

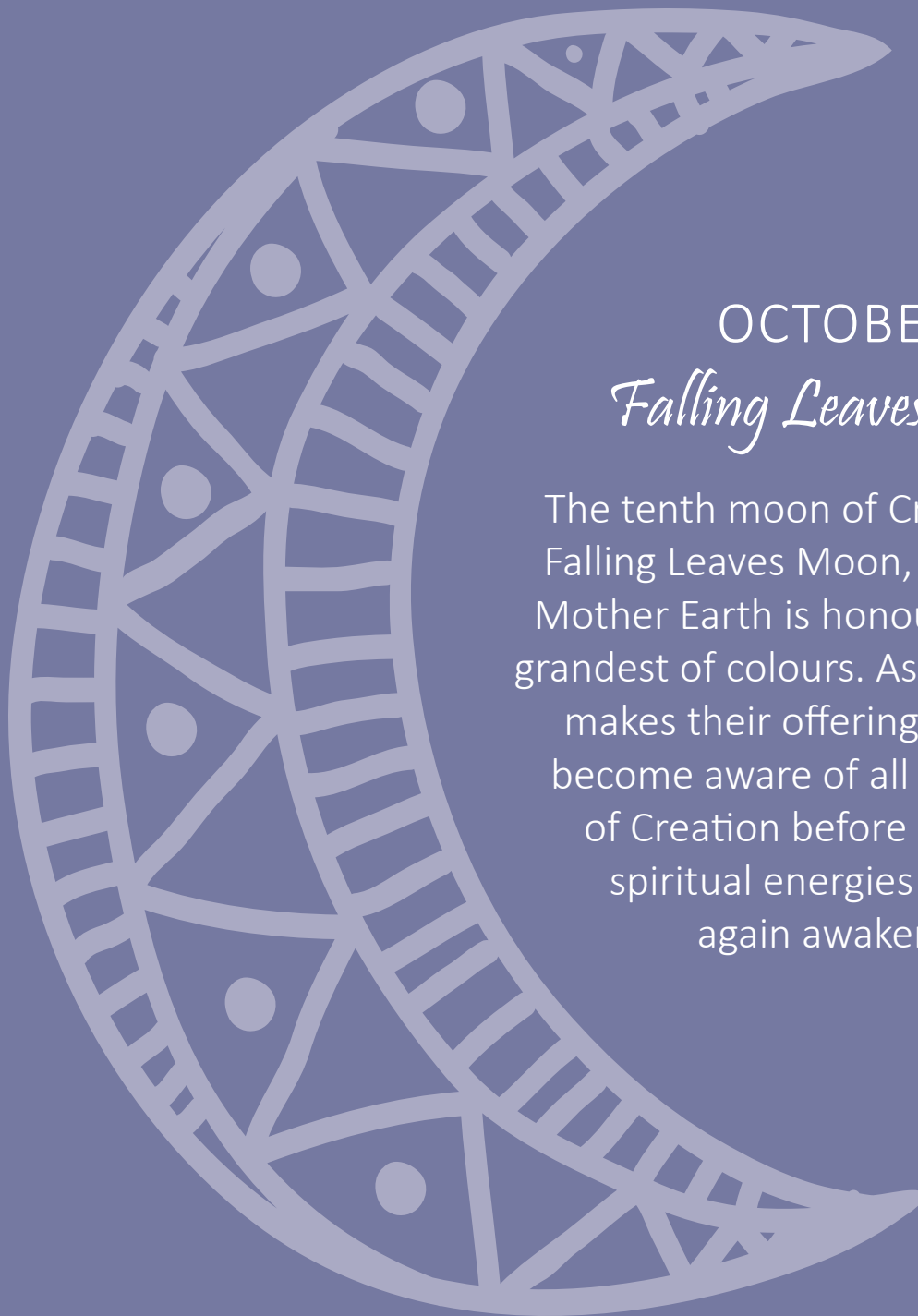


# ANNUAL REPORT

2017 - 2018



*"Falling  
Leaves  
Moon"*



OCTOBER,  
*Falling Leaves Moon*

The tenth moon of Creation is the Falling Leaves Moon, a time when Mother Earth is honoured with the grandest of colours. As all of Creation makes their offerings to her, we become aware of all the miracles of Creation before us and our spiritual energies are once again awakened.

