

# PICKING UP THE JOURNEY – INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

November 1 – 3, 2022, London, Ontario

Ontario Native  
Education  
Counselling  
Association  
Post-Secondary  
Conference  
Report

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**ONECA**

The Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (ONECA), incorporated in 1985, is an organization comprised of First Nation Education Counsellors. ONECA is founded upon principles that recognize that, although a variety of counselling and educational tools and programs exist in Ontario, the development of Native communities requires tools and programs designed specifically to improving Native Counselling and Education services.

ONECA is an organization of Native Education Counselling Professionals in Ontario which values and utilizes its’ collective knowledge, wisdom & respect to strengthen the spirit of self for the well-being of others. To be as the creator meant us to be, to: “Soar like Eagles.”

# ONECA PSE Fall Gathering

## Picking up the Journey – Indigenous Education in a Changing Environment

### Final Program at-a-Glance

**November 1 – 3, 2022**

**Four Points by Sheridan, 1150 Wellington Road South, London, Ontario**

#### **Tuesday, November 1**

7:45 - 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00	Greetings, Opening Remarks, Review of Agenda
9:00 – 10:15	Keynote – Picking up the Journey - Indigenous Education in a Changing Environment, Dr. Sheila Coté Meek
	Aha Moments and Mystery Prizes
10:15 -10:30	Nutrition Break
10:30 – 12:00	The Way Forward in Indigenous Education (panel) – Julia Candlish, Director of Education, Chiefs of Ontario and Bernadette Wabie, Senior Education Officer, Indigenous Services Canada, Ontario Region
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch Break
1:00 – 2:30	The Way Forward in Indigenous Education (panel) – Barry McCarten, Director, Indigenous Education Branch, PSE Division, Ministry of Colleges and Universities; Carolyn Hepburn, Indigenous Peoples Education Council, Colleges Ontario; and Shylo Elmayan, Council of Ontario Universities Regional Reference Group on Aboriginal Education
2:30 – 3:00	Nutrition Break
3:00 – 4:30	Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Navigating between the “Ship” and the “Canoe:” An Indigenous perspective for Indigenous student success in post-secondary, Dr. Darren Thomas</li> <li>- Indigenous Wellness Framework/Wellness Assessment, Mary Deleary</li> <li>- Supporting Supports for Students with Disabilities in a Post Secondary Environment with Jennifer Meksula</li> </ul>

## Wednesday, November 2

7:45 - 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 – 8:45	Greetings, Recap Day 1, Review of Agenda
8:45 – 10:15	Student Survey Results re: Careers in the Food and Beverage Industry – Lorraine Pitawanakwat, ONECA
10:15 -10:30	Nutrition Break
10:30 – 12:00	Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gizhewaatisiwin (Kindness) – Essential for Success, Stephanie Stephens</li> <li>- Psychoeducational Assessments: Why they are important and how to access them, Beth Pollock</li> <li>- Supporting Indigenous Students, for Educators and Influencers, Roxane Shawana and Colter Assiniwai</li> <li>- Healing, Wellness and Meditation, Michelle Thomas</li> </ul>
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch Break
1:00 – 2:30	Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why Indigenous Community Research Matters, Rick Monture</li> <li>- Healing, Wellness and Meditation, Michelle Thomas</li> <li>- The Way Forward: Responding to Community, Sara General</li> <li>- Supporting Indigenous Student Transitions - Holly Groome</li> </ul>
2:30 – 3:00	Nutrition Break
3:00 – 4:30	Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trauma-Informed Practice/Building Resilience, Stephanie Stephens</li> <li>- Ontario Student Access Program, Hannah Vanderbosch</li> <li>- Reflective Practice, Sheryl Ann Third</li> <li>- Indigenous Helper Wellness: Building Skills for Self-Care, Louis Busch</li> </ul>
6:00 – 10:00	Dinner and Entertainment - Comedian Ryan McMahon

## Thursday, November 3

7:45 - 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00	Greetings, Recap Day 2, Review of Agenda
9:00 – 10:30	Utilizing the Survey Results: ONECA 2022 Survey of Indigenous Post-Secondary Students, Lead Facilitator, Karihwakeron Tim Thompson
10:30 -10:45	Nutrition Break
10:45 – 12:15	Utilizing the Survey Results (continues)
12:15 – 1:00	Lunch Break
1:00 – 2:30	Facilitated Network Sessions – Good news, creative solutions, challenges and opportunities
2:30 – 2:45	Nutrition Break
2:45 -3:30	Evaluations, Next Steps, Closing

### Notes:

- The PSE Fall Gathering Program Guide complete with presenter descriptions and biographies, was printed as a separate document.
- One workshop was added after the conference program was printed and one workshop was cancelled due to illness of the presenters.
- Presentations/information that were made available to ONECA are available on the website.

## Day 1 – November 1, 2022

### Plenary Sessions

The conference started with a warm welcome for keynote presenter Dr. Sheila Coté Meek who addressed the conference theme: Picking up the Journey - Indigenous Education in a Changing Environment.

In closing this presentation, Dr. Coté Meek left participants with these final thoughts:



“I know our ancestors faced many challenges.  
I know we all face many challenges in this ever-changing world.  
I know the stories and dreams of my ancestors.  
I know my ancestors made a commitment to survival and living.  
Everyday I get up in this ever-changing world and recommit to living.  
Everyday I get up and I recommit to living well and building a better world!”

### Panel Presentations

#### Panel 1 – The Way Forward in Indigenous Education, 10:45 – 12:00

This panel had a focus on First Nations post-secondary education. Presenters had the opportunity to share news, updates and thoughts about the way forward in post-secondary education. The panelists for this session were: Julia Candlish, Director of Education, Chiefs of Ontario and Bernadette Wabie, Senior Education Officer, Indigenous Services Canada, Ontario Region.

#### Panel 2 – The Way Forward in Indigenous Education, 1:00 – 2:30

Presenters on this panel were invited to share good news, challenges and opportunities in Indigenous post-secondary education. The panelists were: Barry McCarten, Director, Indigenous Education Branch, PSE Division, Ministry of Colleges and Universities; Carolyn Hepburn, Indigenous Peoples Education Council, Colleges Ontario; and Shylo Elmayan, Council of Ontario Universities Regional Reference Group on Aboriginal Education.

## AHA Moments

During the plenary sessions which occurred on Day 1 of the conference, participants were asked to record and submit Aha Moments (What have you learned? How will you use the information?). The enthusiasm among conference participants resulted in receiving forty-eight responses which are captured in the following chart.

<p>Success is kindness. Decolonize these colonial words and concepts. We know what we know but it is blurred sometimes by western ways of thinking.</p> <p>Being kind goes a very long way; same with harm; ripple effects both good and bad.</p> <p>The longest journey is from your head to your heart. Be kind in all we do.</p> <p>I was able to connect with someone at the conference and learn about another avenue for funding opportunities/bursaries.</p> <p>Thank you for the reaffirmation to not act like its business as usual as we work out supports for the new reality.</p> <p>The focus is more about student resistance not student retention.</p> <p>Students are speaking up and advocating for themselves.</p> <p>There is lots of help or support for Indigenous students. Its just knowing where and how to access the services.</p> <p>“The hard work today serves the future learners – we may not see it, but they will benefit from this hard work”.</p> <p>How do we decolonize the story written for us, in regard to who we should be as Indigenous peoples? And how do we re-write and reclaim our sense of identity for those who are learning about their identify?</p> <p>It's not business as usual.</p>	<p>The Creator knows who we are by your heart, actions and words, not be what you're wearing.</p> <p>“Keep pace with both drums”. The balance of living our lives and straddling the western world... Balance is a key piece of successfully doing this.</p> <p>Finding out that the Indigenous People's Education Circle exists and that they have an IPEC action plan.</p> <p>Indigenous Services Canada likes to make things difficult.</p> <p>The cost of living is increasing. Students are using food banks and meal programs.</p> <p>Indigenous students experience childhood trauma, have the highest poverty and the lowest income.</p> <p>Need to do more to help staff, staff impacts, COVID</p> <p>“Triggers” – self-monitoring of experience in past, classroom setting – being singled out</p> <p>Update of post-secondary final report</p> <p>Key message – “transform the power brokers into champions by using their own tools”. This idea is empowering because we are all agents of change.</p> <p>“You can't decolonize a colonized workplace, but you can make it safer.”</p> <p>When helping students decide on their PSE pathway, encourage them to strongly consider what Indigenous supports and</p>
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<p>Regional post-secondary delivery across Canada</p> <p>Summer programming to help catch up and make students comfortable for the fall term</p> <p>Good information on Indigenous Services Canada funding and how would a person find out if our community applies for the funding?</p> <p>There is an alligator dance.</p> <p>The white rows on the Two Row Wampum represent trust, friendship, and respect.</p> <p>We must use the ships tools so we can “get on board to support our agenda”.</p> <p>“Spiritual contract”</p> <p>Be strong! We have a lot of work to do decolonizing our systems.</p> <p>As Indigenous counsellors/educators we are doing a lot of repair work. We work to deconstruct false narratives. We don’t decolonize. We don’t Indigenize. Our work is hard, tedious, and sometimes heart breaking.</p> <p>It’s not business as usual, students are still struggling.</p> <p>“Treaty-based models” – I didn’t realize this was a phrase used but it makes perfect sense. I love that we have our own models.</p> <p>I’m sitting here feeling grateful that we can gather in person and gain valuable information to support Indigenous post-secondary students. Niawen ONECA!</p>	<p>spaces are available at the college or university i.e., elders, counsellors, navigators, advisors, etc.</p> <p>A different way of learning including land-based learning – Indigenous knowledge</p> <p>In the Two Row Wampum belt, the white rows are: trust, friendship, and respect.</p> <p>It’s not business as usual.</p> <p>My role as an educator (e/s) has gone beyond teaching students to helping other teachers in both public and private school boards understand our history and challenges. I am an education warrior. It’s been a good fight.</p> <p>That Indigenous student who sits so quietly at the back of the room may be waiting for me to connect. I now know what I must do! Miigwetch.</p> <p>“It’s not business as usual.” I need to stop thinking that it is. I’m exhausted.</p> <p>“Diplomacy in this work is key for advancement.”</p> <p>“If students don’t have status, the only mechanism is to apply for a status card.”</p> <p>Slido is cool.</p> <p>It’s not business as usual.</p> <p>“Arm ourselves with facts and knowledge.”</p> <p>“The potential is unimaginable.”</p>
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## Day 1 - Workshop Evaluations

After the plenary sessions, conference participants were invited to attend one of three workshop presentations. The workshop options were as follows:

- ✚ Navigating the “Ship” and the “Canoe”: An Indigenous Perspective for Indigenous Student Success in Post-Secondary with Dr. Darren Thomas
- ✚ Indigenous Wellness Framework/Wellness Assessment with Mary Deleary
- ✚ Supporting Students for Students with Disabilities in a Post-Secondary Environment

Recommendation: The workshop that was cancelled due presenter illness should be offered by ONECA at a later date. (Mental Health within Indigenous Communities Post COVID 19 by staff of the Enaatig Healing Lodge and Learning Centres)

Following the workshops, all participants were encouraged to complete a workshop evaluation form. Here are the workshop evaluation results for the Day 1 options.

