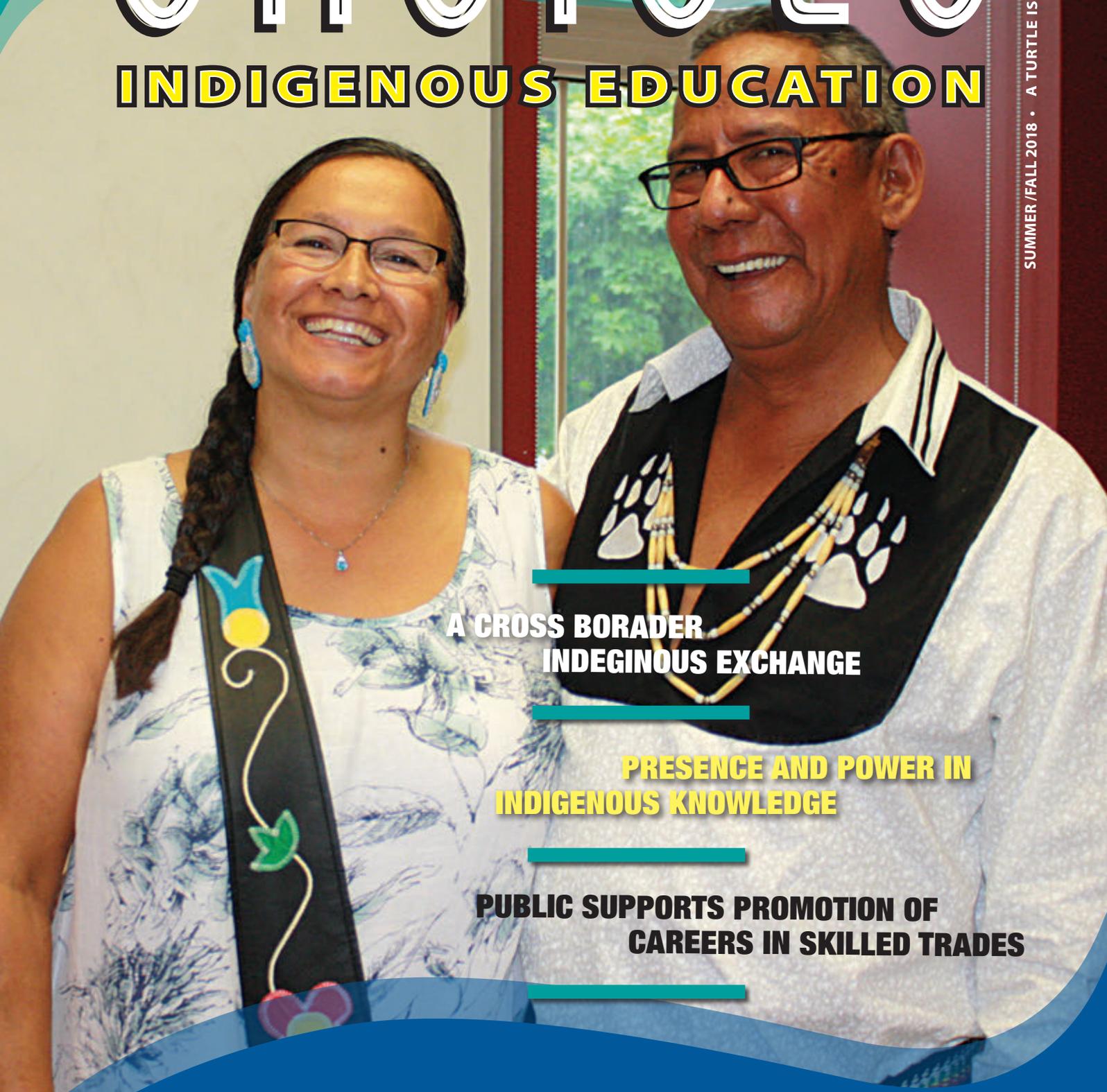


# CHOICES

## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

SUMMER/FALL 2018 • A TURTLE ISLAND NEWS PUBLICATION



**A CROSS BORDER  
INDEGINOUS EXCHANGE**

**PRESENCE AND POWER IN  
INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE**

**PUBLIC SUPPORTS PROMOTION OF  
CAREERS IN SKILLED TRADES**

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## **Workshop presenters:**

*Two of the presenters at the  
Presence and Power in Indig-  
enous Knowledge workshop  
held at Wilfrid Laurier Univer-  
sity's Faculty of Social Work  
in downtown Kitchener.*

*For more of the article  
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# & Content

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- 10** 3 steps in planning your future career ...