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# Our President



On behalf of our Board of Directors, it is with great pleasure to report another successful year for the Ontario Native Women's Association. As a result of the hard work and dedication of the strong leadership team at ONWA and the valued contributions of our Board of Directors, we have made great strides towards advancing our strategic priorities. ONWA

is finally being recognized as a leader on Indigenous Women's issues and making systemic change on addressing violence against Indigenous women.

ONWA has grown substantially over the past year will continue to grow. ONWA is anticipated to further increase staff by 35% in the coming year as many new programs and services have been/are being implemented from the Ontario government.

Ontario Native Women's Association is proud to amplify the perspectives and lived experiences of Indigenous women in Ontario as we work to build an Ontario based on mutual respect that prioritizes the safety, empowerment and leadership of Indigenous Women and Girls. We believe by focusing on women and girls, whole communities are made safer and more prosperous.

ONWA is committed to ensuring Indigenous women's collective voices are reflected in policy conversations at the provincial level. ONWA has always taken a nonpartisan approach to government relationships and we look forward to collaborating with our new government partners on front line service delivery to support community safety across Ontario.

We have come a long way, but we still have a tremendous amount of work to do. We can accomplish the work needed when we work in unity from a strength-based approach. Women are the experts in their own lives and through this approach we will create positive community change.

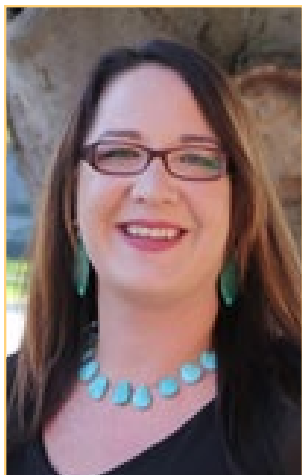
In unity,

*Dawn Lavell-Harvard*

Dawn Lavell-Harvard  
President



# Our Executive Director



## WOMEN AS MEDICINE

It has been prophesied that when Indigenous women take up their leadership roles once again our community healing will begin. We must collectively work together to end violence plaguing Indigenous women and focus on

safety at the individual level, in the family, and across communities. This work must be done in community by community, through building relationships on foundations of trust.

This report is reflective of these foundations and demonstrates what we can accomplish when we work together collectively supporting Indigenous women in communities all across Ontario.

ONWA, as a service delivery agency, provides key front line programs that support Indigenous women in crisis and respond to their needs, creating “Respectful” spaces as we recognize that agencies have an obligation to create spaces that honour everyone’s healing journey through non-judgmental service delivery. This is the basis of a trauma-informed organization. As a result of this foundation, we have been very successful increasing services that meet the needs of Indigenous women in Ontario as well as sharing our tools and resources to support community development.

It is an honour that we have provided frontline services to **over 9,600** individuals this past year. The services provided include home visits, service coordination, crisis intervention, and mitigation and prevention services. Additionally, through our community capacity building activities we hosted and partnered in **over 4,200** workshops

and events that connected to **over 76,900** people in Ontario.

This success would not have been possible without a clear Vision and Strategic Picture to guide our path forward towards recognizing that every Indigenous woman has leadership potential and we need to create paths towards reclaiming this responsibility. We will continue to engage with our board, membership and community members accessing our services on ways we can work together to create safety and healing opportunities.

Moving forward, we recognize that communities have the skills and knowledge of what’s needed in their community. We will be working with them and supporting them to take up their leadership roles to support the needs of Indigenous women in their communities.”

*“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”* Barack Obama

We hope that you enjoy reading this report as much as we enjoyed doing the work. We continue to be honoured to work with Indigenous women and communities.

