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inc.

7th Annual Report
2008/09

“Those Who Lead”

Cover Photo: “Peter Parisian”
Thunderbird House (Winnipeg, MB), November 3, 2008
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Ka Ni Kanichihk is a Registered Charity # 85494 1135 RR001





* Photo: The Honourable Oscar Lathlin (May 20, 1947-November 1, 2008) addresses Ka Ni Kanichik's Annual General Assembly, October 27, 2008. Aaron Pierre, photographer.

Dedication:

Our Ka Ni Kanichihk family remembers the spirit of four very special people who have completed their earth walk and have returned home to the spirit world. We are grateful for all that you have shared with us...

Oscar Lathlin
Gladys Cook
Cherisse Houle
Lorena Martins

Your spirits are now at peace.

“The honor of the people lies in the moccasin tracks of the woman. Walk the good road... Be dutiful, respectful, gentle, and modest my daughter... Be strong with the warm, strong heart of the earth. No people goes down until their women are weak and dishonored, or dead upon the ground. Be strong and sing the strength of the Great Powers within you, all around you.”
— Lakota Elder

The Elders say the Native American women will lead the healing among the tribes. We need to especially pray for our women, and ask the Creator to bless them and give them strength. Inside them are the powers of love and strength given by the Moon and the Earth. When everyone else gives up, it is the women who sings the songs of strength. She is the backbone of the people. So, to our women, we say: sing your songs of strength; pray for your special powers; keep our people strong; be respectful, gentle and modest.



* Photos: 1. (L-R): Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) Grand Chief Morris Swan Shannacappo, SCO Director of Justice Nahanni Fontaine and Urban NDN publisher Colleen Simard; KFB 2009 ceremonies. 2. Jessica Didychuk, Halloween 2009. 3. Treasury Board Minister Vic Toews at announcement of Youth Gang Prevention Initiative; 4. Residential School Survivor Ann Callahan speaks at NDHR event, May 24, 2009. 5. IOAA students working. 6. Daycare participant. (Photos 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 courtesy of Aaron Pierre.)

Our funders

Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. gratefully acknowledges all of its funders, including:

Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development
City of Winnipeg
The Jewish Foundation
Mother of Red Nations Women’s Council of Manitoba
The Winnipeg Foundation
United Way of Winnipeg
University of Manitoba

The Province of Manitoba:
Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
Education Citizenship and Youth
Healthy Child Manitoba
Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade
Manitoba Family Services and Housing
Manitoba Artists in Health Care Inc.
Neighbourhoods Alive!
Urban Green Team

Government of Canada:
Canadian Heritage: Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre
Department of Justice Canada
Human Resources and Skills Development
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada: Urban Aboriginal Strategy
National Crime Prevention Centre
Public Health Agency of Canada
Urban Aboriginal Strategy
Winnipeg Partnership Agreement



* Photo: Daycare participant. Aaron Pierre, photographer.

Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. 2008/09 Revenue

Federal	47%
Provincial	27%
AHRDA	11%
Other	9%
United Way	4%
Foundation	1%

Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. 2008/09 Expenses

Personnel	59%
Program	28%
Operating	13%



Our Vision

To honor the spirit of our ancestors and seek their wisdom to guide our peoples back to balance and wellness. Our people have come home. We are self-determining, healthy, happy and respected for our cultural and spiritual strengths and ways of being.

Our Mandate

We provide Aboriginal identified programs and services that focus on wholeness and wellness and that build on the strengths and resilience of Aboriginal peoples. We do this to help people to help themselves, to build healthy relationships and to create a sustainable future for our community.

Our Values & Beliefs

At Ka Ni Kanichihk we honor the laws of our Creator, the knowledge of our ancestors and our responsibility to the children; those that are here now and those still waiting to come – seven generations from now.

At Ka Ni Kanichihk, We...

- Walk our Talk
- Share strength, health and wellness of Indigenous Peoples
- Provide welcoming and safe environments
- Walk in balance with strength, values and Indigenous Knowledge
- Value belonging, mastery, and generosity
- Believe in independence and interdependence
- Create relevant programming in partnership with our community

Our Council: 2008/09

Jessie Howell, Elder

Gwen Cook, Co-Chairperson
Jennifer Rattray, Co-Chairperson
Cecil Sveinson, Secretary
Kimberly Puhach, Treasurer

Audrey Richard
Dr. Michael Hart
Dr. Brock Pitawanakwat
Donna Desmarais

Staff Representative:
Tammy Folster (Oct. 2008 to July 2009)

Administrative Staff:
Leslie Spillett, Executive Director
Jarred Baker, Director of Operations
Charlett Millen, Financial Manager
Katherine Goodmanson, Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant
Tricia Sinclair, Administrative Assistant





Aboriginal Youth Circle

During the past year, the Aboriginal Youth Circle was involved in the Niizhwaaso Wiigiwaamanon (Seven Lodges): Aboriginal Youth Cultural Leadership Movement, which is a partnership between Aboriginal cultural teachers and a team of Aboriginal youth to provide cultural knowledge to Winnipeg's Aboriginal youth population. The name of the project is representative of the seven Aboriginal groups in Manitoba: The Cree, Oji-Cree, Dene, Dakota, Ojibway, Inuit and Métis. Each lodge is representative of the "heart" of each cultural group and its unique ecology, teachings, language, culture, history, community structure and vision.