### WORKSHOP - Navigating Between the Ship and the Canoe: An Indigenous Perspective for Indigenous Student Success at Post-Secondary

3:00 – 4:30

Twenty-three (23) workshop evaluation forms were received for this workshop.

Participants gave this workshop high praise for the workshop and the facilitator. 98% of all ratings for this workshop were excellent and 2% rated it good. 100% or all participants would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	20			
Quality of workshop	18	1		
Relevance of the workshop content	18	1		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	19			

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? Twenty-one (21) responded yes; one (1) did not respond to the question.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Darren’s quote, “It is with great humility we do this work”, because although we may not see the change in our lifetime, we are still paving the way for our great-great grandchildren, and we need to continue to keep serving and Indigenize education.</li> <li>- Spoke well and intentional, land back and didn’t “talk at” but talked to</li> <li>- Shared experiences in a very humble way of the Indigenous perspective for Indigenous success in post-secondary</li> <li>- Dr. Thomas pushed thinking and I would like him to talk with school boards and settlers who are on their journey towards allyship</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable</li> <li>- Highly informative, very interesting, knowledgeable</li> <li>- Amazing, love his approach and knowledge</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable, very easy to understand</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language was ‘ear-opening’, offered a perspective that was profound and kept me interested</li> <li>- Interesting, informative, pertinent, importance of these conversations and knowledge</li> <li>- Darren was real and very open/honest/factual</li> <li>- His words are impactful, strong, and truthful. He connects and gives examples you can visualize.</li> <li>- Very informative</li> <li>- Interesting and knowledgeable</li> <li>- Helping to make it safer! Elevating the consciousness to creating awareness where all people know what the issues are. Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery and removing the Indian Act. People don’t want to cause more harm. Apologize and commit to doing better!</li> <li>- Advocates to use the tools of the colonizer, important to know how to fight that system and reminder, also the encouragement to help build champions by educating them when asked, I hear so often, its not my responsibility which make my work more challenging and at times unproductive</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable</li> <li>- Darren is a very good speaker because he speaks from the heart and not a slide presentation. An informed scholar who knows how to connect with his audience.</li> </ul>
<p>As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In order for our children to reclaim our Indigeneity, we need to heal and support them to build pride and continue to carry down generation to generation.</li> <li>- Points about intellectual racism</li> <li>- Accessing the stakeholder to make changes</li> <li>- Transformative change happens by using/doing various tactics/strategies, learn who the players are in the system (i.e., environment scan, analysis of system with power brokers and use them as champions and use/build a tool kit, advocate and alligator dance, create space for non-Indigenous!</li> <li>- His candidness</li> <li>- Reiterate all we know and practice but use academic language</li> <li>- To keep motivating the youth to learn and be informed – they can make the difference!</li> <li>- Relate and understand his approach and experience</li> <li>- Yes, found it very useful, lots of aha moments, lots of phrases I can use for my students</li> <li>- We cannot decolonize a colonial environment. We cannot Indigenize a non-Indigenous environment.</li> <li>- Tips and advice for making change</li> <li>- Understand the issues – how to work together and diplomacy</li> <li>- Darren’s knowledge/wisdom was so much appreciated. I learned so much and this presentation has had a huge positive impact on how I can help others.</li> <li>- His way of explaining power people and the environmental scan</li> <li>- Develop degrees that the community wants would be promising for future students and community members</li> <li>- Knowledge, genuineness</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Practical insight into navigating the system while maintaining our Indigenous identity</li> <li>- Reinforce my interest in returning to school</li> <li>- The difference between the ship and the canoe, foot in both vessels, the white rows – trust, friendship, respect, ways to restore sense of worth and value and repair work!</li> <li>- All the information validates my knowledge and work, beliefs and vision</li> <li>- Idea to find allies in Indigenous education for students</li> <li>- Key message was to transform power brokers into champions by using their own tools. This idea is empowering because we all have the ability to effect change.</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I like when Darren explains the methodology of the “ship and canoe” and us as Indigenous peoples need to use the ship’s tools to get on board to support our agenda. “Love that!”</li> <li>- Great job!</li> <li>- Thank you!</li> <li>- Have him present again.</li> <li>- Niawen. Miigwetch.</li> <li>- This needs to be a Ted Talk.</li> <li>- I loved everything about this presentation. I would love to attend more of Darren’s presentations.</li> <li>- Invite speaker back in the future</li> <li>- Always a good presenter</li> <li>- Have a more in-depth discussion on PSE – what the program needs to be, structure, governance, etc. to meet First Nations needs</li> <li>- Chi-miigwetch for sharing</li> <li>- Great speaker – learned so much about protecting the people. Would love to take the course being developed/called Indigenous Political Science (so far un-named)</li> <li>- Nya:wen kowa!</li> <li>- Bring back Diane Longboat</li> <li>- I love the metaphor of navigating between the ship and canoe because I could relate it to my own life (work). The school waters are critical to working together.</li> </ul>

**WORKSHOP - Indigenous Wellness Framework – Native Wellness Assessment**  
3:00 – 4:30

Eleven (11) completed evaluation forms were submitted for this workshop. Of the total number of ratings for this workshop, 89% rated it excellent and 11% rated it good. 100% or all eleven (11) participants would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	10	1		
Quality of workshop	10	1		
Relevance of the workshop content	10	1		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	9	2		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All eleven (11) or 100% of workshop respondents said they would recommend this facilitator to others.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infusing foundational customs in learning</li> <li>- Great resources, will be going on website to search further resources</li> <li>- This was the highlight of my day! Mary shared so much useful information that we can bring back and help our students.</li> <li>- Well preserved and great information.</li> <li>- It was so informative and useful 😊</li> <li>- This is amazing!</li> <li>- Incredibly resourceful and so knowledgeable and spoke from her heart and you could feel the passion which is uplifting.</li> <li>- Very informative. Great conversations.</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment tool</li> <li>- Holding cultural customs at the heart of learning</li> <li>- Self-assessments</li> <li>- The whole presentation and the wellness assessment is amazing.</li> <li>- The large scope of questions</li> <li>- Supporting my students culturally</li> <li>- Being introduced to these frameworks and assessments; resources provided</li> <li>- Knowing that this resource is adaptable and can be reflective of how we need to be more supportive in certain aspects. To also connect back to my Indigenous lens, as sometimes it gets clouded by colonial views, to check-in with self regularly.</li> <li>- The resources really break it down; can't wait to check out the website!! 😊</li> <li>- The overall assessment questions – great guide to follow when considering what cultural components/practices to implement.</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To develop a survey for my client to help them find their career path</li> <li>- Hold online sessions</li> <li>- Merci beaucoup!</li> <li>- None at this time</li> <li>- Keep up the great work Mary!</li> <li>- More presentations please!</li> </ul>

**WORKSHOP – Supports for Students with Disabilities in a Post-Secondary Environment**  
3:00 – 4:30

Nine (9) workshop participants completed evaluation forms.

100% or all nine (9) of the workshop participants rated the workshop either excellent or good in all categories.

62% of all ratings rated this workshop as excellent, 38% rated it as good. 100% of workshop participants who responded to the question, would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	7	2		
Quality of workshop	5	4		
Relevance of the workshop content	5	4		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	5	4		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? Eight (8) workshop respondents would recommend this facilitator to others; one (1) person did not respond to this question.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very knowledgeable</li> <li>- Great presentation and engagement with participants; very clearly, well-versed with the topic</li> <li>- I found her so informative, interactive and engaging</li> <li>- Great information and conversation</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable, 20 years plus, answered all the questions</li> <li>- Very engaging with participants</li> <li>- Knowledgeable, uses audience questions to redirect back to presentation</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable, kept attention</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All of it!</li> <li>- To understand how the accessibility centres at colleges can offer and how to access – she shared in-depth information which was so helpful</li> <li>- Alternative accommodations that can be put in place.</li> <li>- Accessing services – easier to seek help</li> <li>- All topics – bursary information, OSAP</li> <li>- Information about funding for psychoeducational testing</li> <li>- Yes, more details of information, facilitator knew more, great she worked within the school</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No suggestions, my favourite so far 😊</li> <li>- Very informative</li> <li>- Relevant discussion</li> <li>- More discussion on programs/services</li> </ul>



Plenary Session

Student Survey Results re: Careers in the Food and Beverage Industry

8:45 – 10:15



This presentation shared information about the expanding Food and Beverage Manufacturing Industry in Ontario and numerous career opportunities for youth which include entrepreneurial ventures. The presenter shared results from the 2022 First Nations

survey completed in September. Conference participants had the opportunity to share ideas and next steps to promote and educate others on the expanding food and beverage industry and the exciting careers related to youth.

Following the presentation, participants were asked to respond to two questions:

- What would be some incentives that industry could do to attract Indigenous job seekers?
- What are some of the barriers for Indigenous peoples getting a job in the Food and Beverage Industry?