## **She:koh Welcome to Choices**

Choices is all about ab-  
original youth, their future  
and giving them career path  
choices.

In planning our magazine  
we spoke to youth about what  
is important to them and the  
results were resoundingly  
clear they want to build a  
brighter future.

Whether they are from the  
north or south, east or west,  
aboriginal youth and young  
adults told us, they want to  
improve not just their lives,

but the lives of their fami-  
lies and friends.

So our new magazine is  
geared to support our youth  
and features choices along  
their educational path that  
we hope will help them make  
their decisions for a brighter  
future.

With the aboriginal popu-  
lation the fastest growing  
in the country, Turtle Island  
News Publications is reaching  
out to our youth in numbers  
that no other publications  
have.

We firmly believe in our  
youth. They are indeed tomor-  
row's leaders who will make

## PUBLISHER'S

## Letter

choices today that  
will set the future of  
our nations and their  
energy is exhilarating.

Their caring for  
their communities  
and people is touching. They  
truly want a better tomorrow.

We hope that with the  
help of Choices, and our edu-  
cational partners and corpo-  
ration supporters our youth  
will be able to plan their path  
to a brighter future for them-  
selves and our extended com-  
munities.

So welcome to Choices,  
a new frontier for, and with  
aboriginal youth!



# Office of Indigenous Initiatives

BE A PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL

The Office of Indigenous Initiatives is **committed** to having Laurier be an **extraordinary** and **empowering** experience for all Indigenous students. We believe that education, in a **welcoming** environment, that **honours Indigenous people**, is the **path** for our people to be all that we can be. We are here to assist you in all areas of life as students and to ensure you have **the best student experience** that university can offer.

– Jean Becker

Senior Advisor: Indigenous Initiatives

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- Indigenous Field of Study, MSW Program, Kitchener Location
- Indigenous Studies combined major, option and minor, Brantford Campus

For more information come and see us or check out our website to view our monthly schedule of events!

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## Indigenous Student Centres Support Services

Access to smudging • Community outreach • Resource Library  
 Scholarship and bursary assistance • Computer and wifi access  
 Quiet Study Room • Admissions assistance • SEEDS Program  
 Indigenous Recruitment & Retention • Student Leadership Teams  
 Resources for faculty and staff • Advocacy and referrals  
 Academic and personal counseling • Visiting Elders Program  
 Peer Mentor Program • Indigenous Student Association (ISA)  
 Regular gatherings and feasts • Community Garden



[wlu.ca/indigenous](https://www.wlu.ca/indigenous)

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# A Cross Border Indigenous Exchange

that develops curriculum from  
an Indigenous student-driven lens

It will be an exchange program unlike any other. In winter 2019, three Indigenous students from Wilfrid Laurier University and three Indigenous students from Syracuse University in New York will trade places physically but come together to create Indigenous curriculum content.

The Indigenous Mobility and Curriculum Across Borders program in partnership with Laurier, three American universities, and two Indigenous partner organizations is proud to present an exciting exchange program! Thanks to a grant from Santander Bank through the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund, Indigenous students from our community will have access to a life-changing experience. A curriculum development project that will see students working with academic and community mentors from Canada and the US will help shape what future students learn about Indigenous peoples.

The exchange is the brainchild of Laurier professors Dr. Kevin Spooner and Dr. Lucy Luccisano who wrote the proposal

and worked with Laurier Indigenous Initiatives and Indigenous studies to develop the idea. Spooner and Luccisano were aware that Indigenous students don't tend to participate in exchange programs and they were interested in doing something to fill gaps left by typical exchange programs.

"We hadn't in the past seen many Indigenous students applying to go on exchange, so that's a gap," says Luccisano. "Also, usually students go on their own and it's a very individual experience. We wanted to do something different."

Most of the costs to students are covered through the one-time Santander grant, as well as other funding and in-kind support from the partners and several Laurier departments. The partners in the exchange are hoping to make the exchange sustainable for the future.