Four Aboriginal Youth Cultural Mentors were provided with ongoing support and peer mentoring and leadership skills, as well as technical and research skills support. Mentors developed comprehensive presentations related to each of the Seven Lodges and made 15 presentations focusing on anti-racism education and Aboriginal Awareness to 481 students and youth in eight Winnipeg high schools, youth groups, conferences and community organizations.

The AYC also organized three anti-racism "training the trainer" sessions with 45 participants, ages 18 to 24 in attendance. Seven Aboriginal Cultural Awareness orientation sessions were held reaching a total of 318 Newcomer Canadians.

A youth cultural studio — the only one of its kind in Winnipeg — was also established in central Winnipeg and provided the "space" for Aboriginal youth to explore the contributions that Aboriginal peoples have made to human history, art, media, social justice and science and technology.

Seven AYC members attended a two-day strategic planning retreat at Windy Hill Learning and Wellness Centre. This retreat provided youth with an opportunity to review the workplan, evaluate the project and provide feedback. They also participated in team building activities and attended a sweatlodge ceremony.

AYC members also attended a variety of leadership and cultural events including:

National Aboriginal Achievement Awards
Manito Ahbee
Winnipeg Folk Festival
Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival
International Winnipeg Writer's Festival
World AIDS Day
Community Policing Forum
Youth Challenge Day
Youth and Elders Justice Conference
CPR/First Aid training

Miigwetch to the elders, cultural teachers, youth and community members who got involved with the AYC during the past year.

AYC Team

Team Leader: Albert McLeod

Youth Coordinator: Winston Thompson

Youth Activity Worker: Heather McPherson

Youth Activity Worker: Jeff Sutherland

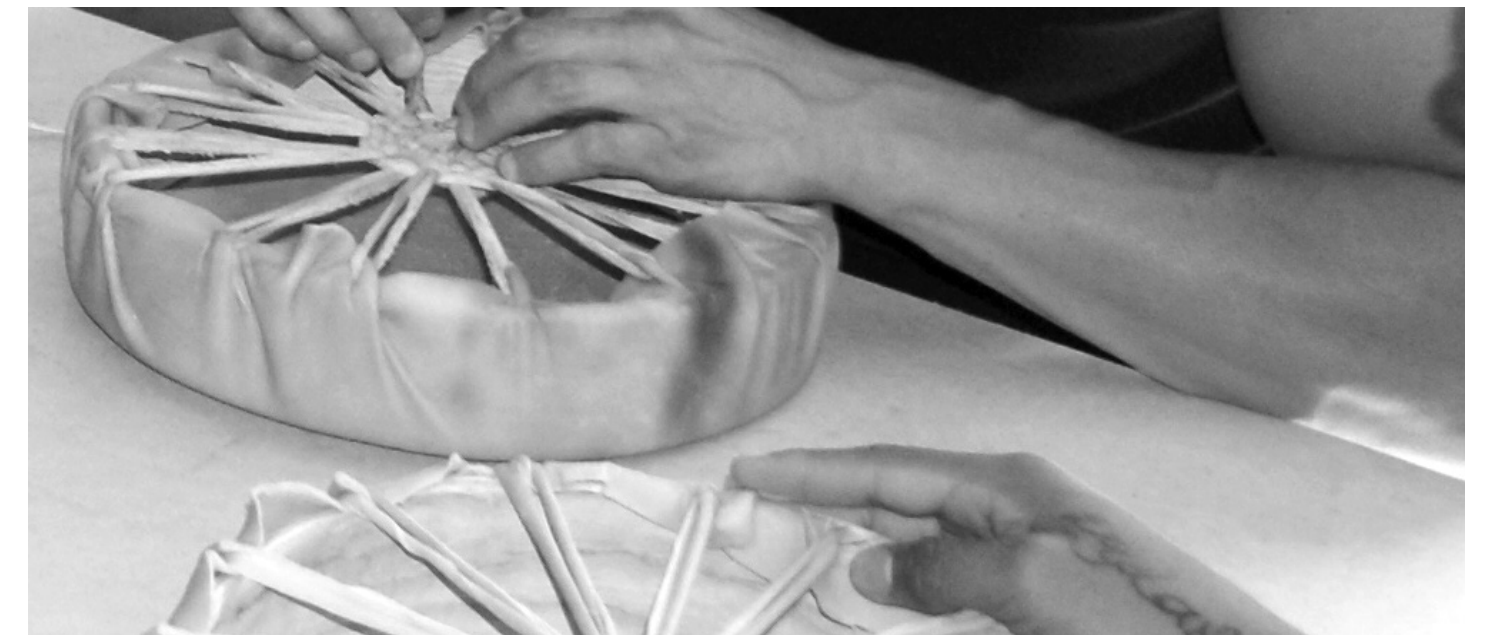
Youth Activity Worker: Justin Kehler

Youth Activity Worker: Melissa Chippeway
Phoebe Burns, Shannon Cormier, Leah Fontaine

Youth Peacebuilding Project

The Winnipeg Youth Peacebuilding Project 2009 (YPP) was deemed a great success by the youth participants. For the second consecutive year, Ka Ni Kanichihk, along with six partnership organizations, brought together 60 youth representing Aboriginal, Newcomer and Mainstream youth to participate in a four day retreat held this year in July at Camp Stephens near Kenora, Ontario. The YPP is designed to facilitate building trust, relationships, awareness, understanding, conflict resolution through dialogue and cross cultural exchange.

Ka Ni Kanichihk produced a 40 minute video which depicts the peacebuilding dialogue process.