Here is the feedback that was obtained:

- Wasauksing Sugar Bush/Wasauksing First Nation (705) 746-2531. Adam Pawis, CEO, [ced@wassauksing.ca](mailto:ced@wassauksing.ca); Ryan Tabobondung, Director of Public Works, [dopw@wassauksing.ca](mailto:dopw@wassauksing.ca)
- Robichaud Commercial Fishing: You Tube – Last Boat on the Lake 2022 Trailer. Owners Allan Robichaud and Jordane Chegahno (partnership with a Toronto restaurant to supply fresh fish)
- Seed Sovereignty Program: Luke Jeffries/Janice Brant Tyendingaga
- DDC Indigenous Kitchen – Joe Shawana
- Bev Osawamick/Hiawatha Osawamick – Food is Medicine
- Tawyna Brant, Six Nations – Top Chef Contestant
- Wild Muskoka Botanicals: Wildmuskoka.com / Founder Laura Gilmar (Anishinaabe)
- Naagan by Zach Keeshig, see FaceBook page (Chippewas of Nawash) - one of Canada’s best new pop-up restaurants and 2022 participant in the Royal Culinary Academy
- Artisan Market contact [Anneh@ramafirstnation.ca](mailto:Anneh@ramafirstnation.ca) for local crafters/harvesters/bakers to sell their products/have a dedicated space/no fee to set up booth/table
- Elephant Thoughts Non-Profit offers culinary internships during summer for High School youth. Also partnered with Bruce Grey Catholic School Board to offer a credit program for students at risk of dropping out. Partnership(s):

Create a Directory in our Monthly Newsletter, post to our websites

Elephant Thoughts/Apahsiwin Program & M'wikwedong/Bruce Grey CDSB – Jennifer Linklater @ Chippewas of Nawash contact person.

- Indigenous Services meet once a year at Rama; Ontario Federation of Economic Development Association – Contact Rob Furlonger (705) 350 -0215 or email [ed@ofnedal.ca](mailto:ed@ofnedal.ca)

## Workshops

**WORKSHOP - Gizhewaatisiwin (Kindness) – Essential for Success**

**10:30 – 12:00**

Fourteen (14) participants completed evaluation forms for this workshop. 79% rated this workshop excellent, 20% rated is as good and 1% of the ratings was fair. 100% or all fourteen (14) participants would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	10	3		
Quality of workshop	10	3		
Relevance of the workshop content	9	3	1	
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	11	1		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All fourteen (14) responded yes.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I found the workshop very interesting; teachings of survival in life.</li> <li>- We all needed to learn in this way.</li> <li>- Speaks truths and in the moment</li> <li>- Good teachings; have similar views and I think this is something that should be shared more with others</li> <li>- The speaker was very grounding and it was a great reminder for us; very engaging and full of knowledge that makes me re-think what I'm here to do</li> <li>- This speaker was very interesting in what she talked about and how she spoke.</li> <li>- Very informative</li> <li>- Amazing energy – everything positive!!</li> <li>- Very insightful. Very kind. Thankful for the teachings, will definitely be sharing.</li> <li>- Need more time</li> <li>- Kindness is our culture's foundation and a key learning/teaching that our students can/should</li> <li>- Yes, very out-spoken on topic for students and knowledgeable</li> <li>- Content – kindness</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our younger generation needs more understanding on our traditions and how to be respectful and to be kind to others.</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I read the bible, the workshop had so many similar topics. Our ancestors had no bible back then. Praying and kindness, pretty much the most important things and follow daily.</li> <li>- Seeing and learning in this way</li> <li>- Speaking from the heart, not from a slide; used tools for small interactive groups</li> <li>- Helps students with understanding “culture 101”</li> <li>- Everything; can’t put it into words right now</li> <li>- Being kind/kindness sets people up to share their gifts in the world.</li> <li>- Everything was very helpful and will be utilized in my job.</li> <li>- Everything – every word is valuable!! Kindness is the way!! 😊 Love all of this!!</li> <li>- I like her activities and very practical.</li> <li>- Reminding yourself, kindness everyday</li> <li>- The interactive connections ideas</li> <li>- To be honest</li> <li>- Spoke her truth</li> <li>- Presentation will be very helpful!</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awesome! I really enjoyed it 😊</li> <li>- More sessions that build on this</li> <li>- I'd like to ask her to do a day with our students. Awesome stuff!!</li> <li>- Keep up the good work!</li> <li>- Great job Stephanie!</li> <li>- Present again, more time</li> <li>- Kindness is very enjoyable – the way to be! – the way to heal! – the way to grow! – the way of the future!!</li> <li>- This workshop would be beneficial to have part 1 and part 2 as there is so much more that she/they could teach us.</li> <li>- Qualify that her thoughts and ideas are her truth and not relevant for all Indigenous i.e., statement about Creator</li> <li>- Awesome presentation! 😊</li> </ul>

**WORKSHOP – Healing, Wellness and Meditation**  
**10:30 – 12:00**

Eleven (11) workshop participants hand in completed evaluation forms. Of all ratings, 82% rated this workshop as excellent, 18% rated it good. 100% of participants or all eleven (11) checked off that they would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	9	2		
Quality of workshop	9	2		
Relevance of the workshop content	9	2		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	9	2		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All eleven (11) responded yes.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amazing tips for self-care</li> <li>- Much needed</li> <li>- Good exercises, helpful and soothing experience</li> <li>- Great way to practice self-care; gives you useable tools that you don't need to purchase</li> <li>- Blend of Indigenous and western methods, mindfulness and breathing techniques</li> <li>- Excellent strategies for all to heal, stay well and to connect to our inner selves.</li> <li>- Extremely useful breathing technique for calming and energizing</li> <li>- Excellent content and presentation</li> <li>- She shared lots of great information. Very calm demeanor</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Breathing techniques.</li> <li>- Strategies for self-care and share with students</li> <li>- Tools to pass onto students</li> <li>- Yes, I will use this with students</li> <li>- The effects of breathing techniques on mood and your nervous system</li> <li>- Breath work and to let go</li> <li>- Techniques to share, breathing exercises</li> <li>- Videos on ONECA website</li> <li>- Learned some new techniques that I can share with my students</li> <li>- Mindfulness, breathing techniques</li> <li>- Breathing activities</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I needed this!</li> <li>- Thank you.</li> <li>- Longer breakout session</li> <li>- Thankful for this workshop as I needed it for my own healing and self-care; would love to add to my practice</li> <li>- Nia:wen, really appreciated this!</li> <li>- Give her book as a prize.</li> </ul>

**WORKSHOP – Supporting  
Indigenous Students: Educators  
and Influencers**  
  
**10:30 – 12:00**

Eleven (11) workshop participants completed evaluation forms for this workshop. Of the total ratings, 95% rated this workshop excellent and 2% rated it as good. 100% of respondents or all eleven (11) would recommend these facilitators to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	11			
Quality of workshop	9	2		
Relevance of the workshop content	11			
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	9			



Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All eleven (11) respondents checked yes.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Great information and engaging presenters.</li> <li>- Yes, excellent network</li> <li>- Yes, very informative</li> <li>- Lots of information in how to support our students and their diversity. Great personal connections from Colter that showed how this support system is a success</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable</li> <li>- This is so informative</li> <li>- Great overview of APSIP and the support they provide to students</li> <li>- Students don't know who to go to for further supports</li> <li>- APSIP is so important and our services and most importantly students need to know and use them!</li> <li>- Spoke well. Presented lots of information. Friendly.</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connections with colleges</li> <li>- Peer to peer supports</li> <li>- I identify with the challenges students face</li> <li>- Diversity in learners is a strength.</li> <li>- I found it all very useful especially since I haven't heard of APSIP before</li> <li>- What Indigenous recruiters do in college and universities and how they can support; tips o checking Ontario colleges portal, application process – very helpful</li> <li>- Hearing about various supports/resources to assist our students</li> <li>- Targeted presentations on careers</li> <li>- Knowledge and understanding that APSIP does to support students; did not know this system existed.</li> <li>- The whole presentation and all of what APSIP does</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awesome!</li> <li>- I love your energy and passion. Great presentation.</li> </ul>

**WORKSHOP – Psychoeducational Assessments: Why they are important and how to access them**

**10:30 – 12:00**

Seventeen (17) participants completed workshop evaluation forms. Of the total number of ratings, 96% rated this workshop as excellent and 4% rated it good. Sixteen (16) respondents would recommend this facilitator to others; one (1) participant did not respond to this question.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	17			
Quality of workshop	16	1		
Relevance of the workshop content	16	1		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	16	1		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? Sixteen (16) responded yes; one (1) did not respond to this question.

<p>Why or why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I learned so much – what these assessments are and how to support students, guiding students to access</li> <li>- Very clear speaker</li> <li>- So helpful in understanding services available to advocate for and utilize for our students</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable with much more information; a very interesting presenter; dynamic and keeps our attention</li> <li>- Certainly! Effectively explained topic; speaks clearly and great tone for presenting</li> <li>- Beth is very professional and knows so much about ins and outs</li> <li>- Because there is a need to understand why assessments can be helpful in terms of students’ success and wholistic wellness – through transition to completion</li> <li>- Great workshop when dealing with assessments</li> <li>- A lot of great information</li> <li>- Very informational; I would love to see the STEPS program replicated within school districts</li> <li>- Facilitator was very knowledgeable; information was well presented and engaging</li> <li>- I learned various steps prior to assessment, the difference between assessments, components of assessments, etc.</li> <li>- Amazing information, knew material well</li> <li>- Excellent information; first time I learned about this; can use in my job</li> <li>- Excellent workshop, well presented</li> <li>- Engaging, kind, clear</li> </ul>
<p>As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to access and eligibility</li> <li>- The availability of services</li> <li>- Tools and information; I have tools I will be able to share with new students</li> <li>- Accessing services; transitional piece; she could do a whole day of what she shared today</li> <li>- Everything, knew little about psychoeducational assessments</li> <li>- The whole process</li> <li>- Can’t wait to check out the website, I am interested in looking into the STEPS program</li> <li>- How to navigate the system</li> <li>- Program open to participants across Ontario</li> <li>- Yes, I have special education students, I meet to know more about measures that are used with my students</li> <li>- Better understanding of psychoeducational assessments at all levels and provided information regarding assessments at post-secondary</li> <li>- Where to access psychoeducational assessments and pay for it</li> <li>- Information helps me understand the referral process, assessment and cost</li> <li>- Be able to provide information to students who need that extra support in college and university</li> <li>- Some funding options</li> </ul>

Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longer training – so much great information in short time period</li> <li>- Bring to regular conference; ONECA partner with NOARC/RARC to offer their extra resources like STEPS, etc.</li> <li>- Nice if there were handouts</li> <li>- Look forward to reviewing the resource guide</li> <li>- The slideshow will be helpful to review the information presented. Thanks for sharing it.</li> <li>- Great learning experience 😊</li> <li>- Need more information on Grade 7 &amp; 8, STEP program</li> <li>- Would be good to learn more about education requirements for students since there is a need in community</li> <li>- More funding options; I was hoping to learn more funding options outside of ARC/NOARC</li> </ul>
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**WORKSHOP – Healing, Wellness and Meditation**  
1:00-2:30

Thirteen (13) workshop participants completed evaluation forms. Of the total ratings for this workshop, 74% rated this workshop excellent and 26% rated it good. 100% or all thirteen (13) participants would recommend this presenter to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	11	2		
Quality of workshop	9	4		
Relevance of the workshop content	11	3		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	8	5		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All thirteen (13) respondents answered yes.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mindfulness is always a great thing! 😊</li> <li>- Great resources to practice; experiential learning – doing</li> <li>- Very helpful with relaxation and letting go of anxieties, etc.</li> <li>- To learn more about breathing techniques</li> <li>- Great workshop to release tension</li> <li>- Very informative, mindfulness and my thoughts; very stimulating, learned a lot about chakras</li> <li>- Very practical and helpful insight to wellness</li> <li>- Good baseline teaching of breathing techniques and strategies</li> <li>- Helps if you are stuck in your life</li> <li>- It would be beneficial for people with anxiety and other emotions they may have</li> <li>- Calming and personable</li> <li>- It was a good workshop</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The breathing exercises – letting go, clear my mind</li> <li>- Free, easy ways to assist myself and those I support to regulate and release difficult emotions</li> <li>- Breathing techniques will be helpful</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-care for counsellors, take care of yourself</li> <li>- Writing affirmations, meditation, breathing techniques</li> <li>- Sustaining a high vibration, affirmations help retain your mind, it counselling doesn't work, try breathing 😊</li> <li>- Practical breathing technique</li> <li>- The practical use of the material and techniques</li> <li>- Meditating</li> <li>- Meditation</li> <li>- Breathing techniques</li> <li>- Breathing techniques/exercises</li> <li>- Good breathing techniques that are easy</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Miigwetch!</li> <li>- Thank you. Pidamaya ye</li> <li>- Loved the chakra exercise</li> <li>- Michelle, keep shining bright. You have great energy! 😊</li> <li>- Good</li> <li>- Very helpful</li> </ul>

**Why Community Research Matters and How to do it (more or less)**  
**1:00-2:30**

There were eight (8) workshop participants who completed the evaluation forms. 78% of the total ratings were excellent and 22% rated it good. 100% or all eight (8) respondents said that they would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	7	1		
Quality of workshop	6	2		
Relevance of the workshop content	6	2		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	6	2		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All eight (8) responded yes

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- History is fascinating</li> <li>- Awesome!</li> <li>- Excellent!</li> <li>- Speaks very well; relatable and talks in storytelling way that makes it easier to listen to</li> <li>- Covered history of Six Nations, etc.</li> <li>- Important for peoples to know their history where they come from and how we got there</li> <li>- He has good historical knowledge</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledgeable of pre-contact, contact of settlers and Indigenous people; ways to collect data in Indigenous communities</li> <li>- He gave lots of history facts that I didn't know</li> <li>- Historical knowledge</li> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- Importance of learning about the past</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Great information in helping with academic and career direction/pathways, etc.</li> <li>- Had he had time to talk more about steps done in research, I would have been more intrigued and given an excellent rating.</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I would watch a virtual webinar with this facilitator</li> <li>- More please!</li> <li>- Great information!</li> <li>- Not at this time</li> <li>- Focus more time on steps of research, not his fault, technical problems delayed him</li> </ul>

**Supporting Successful Indigenous Transitions**  
1:00-2:30

There were fifteen (15) participants that completed evaluation forms for this workshop. 65% of the total ratings were excellent, 28% rated it as good and 7% rated it fair. 100 % or all fifteen (15) said that they would recommend this presenter to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	11	4		
Quality of workshop	9	6		
Relevance of the workshop content	9	3	3	
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	10	4	1	

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All fifteen (15) would recommend this facilitator to others.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Absolutely! Very honouring and knowledgeable; I loved that this presentation was interactive.</li> <li>- Knowing her ideology and ours is similar</li> <li>- Interactive in group discussion of best practices</li> <li>- Very informative on things that worked to build relationships and enhance student success throughout their school/work place life</li> <li>- Great opportunity to network and share what is really working well for our youth; always great to share best practices</li> <li>- Highly beneficial – so many ideas and good to hear and see what others are doing, how similar we work and new ideas</li> <li>- Excellent presenter. She shared so very useful information that will help me work with my students, lots of great ideas</li> <li>- Lots of knowledge of subject area</li> <li>- Great workshop but more for elementary</li> <li>- Lots of interaction and sharing at our tables and groups</li> <li>- Specific to high school/elementary, not PSE</li> <li>- Would like to see more post-secondary related</li> <li>- Facilitator knew her stuff but information not particularly relevant to post-secondary</li> </ul>
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As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Post-secondary peer programming dual credits for land-based program</li> <li>- Student leadership and summer camp opportunities that they do with high school students</li> <li>- The conversations to see what others are doing to engage their youth</li> <li>- Ideas! Refresher of old ideas I've had and want to re-think and plan again</li> <li>- Holly's experience of what her board does to support students during all transitions (JK, 8-9, 12-PSE) were useful and important</li> <li>- The ideas that were shared were excellent. Sharing ideas with other participants.</li> <li>- Best practices used in other communities and regions; building relationships</li> <li>- Not really</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thank you for giving us time to share.</li> <li>- Great workshop! 😊</li> <li>- Great workshop, valuable information, real life information</li> <li>- Session could have been all afternoon; there was so much information</li> <li>- Was thinking it was more grade 12 to post-secondary</li> <li>- Keep up the good work</li> <li>- More high school transition to post-secondary</li> </ul>

**The Way Forward – Responding to Community**  
1:00-2:30

Ten (10) workshop participants completed evaluation forms. Of the total number of ratings, 75% rated the workshop as excellent, 22% rated it good and 3% rated it as fair. 100% or all ten (10) would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	7	2		
Quality of workshop	6	3		
Relevance of the workshop content	7	1	1	
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	7	2		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All ten (10) responded yes to this question.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Energy is great and inspiring</li> <li>- Nice slides and information</li> <li>- Sara and Aisha presented about Six Nations Polytechnic and STEAM. Beautiful presentation full of excellent examples of blending culture and knowledge systems</li> <li>- Very informative</li> <li>- Sharing through story</li> <li>- Good hearing the journey story</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Informative on sharing their school system and how far they have come</li> <li>- Very knowledgeable</li> <li>- Great representative for Six Nations Polytechnic and examples for classrooms</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher energy and culture/academic balance</li> <li>- They used some great examples, quotes, programs that can be integrated</li> <li>- This presentation will help guide me so I am better able to support our students/navigate future challenges and barriers.</li> <li>- Reminder/reflection; learn, unlearn, relearn</li> <li>- Being encouraged to try stuff</li> <li>- The struggles students face during pandemic, incorporating culture and language into class</li> <li>- The example of how to create a community within the classroom; how she incorporated traditional knowledge, community knowledge, land learning and empowerment together</li> <li>- Aisha's sharing about her classes and helping students become 'family'</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Great presentation</li> <li>- Not at this time</li> <li>- Sara and Aisha are young, educated and excelled examples of leaders in education. They talked about their community, families, students and jobs/roles with love and respect.</li> <li>- Great presentation!</li> <li>- Want to learn more on Indigenous ways</li> <li>- Less reliance on power point</li> <li>- I think the title was a bit non-reflective of the content, more about Six Nations Polytechnic</li> </ul>

**Waabishka Miigwan (Trauma-Informed Practice/Building Resilience)**  
**3:00 – 4:30**

Twelve (12) participants completed evaluation forms. 83% of the total ratings were excellent and 17% rated the workshop as good. 100% of them or all twelve (12) participants would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	10	2		
Quality of workshop	10	2		
Relevance of the workshop content	10	2		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	10	2		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All twelve (12) responded yes to this question.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent information</li> <li>- Presenter energy and connections relevant and concrete material</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Was able to bring forward trauma and triggers to life in a sense that it was a bit of an “aha” and given the chance to connect on a different level. The speaker was so knowledgeable and soke from her heart which was great.</li> <li>- I’m looking forward to another, more in-depth workshop. I came in with very little knowledge of trauma-informed so I found her teaching style helped me to absorb the information and help to distinguish the differences in identifying different levels of crisis.</li> <li>- Very informed, knows her stuff, loved the rez dog analogy, would like to see her again – lot to learn!</li> <li>- From a different perspective</li> <li>- This was by far one of the best presentations I’ve ever been to. Stephanie is “real” and says it how it is. She’s incredible.</li> <li>- Excellent presentation</li> <li>- Very authentic and aware of her audience; very knowledgeable; I loved the smudge</li> <li>- She was very knowledgeable, connected with all of us; really down to earth; enlightening</li> <li>- Great conversations and information</li> <li>- Real presenter</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Everything presented was helpful</li> <li>- This will be so helpful when working with my students.</li> <li>- The cycles and effects of trauma, the wealth in healing, the strength in growing</li> <li>- Everything; can’t pick one thing that was most useful</li> <li>- To recognize the beginning stages of moving into crisis</li> <li>- Lived experience</li> <li>- Trauma-informed care</li> <li>- Yes, very, very much</li> <li>- Her entire presentation was useful</li> <li>- “You are not your trauma”</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent practical skills and knowledge</li> <li>- End of day energy low, affected discussion energy by participants</li> <li>- Bring her back</li> <li>- More workshops, never enough time, so much for facilitators to share</li> <li>- Fantastic presentation! I hope to attend another one of Stephanie’s presentations.</li> <li>- None</li> </ul>

**Ontario Student Access Program**

**3:00 – 4:30**

Eleven (11) participants completed workshop evaluation forms. 70% rated this workshop excellent and 30% rated it as good. 100% of the participants or all eleven (11) would recommend this presenter to others.



Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	4	7		
Quality of workshop	3	8		
Relevance of the workshop content	3	8		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	3	8		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All eleven (11) responded yes

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OSAP is so important to understand when working with students</li> <li>- Very informative</li> <li>- I would for the general public but I think it could've been geared to all post-secondary instead of Western University focused; still good information but could be more focused on the population we serve</li> <li>- If they could have more general OSAP information as opposed to Western University only it would have been better; if the Indigenous Financial Aid worker joined them, it would have been better</li> <li>- Knew their information, however wish it was more general OSAP specific than specific to Western, unable to answer questions about other schools</li> <li>- Great information</li> <li>- Informative about the topic</li> <li>- The OSAP grant is good for students as long as they are made aware that it could turn into a loan under circumstances</li> <li>- OSAP is important, it opens doors for students but it's a complex system that all educators and counsellors need to master to guide students</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to access OSAP and grants</li> <li>- Learned new things</li> <li>- All the information</li> <li>- Help understand the application process</li> <li>- Was a good refresher on OSAP information</li> <li>- Good information – great to have other post-secondary counsellors to “fill in the blanks”</li> <li>- Conversational</li> <li>- That change has happened to OSAP in the last few years</li> <li>- We all need to understand OSAP; the breakdown of funding via grants; loans were important and useful; Also cool that they presented Western funding via bursaries</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OSAP navigator or expert through ONECA or COO would be great</li> <li>- Financial aid offices from a few different schools – both colleges and universities do the presentation together</li> <li>- Again, maybe having someone from OSAP not specific to school to do the presentation</li> <li>- Would have like government representative to talk about OSAP as most reference was specific to Western University and my questions were specific to other institutions</li> </ul>

## Reflective Practice

3:00 – 4:30

There were seven (7) workshop participants who completed the evaluation forms. 86% rated this workshop as excellent and 14% rated it good. 100% or all seven (7) would recommend this speaker to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	7			
Quality of workshop	6	1		
Relevance of the workshop content	5	2		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	6	1		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All seven (7) responded yes

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It's interactive and fun! Good workshop to have in the afternoon</li> <li>- Really interactive, one idea to reflect on, not power point focussed</li> <li>- She has a lot of interaction which really made it easy to learn, reflect and feel able to create the culture of listening. The space for students to do this is critical.</li> <li>- Important to encourage and learn about reflective practice for personal and professional development</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/ helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Writing or journaling is a useful tool for reflective thought</li> <li>- Reflection in my practice with heart work</li> <li>- Starting the day off being reflective – blank page/video/thoughts; helps students engage with their thoughts.</li> <li>- Discussion and sharing</li> <li>- I like the reflective practice self-assessment. I have not heard of the term before so interested in learning more.</li> <li>- Remembering to stop and reflect at least once a day.</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thank you for your teaching</li> <li>- Check for 'typos' slide at end had a few</li> </ul>

## Indigenous Helper Wellness: Building Skills for Self-Care

3:00 – 4:30

There were eleven (11) participants that completed the workshop evaluation forms. 91% of all ratings rated were excellent and 9% rated the workshop good. 100% or all eleven (11) participants would recommend this facilitator to others.

Please rate the workshop in the following areas	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of presenter(s)	10	1		
Quality of workshop	10	1		
Relevance of the workshop content	10	1		
Overall, how would you rate the workshop?	10	1		

Would you recommend this facilitator to others? All eleven (11) responded yes to this question.

Why or why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awesome wellness self-care</li> <li>- Gave us time to try out the wellness/self-care ways to do it</li> <li>- Finding our sweet spot; finding we are all in this together</li> <li>- Excellent topic! It's needed by all, more so over the last couple of years</li> <li>- Excellent techniques and information</li> <li>- He presented useful information. He got us using our brains and personal</li> <li>- Great workshop! Love the interaction with the use of menti.com. Shared lots of great information of how to take care of ourselves.</li> <li>- Very informative and effective</li> <li>- I appreciate the workshop; very insightful</li> <li>- Well spoken; clear; relatable</li> <li>- Good workshop to remind you/others the importance of self-care</li> </ul>
As a Counsellor/helper, what did you find most useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-care and passing techniques to students</li> <li>- The bullseye self-assessment for leisure, personal wellness relationships, work/education</li> <li>- Enjoyed the charts and learning where I was at</li> <li>- I like the fact he got us pairing up and sharing; powerful moment 😊</li> <li>- Be able to use some of the strategies/techniques with my students</li> <li>- What we can be grateful for today and what can we can do small things at a time to get us to where we want to get to – the diagram exercise which could be used on students</li> <li>- That we are not alone; most helpers are in the same boat.</li> <li>- Making time for self-care is important</li> </ul>
Suggestions or comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meegwetch!</li> <li>- You are amazing! 😊</li> <li>- Excellent!</li> <li>- Awesome presentation! Wellness is so important!</li> <li>- Excellent workshop! Enjoyed it!</li> <li>- Let's start a debriefing group for counsellors/helpers. It's nice to know others are in the same boat.</li> <li>- Give this type of workshop a quiet space</li> </ul>

**Entertainment**

ONECA enjoyed a humorous and engaging comedy performance by one of North America's most celebrated Anishinaabe comedians and writer, Ryan McMahon. And yes, 'the pants stuffed with cedar for protection against COVID – 19' comment returned for more laughter as the dialogue began on the final day of the conference. You just had to be there...

Many thanks Ryan!



## Focussed Discussion/Brainstorm Sessions

### Utilizing the Survey Results: ONECA 2022 Survey of Indigenous Students

9:00 – 12:00

This was a focussed discussion based on the ONECA 2022 Survey of Indigenous Students. Participants were encouraged to examine the knowledge gained from the survey results as an opportunity to identify next steps.

Conference participants were split up into four groups for this session. Questions were developed to guide the dialogue which can be found in Appendix A. Here is the information that was gathered at the sessions.

For conference participants who were new to ONECA, the graphic titled: What is ONECA? was shared and reviewed.

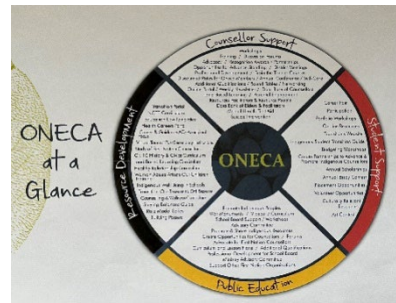
## Information from the Focussed Discussion/ Brainstorming Sessions

### Importance of Student Profile Data

- Reference and resources
- We need to know who our students are, so we know who we are serving
- Should have asked age, marital status, mature students
- Partnerships with day cares, spots saved for Indigenous students' children
- Target unique populations for service/support
- Recruitment
- Pool vs. respondents
- Asking why do some not participate in the survey
- How can ONECA utilize this information differently?
- Geographic data
- Tailor service to students – single parents, young, out of school students, GBLTQ2
- Primary funding source
- Who is getting/responding to the survey? (Maybe too many women vs. men)

### Program Data (i.e., type of Studies – full time, part-time, online)

- Is the program accessible?
- Learning supports – informational, technology, money
- Awareness of Indigenous students supports
- How to support students – family, single, blended
- Some services are only for full time students, some part-time students go to school in the evening so no time to access supports and services
- Micro credentials



- Indigenous lens
- Put our ideas into programs
- Reconnecting with culture in Indigenous institutions
- Course for teaching online
- Teaching pool
- Indigenous teacher recruitment at post-secondary institutions
- What is attracting students to the program or institution?
- What field of study are Indigenous students interested in and why?
- Free courses – access, employability
- Pathways to post-secondary, career inspiration
- Length of program – intensity, competition, class size
- Eligibility – funding and risk
- Academic and career preparation/planning
- Student learning in-person vs. online
- Accessibility – don't have to relocate
- Provide more flexibility/options
- Online – advantages, removed barriers
- Identify/inclusion or different learning styles
- Building supports – tutoring
- Effect on enrolment?
- Where students have to go
- Different stressors for FT and PT students
- Different expenses required i.e., funding allocation, financial aid, childcare

#### Where do Students Attend?

- Look at popular practices from well attended schools/programs
- Have post-secondary institutions send information to ONECA for the newsletter
- ONECA – get more massive comprehensive list so we know what's going on with them and they know what is going on with us
- Increase in social media
- Communication i.e., remind app
- Which institutions are attracting Indigenous students?
- Solidify relationships with schools
- Student support staff understand post-secondary schools
- No response at a school/maybe no ONECA connection
- Geographical information - where are students located
- Where are students attending, not attending
- Compare data to EIS – see similarities
- Identify successful/non-successful schools and programs

#### The Survey

- Who responded and who is missing?
- Break data down further
- How can ONECA ensure the survey is shared effectively? Timely?
- Building student knowledge of ONECA and resources
- Who sent it out? To whom? Follow-up?
- Clarifying the objectives of data collection

- Improve connection between post-secondary institutions and ONECA and member
- Ease membership process
- Disconnect on method of communication – short, concise, email is old, Tiktok/institution is new
- Determine areas to prioritize
- Key findings drive change
- Sharing information with post-secondary institutions e.g., president, staff, faculty
- What else could we do to reach students?
- Communication – inviting students to Indigenous Resource Centre
- Self-identification i.e., OCAS, bands, post-secondary institutions
- Share survey results back to students
- Is N – 169 generalizable? Reliable?
- Break down data into regions
- ONECA outreach
- Alumni experience including smaller questions – Menti
- Incentives – pay people for their time

#### General Comments

- Technology – funds to rent or loaners or purchase
- Living allowance needs to be increased
  - o Low-income housing
  - o Student subsidies, partnerships with municipalities
  - o Guaranteed space in residence
  - o Partnerships with neighbouring schools e.g., Trent U/Flemming, Nipissing U/Canadore
- Emphasis on Indigenous students, just as much if not more than international students
- Summer pre-sessions – introduce students to schools - schools need to be encouraged to have these for First Nations students
- Start relationships sooner with students (while they are still in high school)
- Systemic barriers

#### Institution Information

- Study locations
- Trends in student experience
- What are the current barriers
- Consideration of political climate

#### Supports to Indigenous Focus Programs or Non-Indigenous Programs

- Indigenize linked in
- Indigenous academic/social skill set on students
- What are the trends
- Financial support factors
- Resources for academic/social preparations
- Networking peer students in post-secondary