In unity,

*Cora-Lee McGuire-Cyrette*

Cora-Lee McGuire - Cyrette  
Executive Director

# Our Story



## A Year in Review

The Ontario Native Women's Association has been quite busy growing over the last year. Our programs are operating at full capacity and we are in the process of rolling out new programming in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Building our programs to support the work we do is essential to quality services that support Indigenous women and their families.

ONWA has secured new program funding in the areas of Gladue, Mental Health, Elder care and disability support. This is great news for Indigenous women and communities throughout the province of Ontario. ONWA plans for program expansion to additional sites. However, as some of these programs are pilot projects, the service delivery is limited to certain sites at this time.

This work is supported through the development of a new operating model

that ONWA uses to guide the work. This operating model is a reflection of our organization and how the work is organized. This model is a critical tool in determining what work is done in each portfolio and how that work aligns with our Strategic Picture. In doing so, we commit to quality assurance throughout our service delivery approach.

Another key project to the ONWA restructure was the development of a functional organizational chart. This chart focuses on the actual governance structure of our organization and it gives a clearer picture of what work is done where within our portfolios. It helps us to determine priorities within the portfolio and identifies key activities that are essential to supporting Indigenous women and families.





All of this leads to focusing our teams utilizing a performance management approach that supports building leadership throughout the organization. ONWA is committed to guiding and directing staff to be their best selves in all aspects of their person. ONWA prioritizes staff development to support our service delivery approach to individuals and community. As ONWA grows, it is vital that staff are able to support each other through a comprehensive organizational orientation that includes the showcasing of each program to help and guide new staff through a holistic approach.

We all know that growth can be uncomfortable, however, growth is essential to moving towards a better life for the Indigenous women we serve. We need to see ONWA where we want it to be. We will get there, maybe not today, but tomorrow gives us the opportunity to always begin again.

*"A DREAM written  
down with a  
date becomes a  
GOAL.*

*A goal broken  
down into steps  
becomes a PLAN.*

*A plan backed  
by ACTION  
become REALITY."*

- Greg S. Reid



# Our Vision

At the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) we will support women to take up their leadership roles in the family and in the community.

ONWA will support women's leadership. To do that we have to ensure that our voices are heard. We have to start by listening to each other first.

- To reclaim our voices we must have knowledge. Much of the knowledge we need to be strong leaders is rooted in the cultural teachings.
- To hear our own voices we must silence our pain and trauma and find a place for it in our lives that does not hurt us.
- Our self-esteem needs to be reclaimed.

So when we speak we will have a grounded, balanced, strong, and kind voice.

To achieve our leadership roles we have to break the cycle of abuse that is part of our families and communities. To do that we will, through all of our actions and words, not carry forward the abuse.

We will speak the truth because we will know what the truth is. We will be forgiving and move forward after our truth has been shared. We will not use the colonization behaviours we have learned to hurt others. We will believe in our truth and respect it.

We will expect board members and our Executive Director to reflect this vision of behaviour. When they do not behave in this way we will gently ask them to realign their behaviour.


We will be focused in our work and not exhaust the staff or board. We recognize that any issue we chose to work on, with focused resolve, will support women to move forward in all issues, because all issues are interconnected.

In being leaders in our families our focus must be on the children:

- We take up our role for the children and address the child welfare system. We will build a child welfare system that is transformed and recognizes that the shattered, hurt parent needs love, care and attention, just as her children do. We will create new ways of healing families that are based on the cultural teachings. We help each woman change her life for the better.
- We take up our role for the youth and deal with the youth suicide. We will be good teachers and guides for our youth and make space for them in our work.

We will trust in ourselves and in each other that we can realize this vision. We will love and care for each other.





# *When we focus on Indigenous women we focus on the family and community*

*“Through colonization, Aboriginal women have been victimized and perceived to be disposable. The Strategic Framework assumes that improving the mother improves family, community and the nation.”*

(Sylvia Maracle, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres)

An Indigenous perspective does not facilitate or promote either/or thinking. When we bring our attention to the women in our community, it is not to exclude any other community members, be it the men or the children or the Elders. It is to establish a beginning for the work. Ultimately the work will include all members of the community.