* Photo: Youth participants construct drums.

* Photo: Artist Patrick Ross draws painting during KFB ceremonies, June 18, 2009. Aaron Pierre photographer.

At Our Relative’s Place

At Our Relative’s Place program is a culturally supportive community-based intervention, prevention and stabilization program that responds to the sexual exploitation of children and youth. The program includes a ten bed specialized foster care program for sexually exploited youth between the ages of 9 and 17 years. Our program is an adaptation of traditional Aboriginal practices of child protection, whereby grandparents; aunts and uncles; sisters and brothers; and extended community members stepped into the role of caregivers. Our “relatives” include urban and rural Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families who embrace and nurture the spirit of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity in children and youth.

During the 2008/09 fiscal year, our foster care beds were filled to capacity. There were consistently over 20 youths on our waiting list for service. Children and youth were carefully matched with foster aunts and uncles based on the strengths and unique needs of the individuals involved. The program also acknowledged the need for consistent support staff that would be attached to each youth. With the financial backing of the Province, a recruitment campaign commenced. Training was another aspect of the program that was given increased attention. Mandatory training for all staff, foster aunts and uncles, and respite & support workers included Understanding & Working with Children and Youth Who Have Been Sexually Exploited (S.E.Y.), which is part of the Manitoba Core Competency Training. Additional training needs were identified for each foster auntie and uncle based on the children in their care and the supports required.

At Our Relatives’ Place Program recognized the importance of working collaboratively with collateral agencies. Of paramount importance was the development of a close relationship with the Winnipeg Police Missing Persons Unit. Our collective efforts have done much to ensure the safety of our youth.

The At Our Relative’s Place team is comprised of **Shanlee Scott, Team Leader**; Etienne Henzel, Program Support Coordinator; and Laura Orvis, Case Manager Assistant. Former employees of the program during the fiscal year included **Amanda Machalek, Team Leader**; Betty Cool, Case Manager; Helen Robinson, Case Manager; and Katherine Goodmanson, Administrative Assistant.

“I have seen that in any great undertaking it is not enough to depend simply upon yourself” — Lone Man (Isna-la-wica) Teton Lakota

Iskwewak Leadership Project

Iskwewak (Women’s) Leadership project reached over 122 participants during its final year of a three year project. During the three year life of the project, 257 Aboriginal women participated in a wide range of activities and events that were designed to enhance and build leadership capacity to address family and related violence affecting both nuclear and extended Aboriginal families. The project also offered on-site child minding supports.

- Project goals include:
- To provide opportunities for participants to focus on developing an understanding of the growing issue of violence against women, particularly in urban areas like Winnipeg, and to identify and implement effective and sustainable strategies to reduce violence against Aboriginal women
 - To maintain and preserve the cultural distinctiveness and cultural identity of Aboriginal women
 - To provide leadership skills development opportunities for Aboriginal women
 - To assist participants to develop networks that will support the application of their newly developed leadership skills to family and community situations

Participants attended weekly sharing circles and regularly scheduled Leadership Training sessions. As a result, 35 women (over a three-year period) are now available as speakers and trainers in the field of Aboriginal Strategies specializing in Family Violence Prevention and Intervention. To enhance and strengthen cultural identity and distinctiveness, women attended a variety of cultural activities, including sweat lodge ceremonies, Sundances, medicine picking, full moon ceremonies and feasts and pipe ceremonies. Women also made traditional clothing and drums and learned traditional songs.

In March 2009, 200 people, representing both service providers and community members, attended a day long community forum called “Aboriginal Perspectives on Family Violence” that was organized by Iskwewak participants and staff.

Tammy Folster, Project Coordinator



* Photo: Preparing the Grandmothers and Grandfathers.

Message from Council

Aneen, Tansi, Boozhoo!

This past year has been an inspiring and dynamic one for our Council members; all of whom have all played an integral role in providing guidance, direction, encouragement support, engaging in the strategic planning process and developing policy all aimed at supporting Ka Ni Kanichihk’s diverse and life-affirming programs.

Our Council colleagues included Elder Jessie Howell, Dr. Brock Pitawanakwat, Audrey Richard, Donna Desmarais, Dr. Michael Hart, Kimberley Puhach, Cecil Sveinson and staff representative Trisha Sinclair. Their commitment to Ka Ni Kanichihk was demonstrated through their active participation in the many activities and events that took place throughout the year. Each member brought their many gifts, expertise and experience to their work and in a respectful and supportive way.

The Council takes great pride in the many innovative, creative and worthwhile programs that are offered to the community. We acknowledge the fabulous work of the staff team as well of the contribution of our many partners, including funders, community organizations and community members who have supported our efforts.

With exciting new projects on the horizon, including a capital fundraising campaign to build a second floor onto our present building, Council is very much looking forward to continue to direct, support and guide Ka Ni Kanichihk into a bright future.

Ekosani, Meegwetch, Marcee, Merci & Thank You.

— **Gwen Cook and Jennifer Ratray, Co-Chairpersons, Ka Ni Kanichihk Council**

Executive Director’s Report

Another cycle has been completed in the life of Ka Ni Kanichihk, and, by all measurements, it has been another exciting and productive year. As always, it has been tremendously enriching and rewarding to be part of such a vibrant and vital organization.