The three Laurier students will be in Syracuse together. While the three Syracuse students may go to Laurier's Brantford or Waterloo campus depending on their majors, all six participating students will

maintain close contact as they work on their curriculum development projects, for which they will receive one course credit. At the end of the term, all students will assemble in Waterloo to present their work at a one-day symposium hosted by Laurier.

The planning team developed the vision of a curriculum development project that would see students working with academic and community mentors. Syracuse University became the primary partner and the University of Buffalo (State University of New York), Cornell University, Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford and Skä•noñh - Great Law of Peace Center in Liverpool, New York, also came on board to offer the students resources and mentors.

The result of this exchange will be six online curriculum modules that can be used as resources and incorporated into courses at any of the partner institutions. Students will also be able to access the content for research purposes. Erin Hodson, Indigenous curriculum specialist at Laurier hopes

the student-developed content will result in non-Indigenous students learning more about Indigenous issues and future Indigenous students seeing themselves better reflected and valued in class.

"Nobody knows better what an Indigenous student needs at a postsecondary institution than another Indigenous student," says Hodson.

Students at both universities will be well supported with access to Indigenous student services provided by each institution. Laurier's department of Indigenous student services offers a variety of supports on the Brantford and Waterloo campuses, including academic and personal counselling, visiting elders, soup and fry bread lunches, Indigenous peer mentors, community gardens, and access to smudging and traditional medicines. Syracuse has similar resources and services for Indigenous students.

*Indigenous students from Wilfrid Laurier University in any faculty interested in applying for the exchange program should contact [indigenous@wlu.ca](mailto:indigenous@wlu.ca) for more information.*

# Presence and Power in Indigenous Knowledge

## Laurier workshop learns

By Susannah Schmidt  
Writer

### Presence and Power.

Those two aspects of Indigenous knowledge were shared and affirmed at a conference at Wilfrid Laurier University's Faculty of Social Work in downtown Kitchener recently. About 150 people from universities, the community at large, and social service providers attended.

"We wanted to recognize the presence and power of Indigenous knowledge in people's lives, and that it exists in different forms," said Dr. Kathy Absolon, an organizer of After Canada 150: Restoring Indigenous Knowledge Gathering & Building Community Connections. Absolon is Director of the Centre for Indigegogy and a professor in faculty of social work.

Haudeonosaunee and Anishinaabee Elders, youth, and diverse knowledge keepers shared teachings or led workshops for the two day workshops.

Absolon said these were being shared as "our offering to the city."

"Everyone is working hard... at carrying these bundles in a good way."

Drummer and singer Cara Loft opened the day with a Mi'kmaq Welcome Song, which she learned from Melissa Ireland, as participants were invited

to signal their desire to smudge.

Peter Isaacs then welcomed people to Six Nations territory and offered a keynote address. The Mohawk Knowledge Keeper stood at the front of the room, periodically tapping or waving his wooden cane for emphasis. He gathered listeners to both a quiet hush and bouts of laughter through his talk, A Good Mind Philosophy to Restoring Indigenous Knowledge.

Isaacs reflected on the meaning of the gathering for Indigenous people right now.

"I am honoured all of you have come to spend part of your day here because when we talk about reconciliation, we don't have to reconcile anything. We don't have any work to do in that regard. The majority of the work has to come from the younger brother side, the Europeans. They have to decide how to carry that out."

"[W]e have to decide how to use words to put our minds together," for our part, he said, to live in a good way.

Isaacs shared a Mohawk address, and reflected in English on traditional teachings.

"We as human beings are sacred. We deserve that same love and protection [as the land and wa-

ter]."

He said that the old people would tell him when you see old friends you have not seen for some time, greet them. He talked about various parts of creation such as the Earth, the medicines, the water, and "the sustainers."

"For us a very important aspect is our sustainers. We think about three foods that are very important for our people," he said: corn, bean, and squash. "We think of these three things as being leaders."

"I am going to be watching for them when I put in my evaluation," he joked.

Isaacs told the crowd English was his first language, but when he was "re-learning" Mohawk with his teacher Jake Thomas "it was... easy" because his Mohawk-speaking grandmother spoke the language regularly when he was little. Thomas,

"That's where a true interpretation can be found. When you do that, people will be able to get a better understanding of how we are connected to things."

"In our understanding of creation, we will understand we were created last. Everything that was created before us is like an ancestor to us," he said.

