotel & Convention Centre.

The annual health conference brings together health care workers from across 40 First Nation communities of the Anishinabek Nation.

“Employment, education, housing, health, food security, and basic amenities are issues of importance,” stated Chief Syrette. “You will be learning skills to take back home to your communities to put strategies in place to address these issues; issues that are of great importance to each of us here today.”

Chief Syrette encouraged delegates to pay special attention to youth.

“Our youth struggle with many issues. Issues of addictions, mental

health and suicide,” noted Chief Syrette. “Our communities need to find strategies to help our young people.”

Chief Syrette thanked the delegates for the hard work they do in each of their communities to ensure community health and community healing.

Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee also welcomed the over 150 conference delegates. GCC Madahbee shared with attendees that he took on the Health Portfolio several years ago with The Chiefs of Ontario.

“As I travel around, health issues are the predominant issue that I hear when visiting all of our communities,” he stated. “We have concerns about mental health and the issues that impact our communities as a result of mental health. It can leave us with a helpless feeling sometimes when trying to cope with these issues.”

“With the theme of ‘Good Medicine’, you will have opportuni-



Anishinabek Health Conference 2017 opening morning address by Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, January 24.

ties to network and dialogue with colleagues working in the field of health services,” added GCC Madahbee.

Madahbee shared that he has mixed feelings about the legalization of marijuana.

“Companies have been coming around trying to solicit our First Nation communities to see if they will get into growing legalized marijuana,” noted GCC Madahbee.

Marijuana legalization was one of the topics discussed during the first morning of the three day health conference.

The conference logo, ‘Mino Bmaadzid’, is a beautiful design by artist Darlene (Dolly) Peltier. Peltier is an Anishinaabe Kwe from Wikwemikong Unceded Territory and illustrator for the Wikwemikong Board of Education.

“The ‘Good Health’ logo image is about medicine picking with family and expresses the mind, spirit, emotions, and physical teachings of the medicine wheel,” shared Peltier.

Master of Ceremonies was Bob Goulais from Nipissing First Nation.



## Heroes in Health

Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee; JoAnne Michano of Biigtigong Nishnaabeg; Heroes in Health Award recipients Erica Perkins of Biigtigong Nishnaabeg and John Mattson of Alderville First Nation; and Nora Sawyer of Alderville First Nation. Missing: Pamela Johnston from Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, recipient of this year’s Heroes in Health Award.

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