It’s quite breathtaking to look back over the past twelve months and see the many accomplishments, successes, growth and the changes that have taken place. Much of this is captured in the individual program reports and other stories featured in this annual report. What these reports don’t always reflect, however, is the catalyst or the mechanism that activates or triggers action. That is found in the human spirit; the passion, the inspiration, the creativity, the dedication and the sheer hard work of everyone who is involved in this enterprise of human development based in decolonization principles and methods.

It’s a pleasure to work each day with a team of dedicated and talented professionals. Miigwetch to each of you for your contribution to ensuring that Ka Ni Kanichihk is recognized by members of our community as a “home,” and where they are “accepted and respected for who they are” and for providing outstanding service.

It has been an honour to work with this year’s Council — your leadership, passion, brilliance, guidance, encouragement and unwavering commitment has made this year’s work amazingly effortless and I am grateful for your support.

We are appreciative of all three levels of government, public institutions, corporate donors and private funders that continue to support our work. The annual meeting to review our “5 Year Strategic and Operational Plan” — which took place at the end of June 2009 and which included both Council and staff — confirmed that we continue to be focused on

our four principal priorities: Program Development and Delivery; Organizational Development and Capacity Building; Community Outreach; and Revenue Generation.

Noteworthy, too, is: the addition of our Medicine Children’s Lodge (which became a Provincial licensed day care facility); the addition of two new programs, Honouring Gifts and the Butterflies Club; and expanded services for sexually exploited youth through At Our Relative’s Place. We have evaluated many of our programs and have fine-tuned both our delivery and evaluation systems.

In October 2008, Ka Ni Kanichihk embarked on a human resource management initiative. Led by Lisa Lewis of Beyond Excellence, the performance management program focused on strategic planning; hiring and retention; staff motivation and coaching; and succession planning. Also of note this past year is the enhanced commitment to staff training and development. Staff participated in two Post traumatic Stress workshops and logic model training. At Our Relative’s Place staff attended the Sexually Exploited Youth training. Another staff member attended a week-long Life Skills training program, while our Finance Manager attended a two-day Simply Accounting seminar. Staff from both IOAA and SEPAW are also participating in a women’s leadership training initiative.

Our objective to promote wellness initiatives was demonstrated by our support of activities, including monthly pipe and sweat lodge ceremonies, sharing circles, Sundances, medicine walks and other ceremonies. Staff joined the Walking Club and Lighten Up! — activities that focus on stress reduction and maintaining wellness, all while having fun.

Ka Ni Kanichihk continued to work towards its goal of community outreach and building healthy community relationships. Our partnerships include the Sexually

Exploited Youth Coalition, Grandmothers’ Protecting Our Children, Youth Peacebuilders, the City of Winnipeg, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, National Anti-Racism Coalition of Canada and Nine Circle Community Health Centre.

Ka Ni Kanichihk successfully renewed another agreement with the United Way and entered into negotiations with the Province of Manitoba to secure a service purchase agreement for both Restoring the Sacred and At Our Relative’s Place. The Information and Office Administration Assistant program is now a program of the Neeginan Institute of Applied Technology. Ka Ni Kanichihk also completed a comprehensive business plan for the implementation of its In One Spirit Education and Training Centre.

We anticipate next year to be even more exciting as we embark on new challenges and growth. The launch of our capital fundraising campaign —an initiative, which will expand our present building by constructing a second floor — promises to be an especially worthwhile undertaking.

Together, we are up for the challenge!

— **Leslie Spillett, Executive Director**



* Photo: Leslie Spillett. Aaron Pierre, photographer.

Keeping the Fires Burning 2009



* Photo: KFB, June 18/09. Aaron Pierre, photographer

Over 700 people were on hand at the 8th Annual Keeping the Fires Burning honouring gala, which recognized nine beautiful Kookums (Grandmothers) for their outstanding contribution to preserving and protecting First Nations and Métis cultures, and for their dedication to their families and communities. 2009’s Grandmother inductees are:

- Sarah Lena Beaulieu:** Sandy Bay First Nations — selected by Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
- Ann Callahan:** Peepeekisis First Nations — selected by Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg Inc.
- Grace Daniels:** Long Plain First Nation — selected by Southern Chiefs’ Organization Inc.
- Shirley Groskey:** Portage La Prairie — selected by Manitoba Métis Federation
- Florence Hamilton:** Wabowden/Cross Lake First Nation — selected by Northern Association of Community Councils Inc.
- Margaret Lavallee:** Sagkeeng First Nations — selected by Mother of Red Nations Women’s Council of Manitoba
- Margaret “Peggy” Thomas-Hedges:** Peguis First Nation — selected by Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc.
- Olga Campbell:** Camperville — selected by Aboriginal Seniors Resource Centre
- Aurelia Thickfoot:** Peguis First Nation — selected by Peguis First Nation

The first Annual Oscar Lathlin Memorial Award was given to Sherry! Blacksmith for her commitment to “walk in the footsteps of the Grandmothers” by practicing and promoting and living traditional cultural practices.

Grandmothers’ Protecting Our Children: 3rd Annual Sacred Walk

As the day dawned on September 21, 2009, sacred fires were lit in several communities across Turtle Island to mark the day that has been chosen by Kookomug Gaa Na Daa Maawaad Abinoojiag (Grandmother’s Protecting Our Children) Council to raise awareness about the high levels of violence Aboriginal children and youth are experiencing, and to send a message that our children are sacred and that violence against them will not be tolerated.