In 2014, when Romeo Sanganash, MP rose in the House of Commons to request an Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women he said:

*“In many Indigenous cultures and societies we are taught to honour women, as lifegivers, as knowledge keepers, as storytellers, as medicine women, as word carriers, as community members and human beings and colonialism has impacted negatively on those values.”*

When we begin to acknowledge and reclaim the role of women we also reclaim all of the roles in the community. There are many indigenous teachings that offer us the understanding that women’s role is to maintain connection and continuity in communities and families. When we start with acknowledging women’s responsibilities in our communities, we immediately acknowledge the responsibilities of men to protect and honour women and children’s roles in community.

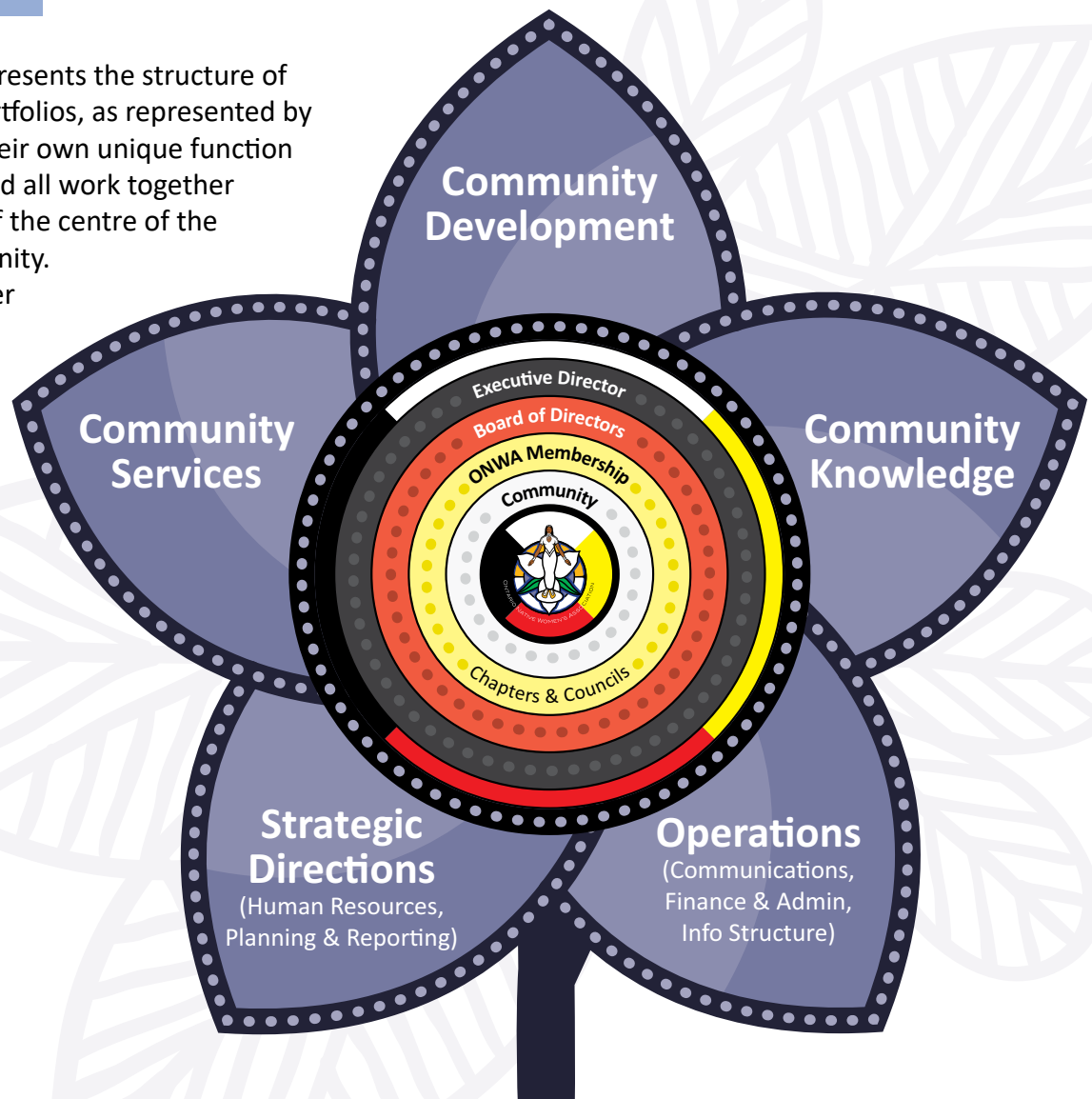
# Our Organizational Structure

The Ontario Native Women's Association takes seriously our responsibility to the community and the part we play in empowering Indigenous women and advocating for their voices to be heard. Every member of the team plays an important role in the work we do. In the true nature of Indigenous women's leadership, we do not see one person as more important than the other, but rather, every person plays an important part of the whole, as we come together in unity and work towards one vision.