## Faculty and Program Data

- Advising on school/committee roles and functions and explaining this in Indigenous languages
- Empower Indigenous learning styles/dynamics/time frame
- Training/professional development/unlearning
- Hold a student gathering and get additional information – by regions
- Need to give Indigenous teachers latitude to do their jobs – requests are performative
- More Indigenous representation in non-Indigenous programs
- TRC – post-secondary institutions' calls to action
- Career prep – working with Indigenous people and communities
- Curriculum development/Indigenous authors, presenters
- Triggers – connect to supports, trauma-informed and cultural safety
- Advisory councils and representation
- Share best/wise practices
- Member - ONECA pool of facilitators – self post on the website
- Canadore and Native Teacher Counsellor Training Program - more cultural supports to share
- Advocate for new programs where needed
- Community health-based need for the trades
- Ontario Hydro – recruitment, how do we connect?
- How can they compliment the program?
- Highlight Indigenous programs at the institution
- Find out where students are enrolled and offer similar program as needed
- Indigenous focus vs. non-Indigenous programs – still need Indigenous support
- Indigenous Social Worker program vs. non-Indigenous SW program – why did you choose?
- If non-Indigenous available then connect with Trades – create Indigenous trades
- Go to the Indigenous student at their campus
- Some may not want Indigenous focus, offer options
- Indigenous content not a credit to use up at post-secondary funding; maybe at secondary level at no cost
- OYAP – Indigenous knowledge program
- Secondary school – dual credits, Indigenous dual credit offerings
- Add Indigenous content into current post-secondary schools i.e., KAIROS Blanket Exercise, elder come into post-secondary schools
- Cultural programming outside of school hours may be difficult, cost of living is expensive, students may be working
- Gaps, historical trauma, geographical challenges
- Indigenous students get called out in class, don't feel safe
- Have mandatory cultural training for staff
- Provincial framework is not followed, not enforced – make into by-laws to have a seat at the Board of Governors
- Affects of trauma – give information
- Advocate to colleges and universities, advocate for base of Indigenous rich content, fill gaps where Indigenous information is lacking

- Where professors struggle to implement Indigenous content, bring in Indigenous speakers
- Racism
- Institutions need to be accountable for First Nations funding
- ONECA has AQ courses available on Indigenous knowledge

#### Indigenous Student Support Office

- Post-secondary supports reference
- College/university/vocational student reference
- College supports reference
- Living in place of study reference
- Financial supports reference i.e., bursaries, OSAP
- Community supports reference i.e., friendship centres
- Prioritize safety/maximize student experience
- Up-to-date database – curriculum/or create, resource people, community people
- Communication
- ONECA needs to know who the contacts are – staff changes all the time
- Career fairs are instrumental in connecting us
- Video recruitment, open house, virtual visits
- Awareness of Indigenous student support office
- Building relationships with First Nations and post-secondary institutions
- OCAS + OSAP = IRC self-identified students
- Designated staff at post-secondary institution to connect with OSAP, OCAS, First Nations
- Invitation to events – raise awareness
- Ways to reduce to the fear of self-ID and using services
- Question of belonging/identity, am I enough?
- Post-secondary institution – Indigenous Resource Centre tells ONECA staff contact, identify key people, easy and accessible information sharing
- Sponsorship letter shared with Indigenous services before September; there is a hold on student accounts (tuition fees) even though sponsorship letter happens year after year; sponsorship letters are cash in hand; this causes stress on students and threatening emails; first payee so that OSAP will not withhold tuition
- Racism – myth that students get education for free (tuition)
- APSIP – connect with mainstream
- PD for institutions to enhance Indigenous services
- Welcome events – elders and facilitators at event
- All school tours stop at Indigenous centres
- ONECA members at institutions, one at each school
- School workers should be on the ONECA database
- Post-secondary institution organizational charts

#### Student Learning

- Student learning reference
- Reference for learning engagements
- Reference for community learning supports
- Use of phones/hot spots



- Document post COVID learning styles
- Student roles overlapped, parent/student
- Disconnect on real time post-secondary experience
- Build reference on how Indigenous students can learn and how to maximize their learning
- Short videos
- Something that appeals to post-secondary students (social media, short video)

#### Mental Health – How can ONECA respond?

- PPL networking
- Highlighting mental health supports or lack of
- Need to connect students to each other
- Track development of possible new mental health metrics
- Identify SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to current post-secondary student experience
- Highlight mental health supports in communities
- Checking in with post-secondary students
- Through mental health experiences
- We need mental health supports; they need to be culturally appropriate and accessible
- Cultural supports available
- Information session from ONECA for post-secondary counsellors on what they offer

#### COVID Data Helpful?

- No
- Hard to say
- Triggered experience
- Priorities – needs and essentials
- Highlighted learning needs and learning tools
- Demonstrated response rates – resources and finances
- Highlighted community overuse – internet services and study/reading spots
- Did students experience barriers to accessing vaccines?
- Which vaccine places were used more?
- Few students not allowed on campus, spiritual belief exemption
- Vaccination sites – good place to contact to promote information for Indigenous students
- Post COVID – how students affected, how we can support them, needs
- Internet service poor – days to download
- Program downloaded to USB – mailed, driven
- Lots of classes are still online
- Wording of the survey question is not helpful, not pertinent
- Help faculty to be online
- How do we help online students
- What is used/not used – why?
- Is more information needed?
- Build upon services used
- Some are good online learners
- Some programs could be hybrid, more choice, independent learning
- Some don't want online

- Teachable – I want to take a break, I need to take the whole year
- ONECA share with schools, First Nations – share data to increase staff, seek in person support, may not live on First Nation
- Long term effects – gaps in high school education, success at post-secondary
- Enrolment increased – access to online is more flexible

#### Student Satisfaction

- Influencing policy
- Advocacy
- Accountability
- Reporting
- Networking provincially
- Reach out to K-12, First Nation – what can be done to prepare students for post-secondary
- Share information with institutions, 70% learn better in class
- Is there a comparison to mainstream and what are institutions doing?
- Online challenge – quality of class, professor proficiency, PD how to teach online
- 90% don't know about learning support – call – overwhelmed with calls or slow service
- Automated emails
- Mental health – advocate to college, hire mental health workers
- How to support counsellors? – refill roles/keep staff; offer sessions on anxiety and depression; have mental health workers; partner with other institutions mental health services; provide information to institutions; mental health nurse – identify support; mandatory course for students on mental health
- Mandatory First Nations orientation before getting first cheque for post-secondary
- Imbedded in registrar
- 74% - good experience – where schools need to step up
- People to share best practices and available resources
- Canadian Association for Mental Health (CAMH)
- Safe place to share when things don't work at institutions – get real with each other
- ONECA share with IPEC, ONECA at the provincial table; one worker, have ONECA back them up; ONECA find workers to support
- Indigenous Peoples Education Committee (IPEC) – make space for community partners

#### Linking Students to Supports

- Building on strengths of post-secondary experiences during COVID
- Learning on your “preparation” to work, to study
- What did you do to cope during the pandemic? Create online networking supports
  - o Online channels
  - o Networking alumnus
  - o Highlight common learning paths
  - o Identify learning strategies
- Identifying where students are getting their academic 411

#### Program Content

- Build Indigenous resources nationally, turtle island, globally i.e., speakers, books, discussions, documentaries, authors

- Network service providers
- References to post-secondary providers i.e., teachers, elders, advisors, Deans – Indigenous to Indigenous
- Built-in Indigenous faculty resources, help kits

#### First Nation Community Support

- Policies reflected (community)
- Ability to study from community
- No need for policy change
- Moving online for full time post-secondary studies
- Adjust online PT or FT post-secondary studies
- More understanding from community on post-secondary experience
- Preparatory programs delivered online (Cree School Board)

#### Post-Secondary Experience

- Advocacy/relevancy
- Recognize achieving/serving schools
- Networking with post-secondary school services
- ONECA's reference for interested schools
- ONECA build working framework
- Address post-secondary focus on Indigenous school services

#### Data Analysis

- Not enough respondents – remind participants
- Time administering the survey is a factor
- Financial costs are a factor
- Consider the timing of the survey
- In person survey vs. online survey
- Language of the survey – cultural interpretation

#### Funding

- Housing not paid for
- ONECA advocate for residence at lower cost
- Advocate more funding – Chiefs of Ontario
- Research each First Nations funding levels for comparison
- Advocate for increased funding for students
- Funding guidelines – communication protocol process, staff changeover is a concern, ONECA portal app for that, QR code for everything mental health

#### Research Projects

- Students can scan, make easy
- Racism and discrimination
- Funding - expenses? – bursary, financial aid
- Which programs were successful, which were not, program, school
- Tool kit for success – ask students, ask teachers what they want

## Network Sessions

The facilitated network sessions were planned for the final afternoon of the conference. Once again, participants were split up into four groups and encouraged to share good news, creative solutions, challenges and opportunities. The following are the notes recorded at the sessions.