Escorted by members of the RCMP and the Winnipeg Police Service,

approximately 300 people joined the Grandmother’s Council in the sacred walk that started at the Circle of Life Thunderbird House and ended at the Forks Oodena.

The Grandmothers Council have been meeting regularly since 2007 to plan events designed to raise awareness and to take action to end the high levels of abuse — including child incest and sexualized and racialized violence — that has been so devastating to our children, families and communities.

By all wearing red Ka Ni Kanichihk t-shirts, the staff and students were highly visible in the crowd. Ka Ni Kanichihk is honoured to play an integral role in support of our elder women leaders and to ensure that we are fully engaged in the protection of our children and youth.



* Photo: GPOC, Sept. 21/09. Aaron Pierre, photographer

Ka Ni Kanichick Inc. “Those Who Lead”

Aboriginal Mother Centre: Honouring Gifts

“We definitely believe that a program like Honouring Gifts is beneficial to both our organization and to the participant. It provides a back-up for assistance to the participants, as well as a career mentorship, which also builds communication. As for the organization, it provides a mentorship to the participants.” — Workplace Host

“I can commit myself more to my work, take it more seriously, adapt to situations better.”

“This program has helped so much in preparing to get employment. Without this program, I would be lost in finding employment.”

Honouring Gifts, an employment preparation and career exploration project that was funded by the City of Winnipeg, got underway in February 2009 with 18 young single mothers registering for the nine month project. The goal of the project was to provide a combination of skills specific training and workplace internships to support young women with little-or-no employment experience to discover their talents, abilities, interests and skills and to explore their personal and work goals.

During the classroom component of the project, young mothers participated in a variety of employability building skill development workshops, including Suicide Intervention Training, WHMIS, Food Handler’s Certificates and Manitoba’s Best

Customer Service Training. They also attended Ka Ni Kanichihk’s culturally-based Ways of Being Life Skills Training and participated in various culturally based activities. Children attended the Medicine Children’s Lodge, while their moms were in class or in the workplace.

Of the 18 young moms who registered, 9 completed the program, 3 attained employment, 6 returned to school and one became a new mom.

Sharon McIlraith, Team Leader
Erin Stranger, Lead Career Exploration Coach
Lawrence Angecone, Career Coach

Self Employment Program for Aboriginal Women

Three of the four women started SEPAW in October 2008 and have gone on to launch their respective businesses; one SEPAW program member entered the IOAA program to further her education. One graduate, who, upon entering the program, was unsure that her idea was viable, now has a very successful business in jewelry design and delivering jewelry making workshops. She has also become a great support to the program by assisting in the recruitment and mentoring of new students. Another graduate is now developing her business on clothing design and production.

As a precursor to starting her business of working with women who are involved in the child welfare system, a third graduate participated in an awareness-raising walk to Ottawa during August and September 2009.

Three students are set to graduate from the program and will be launching small business enterprises in northern delivery systems, dance classes and children’s clothing/products.

SEPAW meets the needs of Aboriginal women because we provide a unique combination of Aboriginal awareness and the “Ways of Being” curriculum together with business development. Women have reported that this approach to self employment provides them with the learning tools that are necessary to adapt to a changing environments — both within their own lives, and within their entrepreneurial pursuits.

SEPAW Team:
Sharon McIlraith, Team Leader
Nancy Kantor, Life Skills Coach



* Photo: SEPAW graduate Mindy Booker, Manitou Ahbee tradeshow.

7th Annual Report 2008/09

Restoring the Sacred

Aboriginal Women
Responding to the AIDS
Crisis (AWRAC)

“I’ve been in this program for four years now; I was in the second intake. The program has done so much for me in that time, including paying for my grade 12 graduation dress, getting my criminal record check, child abuse registry check, first aid/CPR. It has also provided me with reliable references to get me the job I have now as a youth/child support worker in Emergency Placement Shelters for CFS.”

Restoring the Sacred is a youth mentorship program that focuses on leadership development and youth empowerment for Aboriginal youth, ages 14 -21, who have relocated from northern and/or rural communities to attend High School in Winnipeg. The program was inspired by Aboriginal high school students who identified that having the support of a “buddy” who was knowledgeable about urban living would have helped to ease their transition to Winnipeg through positive social interaction and information sharing.

This year was one of change and challenge for both the RTS program and for the students who were involved. Staff departures in October 2008 made it challenging to maintain connections with mentors. However, with new youth coach facilitators on board in early 2009, a concerted effort was made to reconnect with previous mentors and identify new ones. This outreach effort has resulted in a significant increase in the number of mentors. Currently there are 15 trained mentors and 32 applicants waiting to be trained and matched with recently arrived youth from rural and Northern communities.

Despite these challenges, youth, mentors and mentees participated in a wide range of cultural, spiritual, educational, recreational and leisure activities designed to develop and deepen self-confidence, self-discipline, assertiveness, autonomy, independence and identity.

Students participated in the Spruce Woods Sundance and the Spirit of Giving Pow Wow, and also attended many sweat lodge and Yuwipi ceremonies. Youth also participated in the 2nd Annual Youth Peacebuilders Retreat and helped organize two very successful Open Houses. Through this cultural reconnection, many of RTS youth are interested in receiving their spirit names, as well as continuing their journey towards cultural reclamation.

Lionel Houston, Team Leader
Raena Baker Coach/Facilitator
Former staff Lindsay Hourie and Fred Breardy

AWRAC staff continues to meet and network with community organizations, including: Aboriginal Visioning; University of Manitoba Aboriginal Focus Programs; Nine Circles Health Centre; Main Street Project; Manitoba Harm Reduction; Manitoba PHA Caucus; and Connecting Community Coalition to discuss and develop plans of action to create HIV/AIDS awareness, resources, education and support.