Culture and our identity as Indigenous women leaders are the foundation of the work we do, forming the root from which the flower of our organization derives nutrients and water to grow. Water is central to many of the teachings we receive from our Elders and Grandmothers, and we open our meetings in a good way with a smudge and honouring of the water. As Indigenous women, we recognize our responsibility to the water, and the life that it gives us.

## Our Structure

The beaded flower represents the structure of ONWA. Each of the Portfolios, as represented by the five petals, have their own unique function and responsibilities, and all work together exists for the benefit of the centre of the flower and the community. The centre of the flower is the women.



# Our Operating Model

ONWA's management team saw a need to have clarity within ONWA and launched Project Operational Excellence. At a very practical level, Project Excellence is about truly understanding ONWA, and leveraging that understanding to position ONWA to meet the growing demands on it.

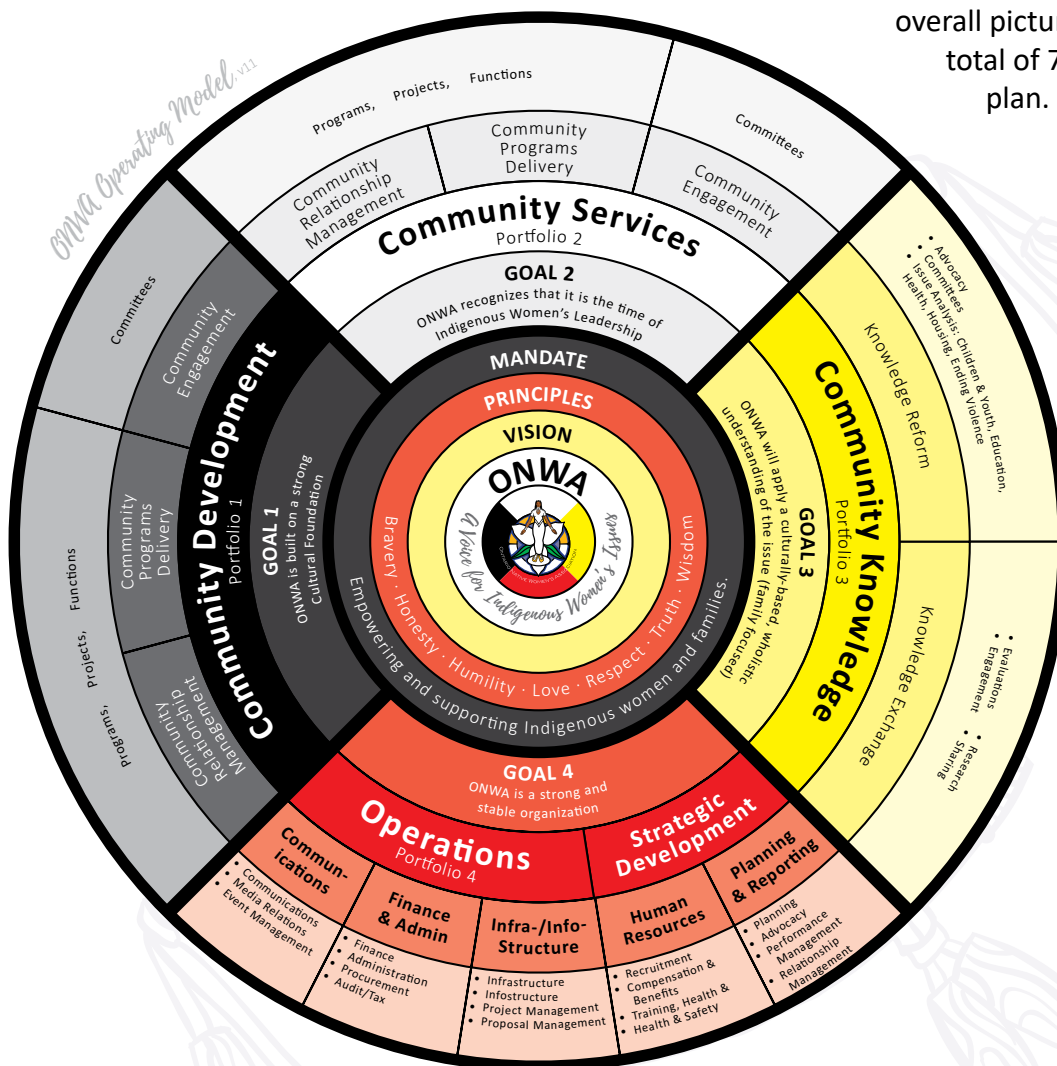
We needed to clearly align the ONWA organization to the ONWA Strategic Plan by solidifying an operational culture that is community member focused and results oriented. Identifying and implementing future-oriented frameworks, plans, functions, systems,