"Move slowly with that knowledge... [and] focus on these things you can use in your life. Carry with you these words that come before everything."

Loft, who coordinates the Masters of Social Work Indigenous Field of Study program, said she is beginning an MA program in cultural analysis and social theory that will allow her to explore "how we as Indigenous people mobilize heart-space activism."

"The elders in our community have said the Creator loves song the best as a prayer. . . I see song as

**"Move slowly with that knowledge... [and] focus on these things you can use in your life. Carry with you these words that come before everything." - Peter Isaacs**

he said, was "an excellent teacher, a very kind man, and very funny."

"For anybody who wants to understand our people, go and study the language."

one of my gifts and I get that nurturing [from it]," said the singer from Tyendinaga.

"I enjoy singing with a group of people. There's a spirit to these songs."

# Public supports promotion of careers in skilled trades



A recent Ipsos Reid poll indicates Ontarians are overwhelmingly in favour of the promotion of skilled trades as a viable

career choice. The poll shows that 96% of Ontario residents are supportive of the Ontario College of Trades' (the

College) mandate to promote the skilled trades to young people and under-represented groups. The College is the regulatory body for the province's skilled trades industry.

"Our belief is that a career in the skilled trades should be a first-choice for more youth, for Aboriginals, new Canadians, and for those who are interested in a second career," says the College's CEO, David Tsubouchi. "And this poll shows that Ontarians are with us."

Some experts suggest that there is a looming skilled trades shortage in Canada that could lead

to major economic consequences.

"Our economy is built on the skilled trades, and if we want to remain competitive, we must develop a highly-trained, highly-skilled workforce," Tsubouchi points out.

Anyone interested in a skilled trades career is encouraged to visit [www.earnwhileyoulearn.ca](http://www.earnwhileyoulearn.ca), the College's youth-targeted website. This forum provides young people with relevant information on how to begin an apprenticeship in Ontario and the benefits of a career in the skilled trades. -(NC)-

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- Have an experience you'd like to share as an Aboriginal student or graduate we'd love to hear from you.  
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education



# Rebecca Jamieson Ogwehoweh Language Degree

## Convocation Speech

June 7, 2018

**S**ge:no swagwegoh. Hello everyone and welcome. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you all –friends, family and loved ones – for joining us here on this auspicious occasion. Last year on this day, Six Nations Polytechnic students made history by becoming the first class of graduates from the Bachelor of Arts in Ogwehoweh Languages program and this year, I'm proud to say that we have 9 more students to add to that group of esteemed alumni.

The journey to this point has been long and arduous but well worth it. Shortly after opening in 1993, SNP staff embarked on the unique mission to achieve international distinction for excellence in Indigenous education, Indigenous language revitalization and the continuance of Indigenous knowledge.

Our work on and toward this mission can be seen not only in the Ogwehoweh Language degree, but also in the recent legislative announcement by Ontario to create a third and unique Indigenous pillar of post-secondary education and training in addition to publicly funded colleges and universities. This opens doors for our institution in terms of offering and granting degrees meaning our students will have equal opportunities to ob-



Rebecca Jamieson giving her convocation speech

**“Six Nations Polytechnic will continue to work towards the revitalization of Hodinohso:ni languages and culture. Days like today give me hope for the future and reinforce our community's commitment to preserving Hodinohso:ni knowledge. I'd like to congratulate all of the students and commend them for their hard work and dedication. This is only the beginning and it's a very promising start.”**

Rebecca Jamieson

President/CEO of Six Nations Polytechnic

**Six Nations Polytechnic (SNP) celebrates convocation of language degree  
SNP is the only Indigenous institute to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Ogwehoweh Languages**

tain post-secondary education right here at home.

Each of the six languages spoken in our community is on the list of languages that are in critical danger, as identified by the United Nations. Therefore, it's of the utmost importance that we at Six Nations Polytechnic, and in the Six Nations community, do everything

in our power to prevent our languages from being lost, because if that were ever to happen, our culture and our way of life would also be at risk.

(Turn to students) Because of your dedication to the Bachelor of Arts in Ogwehoweh languages degree there will be more Mohawk and Cayuga teachers.

Because of the time spent away from your families, more children will be raised knowing how to speak their language. Because of your decision to go back to school, you are now able to carry on a conversation in Kanien'kéha or Gayogohono. (pause) Because of your commitment to this program, our community is one step closer to revitalizing our languages.