AWRAC is partnering with Nine Circles Health Community Health Centre pilot program to bring rapid AIDS/HIV testing to satellite agencies in the community, where women live, are respected and are comfortable sharing and in being treated. This also helps to normalize sexual health and makes it convenient for women to access.

After a very successful launch of the DVD “Notebook Me Mengwa Maa Sinatae: Butterfly Patterns of Light,” the Medicine bundle, workshop and DVD viewing have been shared and received well by several Aboriginal women’s community organizations.

AWRAC’s workshops focus on sharing stories, experiences and information. The project coordinator facilitates the workshops and implements lifeskills training in response to DVD showings, which create new understandings that reflect an:

- Increased awareness that HIV/AIDS is a current & growing pandemic
- Increased understanding of HIV/AIDS related issues such as discrimination, poverty, addictions, sexism, racism and access to services
- Increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention

AWRAC collaborated with Connecting Communities Coalition to assist in a interactive educational event for AIDS awareness day, which took place on July 18, 2009 at Central Park. This successful event was well attended by the general public and media.

AWRAC’s project coordinator joined Nine Circles staff and approximately 250 other individuals in the 2009 Scotia Bank AIDS Walk for Life in support of Winnipeggers living with or affected with HIV/AIDS.

Linda Lamirande, AWRAC Project Coordinator



* Photo: Linda Lamirande and Petanacoot, Spiritual Cultural Advisory Nine Circles.



* Photo: National Day of Healing and Reconciliation, May 24, 2009. Aaron Pierre, photographer.



Capital Expansion Project: Artist's/architect's rendering.

United Way Update

Once again, the goal of 100 per cent staff participation in the annual United Way campaign was achieved, and the fundraising goal surpassed! In recognition of increasing our United Way donation by 25 per cent over the previous year, Ka Ni Kanichihk received a Quantum Leap Award.

We are committed to our relationship with the United Way, and we thank all the staff and community members who continue to help us to support this relationship by helping us to put the “fun” in fundraising.

Congratulations to our committee members for making this year's campaign successful and enjoyable: Sharon McIlraith, Charlet Millen, Jarred Baker, Cora Morgan, Amanda Machalek and Linda Lamirande.

Sexually Exploited Youth Coalition

The SEY Coalition continued to meet regularly throughout 2008/09 to discuss strategies to keep sexually exploited youth safe. The membership of the coalition is extensive and represents the majority of those organizations working in the this sector. It was formed following the brutal murder of Fonessa Bruyere in August 2007. Around the same time, Ka Ni Kanichihk organized a press conference calling on the Province to form a police/citizen task force dedicated to investigate the high numbers of missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

In November 2008, Minister of Family Services and Housing Gord Macintosh announced “Tracia's Trust”— the second phase of the Provincial Strategy on Sexual Exploitation. The strategy was named to honour the memory of Tracia Owens, a 14 year old girl from Berens River First Nation who ended her life prematurely in August 2005. The strategy involves a number of initiatives, including training, prevention programming, increased safe housing capacity and a coordinated outreach approach called Street Reach.

The Hands of Mother Earth Project, a partnership between Ma Mawi Chi Itata and Ka Ni Kanichihk to develop a Rural Healing Lodge was endorsed by the SEY Coalition and was approved by FH & H recently.

Capital Expansion Project

Ka Ni Kanichihk is embarking on Phase 2 of its Capital Expansion Project. This fundraising project will raise approximately \$3 M and will used to build a second floor on our current property. This expansion will double our current capacity to provide integrated and quality programs and services to our community. The new development will include an enhanced capacity to provide day care services, a commercial kitchen for successful social enterprise projects, increased training space to accommodate new programs, a ceremonial space, increased office capacity and increased emergency housing capacity.

Medicine Children's Lodge

The name for Ka Ni Kanichihk's newly licensed daycare is a reflection of a traditional teaching that instructs that the children that are raised by grandparents are “medicine” because their very presence continues to challenge, inspire and motivate.

The Medicine Children's Lodge is licensed for 4 infant and 12 preschooler spaces primarily to children whose parents are involved in Ka Ni Kanichihk's programs. This service has already demonstrated its effectiveness by increased enrollment, participation, attendance and completion rates among students. Ka Ni Kanichihk acknowledges Cora Morgan for her role in securing the liscense.

Circle of Courage Program

“I love it out here. No sirens, no gun shots. In the city I am scared every time I leave my house” — Youth participant at a cultural camp.

“As a Probation Officer, I look for resources that are both culturally appropriate and relevant. Recently, I had two clients attending the Circle of Courage and both have completed their probation orders successfully. I give credit to Lionel, who connected with them and showed them a respectful direction to follow. Both boys participated in sweats, Sundance and other ceremonies.”

A graduation ceremony has held in September to honour the first youth who was registered in the Circle of Courage program. In addition to the family, friends; peers; funders; evaluators; Council members and staff; Winnipeg's Chief of Police Keith McCaskill; and members of the Grandmothers Protecting our Children Council were on hand.

COCP embraces Lakota elder Dr. Martin Brokenleg's youth centered curriculum to provide a range of supports, training and culturally based activities to 15 young men, ages 14-18 years old. Providing youth with the opportunity to experience the spirit of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity has proven to be an effective approach.