- Many post-secondary students are continuing their post-secondary education paths post COVID
- Networking at this conference
- Finding resources for students and for helpers
- Ideas from other communities that we can utilize in our positions
- Learning about opportunities/workshops to offer students
- Job fair ideas: job ideas, interviews, resumes, phone call – to create confidence and independence
- New learning – blue prints – northwestern Ontario Grade 7+ tracking
- Renovating Indigenous Centre – murals (2 sites)
- Land acknowledgement read by non-Indigenous
- Local post-secondary institute cost-sharing to host events
- Work study students
- Students, graduates
- Virtual meetings – good for some events, reached more people
- Native Counsellor Training Program went virtual and is free
- Food and beverage careers now
- Hubs in community (Kettle Point and Walpole Island, COTTFN) – space to study, virtual learning, gradually offer programs
- Post-secondary institutes ready to give back
- Post-secondary collaborative
- Increasing living allowance – Southern First Nations Secretariat
- Post-secondary gathering – make a regular conference
- Good conversations
- Good tools
- Safe travels/opportunity to share frustrations/PD/mental health break
- WIKY has recorded video resources and important links on Board of Education site
- Best practices are being shared
- Out of office! Heart full
- Laughter to lift up spirits
- More partners and more awareness of who wants to support the community
- Raised awareness from outsiders
- We are learning more about what our students are experiencing
- Learning new computer programs including how to register students online/upgraded, independence
- COVID rules opening up, 3 days in office will allow more interaction face to face with students
- Nice to be back in person

- Personalized schedule for student support
- Accessibility navigator for students with mental health issue
- Incentives for doing survey and answering emails
- Uptake of institutions to support Indigenous students i.e., funding, human resources, increased labour on staff, we will go the extra mile, elementary/secondary, orange shirt day, amplify Indigenous voices
- IEC and ONECA work together for systemic change; TRC institution accountability
- Retention and graduation – access to college post-secondary graduate employment, moral obligation, not just a one-off project – 5% of faculty budget for Indigenous faculty throughout the entire college collective
- ONECA can be part of the voice to head up challenges, colleges won't listen to students and Indigenous staff i.e., reduce residence fees
- ONECA come to IPEC annual meeting, come with specifics, connect to top college and universities, message from community
- Education as an enlightening experience
- Interventions and supports not like any other student group (different norms)
- Strength and weight of student and community is known
- Persons have stronger voices now, they speak up
- Community - invite to campus for ceremony and events, drum circle, gardens, pow wow, land-based learning
- More students from high school are going into university sciences – summer camps, science, S.T.E.A.M. program



## Challenges

- Communication
- Staff capacity, burn out
- Political structures
- Lack of consistency – personal, program funding/financial support, forms (e.g., workplans, etc.)
- Geographic location – getting resources
- Man power/human resources
- Finances in northern communities
- Preparing students and families for transitions
- Staff do all the reconciling
- Smudging in post-secondary institutions
- Performative allyship
- Salary – do more than original job description
- Recruiting positions, accessing services
- Staff impacts (COVID), COVID post traumatic stress disorder
- Students are struggling with transitioning and with re-engaging in person
- Parents calling for students
- Lateral violence
- Don't see budgets – no transparency
- Shortage of workers, lack of pay
- Having students respond to emails in a timely fashion

- Orientation workshops once a month e.g., prep for post-secondary, incentives – self care, bursaries, scholarships, introduction to post-secondary, preparations
- Students asking for more funding/salary grids needs to be revised/revisited
- Rate of pay does not match the level of responsibility required to do the job
- Lowering standards to fill the job
- Change in management
- Workplace management
- Language barrier in Cree School Board – need to be exempt from language requirement with three languages
- How are students interpreting with three languages
- Mental health challenges – referrals to access, navigator, new position
- New learning e.g., technology/new way to be with students in real time
- Students need to read emails, we use Facebook
- High staff turnover, losing connections
- Funding once COVID funding is over – childcare, technology funding was there...may not continue
- More mental health staff needed in remote areas (only 2 in community)
- Challenges with help lines and crisis lines
- How can we help students navigate these systems? It can be a challenge.
- Communicating with students via email or FaceBook
- Trend – Christmas time – failure not attending, list of students to institutions, introduce to students, student success form had to be completed by student, accountability, mandatory orientation, withhold living allowance
- Institutes have challenges – obligated to service students to meet their needs
- Indigenous voice needs to be understood, need accountability with Board of Governors, the weight of the voice of Indigenous representatives, ONECA represents all First Nations
- Grade 6 – 9 – behaviours, socialize, gaps in learning? Need 10 years to address this
- College – high risk assessment, intervention required, reach student, math and English across the board
- Indigenous content should be authentic
- Post-secondary – fund a few extra because of loss of students by January; college needs to step up
- How do colleges collaborate with close communities?
- Hold institutions accountable for our students, tired of safe conversations, let ONECA do the hard conversations
- How many students need one or a few credits to graduate/get credentials



- Connecting with a variety of shareholders for student success – tutors, mental health
- Breakdown 'silos' in education, communities, collaborate
- Streamline programming
- Food! Feed the students
- Re-vamped post-secondary policy and receiving good feedback for this

- Researching existing policies and procedures to improve on ours
- Software applications training (8 months) – excel, cultural, etc.
- Upgraded all staff with increased work skills to serve the students
- Empowered all employees increased positivity
- Connected – TEAMS
- More awareness of online resources
- Indigenous Services Team (Cree School Board)
- Traditional knowledge/style of learning is being incorporated more into curriculum
- Finding Indigenous connections/allies/to support students navigating the system e.g., college support, tutoring
- Hire social media person to reach students, parents, staff – raise students morale
- Wellness packages for students were appreciated/helped connect the team at the secretariat with students
- Language apps are continuously improving – Ojibwe, Oji-Cree, Cree
- Drones purchased for students – include culture, traditional teachings, language in all curriculum
- Land-based learning
- Link possible triggers to wellness workers (QR code)
- Partnerships created with mental health workers within office on the reserve, need links to other communities for community members who lack trust in their own community workers
- “Are you there?” – communicate with students using their own language
- Have allies/other youth to help communicate
- Housing – billeting Indigenous students, connect to auntie, uncle, grandmother
- Gas card or parking pass
- ONECA calendar
- House on university campus for aunties, grandmothers and knowledge keepers – live and take care of students



- ONECA to host post-secondary conference
- ONECA do survey to post-secondary institutes (managers, counsellors) and Indigenous student centres
- Reach out to former counsellors
- Mentorship opportunities
- Regional student surveys/focus groups
- Self-care coupons
- New faces/contacts
- Back in person, renew contacts
- Rejuvenated
- Share resources/jobs
- Honours in BA now offered at Six Nations Polytechnic
- Cree School Board – new ways to communicate, new database
- Able to be in touch (in real time) with our students who are all over the province
- In smaller communities, smaller numbers allow staff to form stronger bonds with students, more flexibility

- Share information, resources and knowledge
- For example, partnership with China – mushroom harvesting, medicines in the north – jobs for our youth in near future/need them involved
- Business as usual in remote schools – KOBE
- Students can watch virtually from KOBE schools; this helps them prepare for life in the future
- Use our own data to fire back, qualitative data is important
- Add inclusion and diversity to Indigenous departments; Indigenous are distinct
- Elementary/secondary – Indigenous lead, solely focused on Indigenous student success
- Language – early childhood education, JK, SK, immersion
- ISC and ONECA – lobby for increased funding for PSSSP as 5-year agreements come to an end i.e., rent, food, gas
- Colleges and institutes Canada has a national Indigenous Advisory group
- ONECA provides data i.e., needs of Indigenous students
- College should take up the cost of students and pay for the first semester
- Best practices from counsellors; hear from communities
- Design first year program – all work together to design for our students
- When at the table, introduce self as I am \_\_\_\_\_ I represent \_\_\_\_\_ community members
- ONECA – develop a mechanism to reach out to students to obtain diploma credentials, 5-year window before curriculum changes – college may be able to make it happen
- Micro-credentials



## Conference Evaluation Results

The ONECA Post-Secondary Conference was offered to its membership free of charge. The conference attracted seventy (70) registrants plus twelve (12) late registrants (after the deadline date or in-person registrations) and nine (9) people who either cancelled or did not show. Therefore, the actual number of conference participants was seventy-three (73).

In addition to completing workshop evaluation forms, the final day of the conference, participants were encouraged to complete an overall evaluation form. Forty-two completed evaluations were received.

The survey results show overwhelming support for the conference – 100% of survey respondents or forty-two (42) would recommend the conference to others.

98% of the respondents or forty (40) out of forty-one (41) survey respondents rated the conference organization as either excellent or good!

Other survey questions are shown here.

**100%**  
would recommend the  
conference to others

**98%**  
praised conference  
organizers

Please rate the overall conference in the following areas:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Keynote/Guest Speaker	31	8	1	
Presenters	19	10		
Selection of Workshops	29	11	1	
Hotel	28	11		
Food	25	13	1	
Entertainment/Banquet	27	9		
Organization	36	4	1	

Notes: Not all conference participants answered all of the questions. One person missed the keynote; one person marked N/A for hotel; one person couldn't attend the entertainment/banquet; and one responded with N/A.

For ONECA to better serve conference participants, they responded to the following:

<b>Please respond to the following:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Did the workshops you attended meet your expectations?	39	
Did you establish new contacts at the ONECA conference?	39	
Will the training you received at the conference assist you in your job?	39	
Did you collect new resources at the conference?	37	
Did the conference respond to your professional development needs?	37	
Would you recommend any of the facilitators from the conference for community learning events?	42	
Have you attended an ONECA conference before?	26	16
Will you attend another ONECA conference?	37	
Are you a graduate of the Native Counsellor Training Program?	4	34
Are you presently an ONECA member?	34	8
Do you want to become an ONECA member?	7	
Would you recommend the ONECA conference to others?	42	

Notes:

- With respect to the question, are you a graduate of the NCTP, two respondents added: not yet; one said, almost; and one said, not yet almost.
- For are you presently an ONECA member, one respondent said, I'm a student
- When asked do you want to become an ONECA member, one respondent stated, I'm a student and one did not respond

Survey respondents were asked to state which district they were from. Of the participants that answered the question, here are the survey responses:

Thunder Bay	Waterloo Region	Oshawa, near Scugog
Brantford	Eastern	Oneida Nation
London - 7	Sault Ste. Marie	Huron-Perth County
Sudbury - 8	Muskoka	Cree School Board - 2
Peterborough - 2	Temagami	Nipissing - 2
Kenora District	Lakehead	Simcoe County
North/northwestern Ontario – 2	South	

Suggestions for Improvement

- I wouldn't change a thing. This conference was amazing!
- To receive the notes from the conference
- So many good workshops happening; unable to attend them all

- Great conference!
- Use transcription for virtual presenters
- No suggestions
- \*For the survey questions, it would have been beneficial to have a hand-out or slides of questions being asked as they were very loaded questions. Facilitator of this session didn't understand the ONECA expectation of session.
- Glad to see not so university/college focused. Seems to have shifted to the professional development for the First Nation education counsellors which is great!
- Being informed early on regarding workshops (non member)
- none
- Self-care – massages, nails, etc.
- Some facilitators talked a lot about their agency and not much about the topic title
- More detailed descriptions of workshops and the content they will be delivering
- Maybe some land-based workshops outside
- Can I become a member from another province?
- Business card exchange, networking opportunity
- Keep doing what you're doing! Awesome conference! 😊
- 3 days is too long for a conference; tough to take 3 days off work.
- Email out the agenda (non member)
- Could be longer, would have like to hear all guest speakers!
- Adding mental health, have some more school heads show up to hear our concerns
- Networking earlier – as at end lots want to leave early
- Hospitality room, morning smudge, elder available, options for singing/drumming
- More facilitators from local Haudenosaunee areas
- Scrambled eggs every morning, please
- Maybe more time for networking with new contacts
- Technology set up
- Some workshops should be offered twice in case there are two in the same time slot (hard to choose)
- End at lunch on last day for travel time
- Would have been good to have more local presenters
- Vet your presenters – I want to know who I am learning from, what Nation claims them
- Dietary issues – less carbs for snacks