The opportunities for you all are truly endless. With this degree you can do anything you want to do; be anything you want to be. You can teach, write curriculum, develop policies, create films, author books, translate, or do research; all within and for the language. My only hope is that your passion for learning and carrying the knowledge will never fade, and that you will always remember your own personal mission in this life. So I want every one of you in the graduating class to make a promise today. When you walk across this stage, promise that you will not lose hope in the face of adversity; that you will be resilient and steadfast even during your greatest challenges; and most importantly, no matter what, promise that you will keep speaking the language.

On behalf of all of the staff here at Six Nations Polytechnic, I have only one thing left to say: **oya:nre.**

# 3 steps in planning for your future career

**Evolving market trends and changing industries make us wonder how we can stay ahead of the game. What can we do to ensure our talents will be needed in the future?**

Whether you're looking to future-proof your own career or give advice to your kids in post-secondary school, here are some smart ways to boost a resume and keep it relevant for years to come.

**Always keep learning.** Gone are the days when you got your degree and never looked back. Today, continuous education is essential for staying com-

petitive. Fortunately, there are many ways to upgrade your skills. Depending on your time and budget, you can take courses towards a certificate, join a workshop, or participate in an intensive bootcamp. Many workplaces also have programs to help pay for all or part of continuous education in the field.

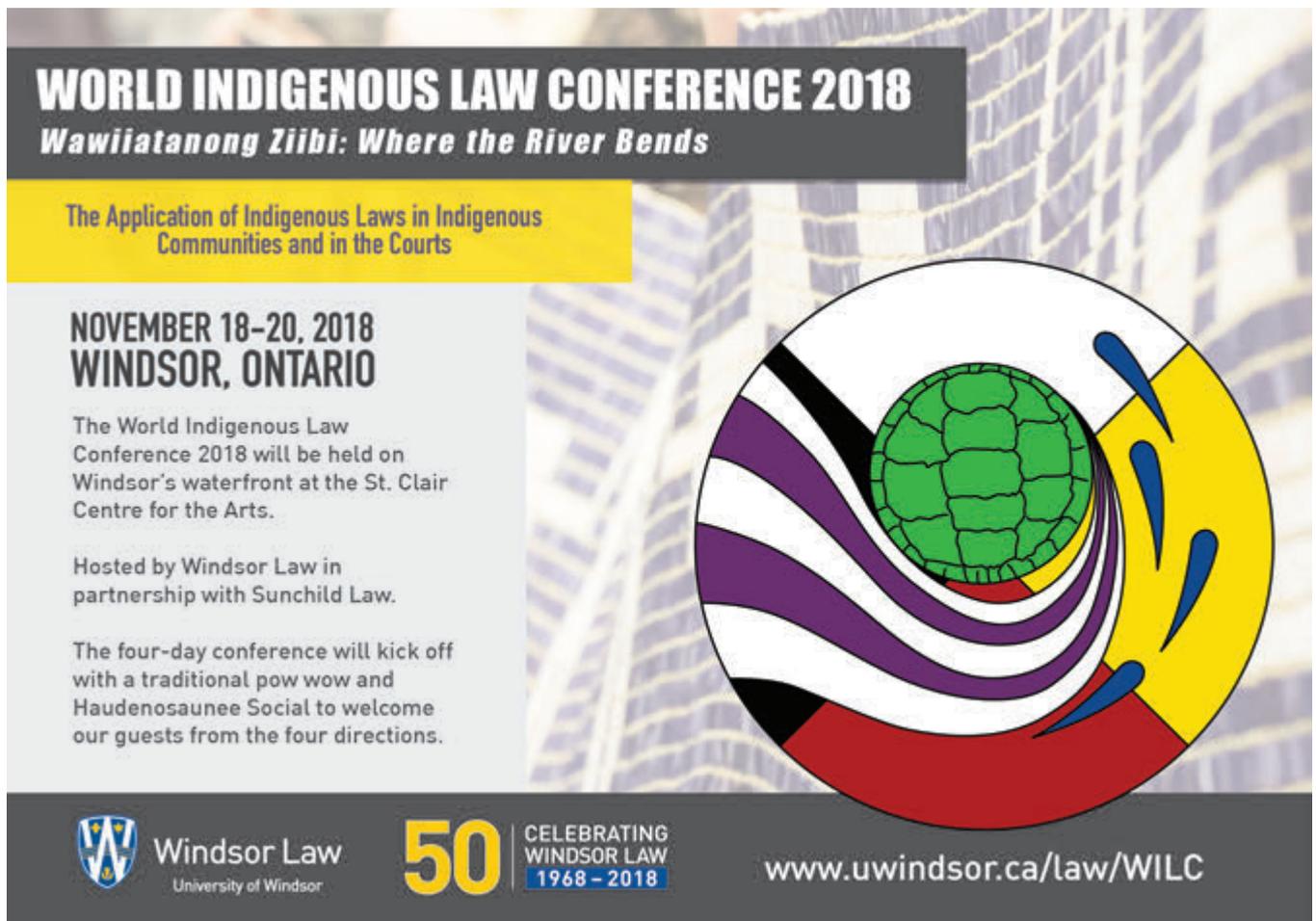
**Get international experience.** Working abroad can prepare you to excel in the global economy and help you stand out from the rest. You'll also gain skills and a unique cultural perspective that can help with both personal and professional development. Research