During the year, youth participated in a wide variety of recreational, academic and traditional teachings, lifeskills training and cultural activities.

Youth attended both the Spruce Woods Sundance and the Team Leader's Sundance and learned about their roles as Oshkaabewis by helping to build the arbour, setting-up tipis and being fire keepers. They also sat at the drum and learned to sing sundance songs and the protocol of the sundance. During the summer, youth and staff spent time in Peguis picking sweetgrass and another day picking sage.

This past summer, the youth also attended a week long summer camp hosted by Anishnaabe elder Gary Ravin and participated in and daily teachings and sweatlodge ceremonies. They also visited an island where ceremonies were held and learned about the medicines that can be used to treat H1N1.

Throughout the year, the youth went on many outings including Little Mountain Park, the Forks, and Birds Hill. They attended Moose hockey games, Bombers football games and Goldeyes baseball games and worked out weekly at the Cindy Klassen Recreation centre.

Currently 15 youth are actively enrolled in the program while 26 are on a waiting list.

Lionel Houston, Team Leader
 Coach/Facilitators: Terry Huppe-Jesse Morrisseau
 Administrative Assistant: Tilman Goetting
 Bill Crompton, Traditional Teacher
 Former staff: Jessie McKay, Earl Thomas, Jessica Didychuk



*Photo: “Uncle Bill” helps COCP participant make a drum.

Our Programs & Services

Information & Office Administration Assistant

In the 2008/09 program year, IOAA achieved an 82 per cent program student completion rate! Congratulations to both students and staff for achieving this milestone.

Relatives, friends, funders, community members and Ka Ni Kanichihk staff were in attendance at the graduation ceremony in May 2009 to honor the 18 graduates of the Red River Certified Information and Office Administrative Assistant Program. Four of the graduates were awarded Red River College “honor role” status. Three graduates are now enrolled in the second year of Red River College’s Computer Applications for Business Program and report that their competency levels are comparable with those students who attended Red River’s first year program, thereby affirming that Ka Ni Kanichihk’s program is equivalent to that delivered by the College. One student who did not graduate with her class enrolled in the 2009/10 class to complete her studies and will graduate in 2010.

As one class was ending, another one began with 23 new and bright faces arriving on our doorstep in April 2009 to begin their journey towards education and future employment. In addition to the academic curriculum, students participated in cultural activities, including sage picking and sweat lodge and pipe ceremonies. The women also made hand drums and learned how to take care of the drum.

Based on feedback and evaluation from students, the IOAA team made some curriculum and programming adjustments to strengthen the program. With a \$15,000 grant from the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement–Aboriginal Partnership Committee, Ka Ni Kanichihk was able to upgrade its computers and software. As a result, students are prepared for the workplace using the most up to date programs. The computer course was expanded by adding IT applications, including hardware and software installation and troubleshooting.

The Business Communications course was also adapted to include greater practical skills acquisition

and involves professionals working in the field, including former students.

We look forward to seeing this present group of students spread their wings and fly on their own, knowing that their Ka Ni Kanichihk family will always be here to support their needs.

IOAA is now one of the many Neeginan Institute of Technology programs.

- IOAA Team**
Sharon McIlraith, Team Leader
- Nathan Vreyborg, Math/Computer Instructor/Employment Facilitator
 - Nancy Kantor, Life Skills Coach
 - Shannon Cormier, Business Communications/Office Procedures Instructor
 - Paula Hendrickson, Program Developer/Instructor (Dec. 2008)
 - Tammy Shone, Computer Instructor (Jan. 2009)
 - Linda Lamirande, Life Skills Coach/Case Manager (April 2009)



* Photo: IOAA students (L-R): Trisha Sinclair, Ellen Cook, Jennifer Coutu and Toni Kipling.

Special Visitors: Chrisjohn, Yee, Mandamin

Three very dynamic and inspirational Indigenous leaders visited Winnipeg and Ka Ni Kanichihk and shared their knowledge, wisdom and spirit with us.

In May 2009, Ka Ni Kanichihk welcomed Dr. Roland Chrisjohn (Oneida Nation) to Winnipeg, and, during the four days he spent here, he delivered two major presentations on the continuing legacy of colonial history, entitled “What If The Holocaust Never Ended” to approximately 250 people. Dr. Chrisjohn teaches Native Studies at St. Thomas University and is the author of “The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada.” Dr. Chrisjohn also spent time with Ka Ni Ka Ni Kanichihk staff and participants.

In June 2009, Mohawk youth leader, writer, educator and organizer Jessica Yee visited Ka Ni Kanichihk and shared information related to healthy sexuality, cultural competency, youth empowerment, reproductive justice and sex positivity with about 40 youth. Jessica is the founder and director of the Native Youth Sexual Health Network.

Also in June, Grandmother Josephine Mandamin, Anishnaabe and founder of the Great Lakes Mother Earth Water Walk, visited Ka Ni Kanichihk, and, together with other Anishnaabe Ikwe, conducted a water ceremony at Ka Ni Kanichihk. Later that day, Josephine was the keynote speaker at the 2009 Keeping the Fires Burning Ceremony and shared her story about how she was “moved by the spirits” to speak out for the water. “The water is sick and people need to really fight for that water, to speak for that water and to love that water” says Grandmother Josephine.