#### Suggestions for Future Professional Learning

- Offer “lunch and learn” on the last day to end at noon
- Share email list of all attendees
- Self care – sharing circles, debriefs
- Review ONECA resources
- Could there be a possibility to record workshops? It was disappointing to have to pick just one, when I would have loved to engage with all learning opportunities
- Sessions with other communities on set topics, questions to see what other communities are doing with their programs/funding.
- Invite some students to participate in the breakout rooms for the 2022 survey. It'd be good to hear their perspectives on it too!
- Great work ONECA! 😊

- Mental health First Aid
- OSAP Indigenous contact
- OSAP information is always helpful
- Resource for post-secondary funders and school contacts, e.g., sponsorship letters
- Hard to find funding for Indigenous students who don't have status
- The conference in May was amazing! ONECA does well. More presenters from outside ONECA maybe or giving the PowerPoints to participants.
- Indigenous knowledge keeper to be involved should anyone need to connect for self-care.
- Invite CBS PSSS to present
- Encourage and empower supporters of \_\_\_\_\_ post-secondary students sharing
- Land-based learning
- Our role as Indigenous reps on Boards
- Indigenous student counsellors share their best practices from college/university and recommendations for First Nations post-secondary counsellors
- Incorporating land-based learning into curriculum
- Good job!
- Session on "Indigenous education"
- Best practices for engaging out students
- Please no hard candies on the tables – it is super distracting to listen to people crunching throughout an entire workshop!
- Well organized!
- For newcomers to education – post-secondary – it would help me to learn how OSAP, OCAS, First Nations sponsorship works
- Always interested in learning about accessing free supports for students and PD for frontline workers

## Concluding Notes Based on the Evaluation Forms

**100 %**  
**Satisfaction**

The conference met the expectations of 100% or all those who responded to this question. 100% or all conference participants who answered the question, established new contacts. 100% or all respondents agreed that the training received would assist them in their jobs.

Most of the participants checked off that they would attend another ONECA conference.

It is important to note that the conference attracted a significant number of participants who had not attended an ONECA conference before. This could be a result of the change in location or some other unknown factors.

Most of the conference participants are not graduates of the Native Counsellor Training Program. This may be an opportunity to promote the NCTP.

ONECA may need to charge registration fees due to the number of participants that registered late or on-site.

## Recommendations

Conference participants gave ONECA high praise for the good work in delivering another successful conference. This post-secondary conference resulted in a keynote speaker, two panels, sixteen workshops, a brainstorm session and a networking session; and without a doubt, participants offered lots of suggestions for future work.

The ONECA Post-Secondary Conference was offered to its membership free of charge. The conference attracted seventy (70) registrants plus twelve (12) late registrants (after the deadline date or in-person registrations) and nine (9) people who either cancelled or did not show. Therefore, the actual number of conference participants was seventy-three (73). In the future, ONECA may want to charge a registration fee to alleviate the high number of on-site registrants.

Among the many suggestions offered by conference participants, there continues to be a need to strengthen the relationships between students, community and institutional partners. Captured here are some of the suggestions ONECA may want to consider for future professional development opportunities:

- Mental Health within Indigenous Communities Post COVID 19 by Enaatig Healing Lodge and Learning Centres (this session had to be cancelled due to illness).
- More from Darren Thomas
- Diane Longboat
- More from Mary Deleary on the Indigenous Wellness Framework/Wellness Assessment
- Bring back Stephanie Stephens for a Kindness workshop part 1 and 2; this would also be a good workshop for students. Sessions by Stephanie would be welcome.
- Bring back Beth Pollock. ONECA could partner with NOARC/RARC to offer their extra resources like STEPS, etc.
- The session on Student Transitions could have been longer; there was so much information
- A session about OSAP delivered by a government representative
- A session on Indigenous education
- Self-care
- Mental health concerns from schools
- Information session from ONECA for post-secondary counsellors on what they offer
- Networking opportunities

Conference participants also made project suggestions that ONECA may want to consider. They include:

1. Start a debriefing group for counsellors/helpers.
2. Identify SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to current post-secondary student experience.
3. How to support counsellors – refill roles/keep staff; offer sessions on anxiety and depression; have mental health workers; partner with other institutions mental health services; provide information to institutions; mental health nurse – identify support.
4. Tool kit for success – ask students, ask teachers what they want.
5. Facilitating community partnerships to enhance student resources.

## Appendix A - Questions for the Focussed Discussion

### 2022 Survey of Indigenous Students

(Notes for Volunteer Facilitators)

The following questions have been developed to guide the facilitation. Please read them out one at a time and ask participants to respond. Feel free to move around through the topic areas if the group takes you there. Be sure to encourage many people to respond, rather than have the discussion limited to only a few participants.

Invite participants to brainstorm ideas. Encourage responses from every group/table of conference participants. If you keep hearing from the same people, seek responses from another part of the group. Encourage respondents to be considerate of the time and allow time for others to respond.

#### Student Profile Information

- Why is it important for the survey to have questions about student profiles? I.e., male/female, two-spirit, First Nations, Métis, Inuit?

#### Where Students Attended Post-Secondary Institutions

- How can ONECA utilize data on which post-secondary institutions the students attended? I.e., Indigenous institutes, mainstream institutions, various locations.

#### Program Data

- Why is it important for ONECA to know if students are in full, part-time or in intensive mode programs?
- What strategies can ONECA employ with knowledge of students that are enrolled in Indigenous-focussed programs? Non-Indigenous focussed programs?

#### Faculty and Program Information

- How can data on faculty responsiveness to student needs be utilized?
- How can ONECA utilize data about how program content reflects Indigenous histories, cultures, knowledges and circumstances? There was a decline from the 2019-2020 student survey. How is the data important over time?
- The data shows that far more students are content with how Indigenous peoples are reflected in their courses that not, however, ¼ of students say far more work is needed or there is not an adequate reflection. How is this information helpful?

#### Indigenous Student Support Office

- There are still 15% of students who do not know if the institution has an Indigenous student support office. 26% of students do not know if there is an Indigenous student counsellor. How can ONECA utilize knowledge of institutions with Indigenous student support offices? Institutions with an Indigenous student counsellor?

## COVID Data

- How have the numbers of student vaccinations been helpful?
- Program delivery varied after COVID hit. It went from face to face to technology based online or some other hybrid program delivery model in a hurry. How is this information helpful?
- The survey shows that students accessed certain supports at the learning institution while other supports were accessed at the First Nation. How can ONECA utilize or communicate this data?
  - o During the pandemic, students accessed these supports at their learning institution: the online library, recordings of lectures, mental health supports, help with learning/studying, tutors, residence.
  - o During the pandemic, students accessed these supports at their First Nation – tuition funding, living allowance, technology, education counsellor, elder/cultural advisor, mental health counsellor.
- First Nations communities supported student's online learning in a variety of different ways. How is this information helpful?

## Student Learning - How can ONECA utilize the following information?

- 59.5% of students had adequate preparation for their post-secondary program.
- 63.1% of students are concerned about the quality of their education as a result of the pandemic.
- 70.8% of students learn better in a classroom environment.
- 74% of students find it more challenging to concentrate and stay focused for online course work.
- 75.6% of students had access to learning supports at their post-secondary institution; 19% did not know about the learning supports.

## Mental Health

- 83.4% of students say their mental health suffered during COVID-19 i.e., stressed, anxiety, isolation, trouble sleeping, and depressed. How is ONECA positioned to support students who were challenged? What projects could be undertaken to address these kinds of issues?
- 61% of students reported knowing their post-secondary institution has mental health supports; 30.2% of students identified there are mental health supports at their First Nation. What role can ONECA play to help link students or communicate much needed supports?
- The most important supports are: mental health supports, financial supports and cultural supports. How can ONECA utilize this information?

## Post-Secondary Experience

- Students reported that post-secondary institutions are moving in a positive direction in some areas, i.e., strengthening connections to identity/culture, Indigenous student services, 74% of students rate their post-secondary experience as either very good or good. How can this information be utilized?

## Student Funding

- Students are getting funding for post-secondary education from a number of sources. How is this data helpful? For example, Indspire is not a funding source for survey respondents.
- How can ONECA utilize student funding information? We already know there are limitations in funding from different sources. Students continue to rate tuition and living allowance or additional living allowance as the most important supports needed, followed by technology, elder/advisor, mental health counsellor and education counsellor.
- Students were asked to comment on student funding guidelines with respect to program delivery – online, a mix of in-class and online and in class only. What role can ONECA play in helping to communicate this information and to who (which organizations)?

If there is extra time, ask: If ONECA were to undertake additional community research projects, like the student survey, what would it look like? What subject areas or topics could be covered?



## **Appendix B – New Workshop**

### **Supports for Students with Disabilities in a Post Secondary Environment**

This session will explore supports and resources for students with disabilities who are studying in a post secondary program. We will explore what it means to have a disability and academic accommodations which may support student success. We will discuss possible funding opportunities that may assist with costs related to accommodations. Come learn how accommodations are scaffolds to success, not a lowering of expectations.

Presenter: Jenn Meksula, Counsellor, Accessibility Services Fanshawe College

Jennifer Meksula has been involved in the student support side of education for 20+ years. She has developed and facilitated individual and group programming for children and youth who experience challenges related to distress tolerance and emotion management. She has worked with students in elementary, secondary and post-secondary settings as either a teacher or social worker. She is currently a member of Fanshawe College's Accessibility Services team where she serves as both counsellor and coordinator. She recently returned from a professional development leave where she focused on the benefits of Universal Design for Learning and explored how to incorporate these principles into course design.