backs this up, as young people with international experience are more likely to be employed later on. A great resource for getting work permits quicker and easier is International Experience Canada, a government program that allows youth ages 18 to 35 to work and travel abroad for up to two years in one of more than 30 partner countries and territories.

**Build your brand.** No matter what field you're currently in or plan to be in, professionals in today's job market need to understand marketing and branding. This means you need to be mindful of your online presence

and work at improving it. Think about what you post on social media and keep your LinkedIn profile up to date. You'll also want to take steps to establish yourself as a thought leader and expert in your industry by networking and publishing articles on relevant trends and topics (even if it is just on your LinkedIn page or blog). Having people know about you and your abilities will be the key to future jobs, so start paving the way for those opportunities now.

Find more information on work and travel abroad at [canada.ca/iec](http://canada.ca/iec). -NC-



**WORLD INDIGENOUS LAW CONFERENCE 2018**  
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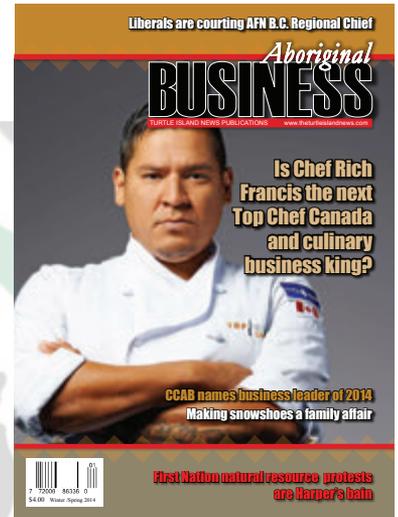
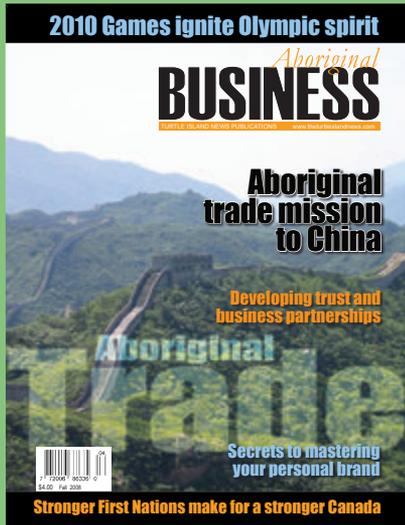
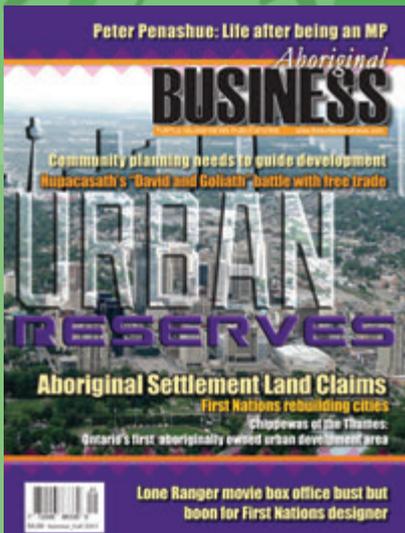
The four-day conference will kick off with a traditional pow wow and Haudenosaunee Social to welcome our guests from the four directions.

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