* Photo: “Josephine Mandamin,” KFB, June 18/09. Aaron Pierre, photographer

Ka Ni Kanichihk: A Safe Harbour

Ka Ni Kanichihk is now a community organizer with the “Safe Harbour: Respect for All National Diversity Initiative.” The role of the community organizer is to deliver Safe Harbour Orientations to local businesses and agencies and invite them to commit to the three principles including:

1. Equitable treatment: Treating all clients and/or customers in an equitable manner. If a concern is expressed regarding a lack of equitable treatment, staff take this concern seriously and take steps to address it.
2. Providing a “Safe Harbour”: Being a temporary and immediate safe place where someone who has experienced mistreatment will receive a helping hand such as a place to sit, a telephone to use and information about how to seek further assistance.

3. Prepared Employers/Employees: Preparing all employers/employees to remain aware of the value of diversity, deal effectively with discriminatory remarks (or acts when they arise), and ensure that marginalized community members feel welcomed in their organization.

Participants then go back to their workplace to share the key commitments and approach with their colleagues, supported by a Participant’s Workbook and promotional materials. Their workplace is then designated as a Safe Harbour-certified location with the colourful window decal, a certificate and other signage to announce to the community that they are committed to standing up against racism and hate and to promoting diversity.

Ka Ni Kanichihk: Research Update

This year, Ka Ni Kanichihk & WRHA came together to combine strengths and resources in a research project entitled “Learning From Aboriginal Peoples with Diabetes.”

- The goals of this research are:
- to gain understanding and insight into Aboriginal people’s health care experiences
 - to develop action plans for health system improvement based on those shared experiences
 - to develop research capacity in Aboriginal communities

The Spence Neighbourhood Community Research Hub was employed to conduct interviews and participated in the interpretation, debriefing and dissemination of findings back to community.

Leslie Spillett and research assistant Linda Lamirande presented the partnership process and the common threads of the participants’ experiences to The National Diabetes Conference (“Restoring Balance”) in Ottawa, March 2009.

Dr. Ingrid Botting & Linda Lamirande also presented at The Canadian Public Health Association conference in Winnipeg, June 2009.

Other activities included action planning and “next step” meetings — this, together with report findings and summarizations.

Ka Ni Kanichihk Firsts!

The Medicine Children’s Lodge received its first Provincial Day Care License on August 18, 2009. Miigwetch to Anthony Whitford, Bonnie McKay, Sharon McIlraith, Cora Morgan, Desiree Gilbert & Erin Stranger for your perseverance and dedication to make this happen.

To address both safety and transportation concerns, Ka Ni Kanichihk purchased its first van: a seven passenger Pontiac Montana.

“The Leader’s Reader,” Ka Ni Kanichihk’s newsletter, made its first debut in October 2009. Thanks to the outstanding work of our newsletter team Katherine Goodmanson, Trisha Sinclair, Nathan Vreyborg and Sharon McIlraith and the cooperation of all of its contributors.

Ka Ni Kanichihk’s Health Plan was improved, and for the first time includes both long term disability and a group Registered Retirement Savings Plan.

Ka Ni Kanichihk’s Team Leaders developed an Indigenous logic model based on traditional values and teachings.

Sherryl Blacksmith was the recipient of the first “Oscar Lathlin Memorial Award” and was recognized for her dedication to preserving and protecting traditional knowledge. This award was created by Ka Ni Ka Ni Kanichihk’s Council to recognize the lifetime achievements of Oscar Lathlin, Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs who passed to the spirit world on November 2, 2009.

In the pursuit of health and wellness, the first Walking Club started off strong with staff and program participants going for a brisk walk during daily breaks. Walking Club members were provided with pedometers to keep track of their fitness.

Staff signed up for the “Lighten Up!” challenge — another initiative that promoted healthy eating, exercise and wellness through education, support and fun. Anthony Whitford was the first “Lighten Up” winner.

Ka Ni Kanichihk hired its first Oshkaabewis (Traditional Helper) to ensure that traditional values, knowledge and practice are embedded

within our programs. Welcome Heather Houston!

New computers were purchased for both the IOAA and SEPAW classrooms thanks to the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement.

Ka Ni Kanichihk’s Executive Director, Leslie Spillett, was the first recipient of the Aboriginal Social Workers in Manitoba “Lifetime Career Achievement and Contribution to the Field of Aboriginal Social Work.”

The first youth to register in the Circle of Courage Program was also the first to graduate in October 2009. Congratulations, Jessie!

Eighteen young mothers, the first group of participants in the first Honoring Gifts program, were also the first to graduate and have gone on to further education or employment.

Ka Ni Kanichihk — in partnership with sister community organizations, including West Broadway Community Centre, Onashowawin, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Turtle Lodge — sponsored its first “feeding the spirit” community pow wow.

The Butterflies Club, a project for girls between the ages of 9 and 12, was funded for three years by the Canadian Women’s Foundation. The first group of 18 girls began in September 2009.

As part of our employee led United Way Campaign, our first Feeding the Spirit fundraiser was held, and over 200 community members were able to participate in a community feast.

In the spirit of health and wellness, participants and staff in both the IOAA and SEPAW classes now begin the day with a daily exercise routine, which consists of mild aerobics, stretching, yoga, isometric and strength training exercises.

The first flu clinic was held in November 2008 with over 60 students, staff and community members getting an annual flu shot.



* Photo: KFB, June 18/09. Aaron Pierre, photographer.



* Photo: Medicine Children’s Lodge. Aaron Pierre, photographer.