and processes ensures ONWA achieves its goals and objectives.

Through all of this work we have seen the need to revise the ONWA Model and this new model ensures women are the centre of our work. The model also links to specific portfolio-based actions and outcomes and has an aligned tactical plan with goals and objectives.

Project Operational Excellence has been a transformational process that is positioning ONWA for the future. It means change, new tools, and new ways for ONWA. It means instilling a 'continuous improvement' management culture. We are all excited and we are looking forward to the next steps.

As a result of all of this hard work, the ONWA Strategic Picture report card shows that in the past year we have accomplished 53% of the overall picture. We have completed a total of 74% in just 2 years of a 5 year plan.





# Our Governing Board

ONWA has a policy-making Board that is committed to creating an open and supportive Board environment to facilitate open and respectful discussions. The Board of directors follow a Governance Policy that provide a framework for the way in which governance is carried out within ONWA.

Our Board is comprised of sixteen (16) Indigenous women; each of the four regions has four representatives, one of which must be a youth. ONWA has two (2) honorary members and a regional Grandmothers' Council that is comprised of non-voting members of the Board that are present at Board Meetings and the Annual Assembly in a support and mentorship role.

<b>Board of Directors - CURRENT REGIONS (2017-2018)</b>			
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>Southern Region</b>	<b>Western Region</b>	<b>Northern Region</b>
<b>Dawn Harvard President</b>	<b>Brenda Jackson Director</b>	<b>Agnes Bachmann Director</b>	<b>Betsy Connor Treasurer</b>
<b>Melinda Commanda Director</b>	<b>Gloria Alvernaz- Mulcahy Director</b>	<b>Cecilia Airns Director</b>	<b>Pauline Hunter Director</b>
<b>Mellisa Gill Director</b>	<b>Wendy Sturgeon Secretary</b>	<b>Sharon Sapay Director</b>	<b>Roberta Wesley Vice President</b>
<b>Lynne Cormier Youth Director</b>	<b>Mariah Abotossaway Youth Director</b>	<b>Kayla Meekis Youth Director</b>	<b>Mary Anderson Youth Director</b>
<b>Holly Hughes Grandmother</b>	<b>Suzanne Knapp Grandmother</b>	<b>Catherine Everson Grandmother</b>	<b>Dorothy Wynne Grandmother</b>

## Honourary Members

- Jeanette Corbiere-Lavell (Manitowaning)
- Dorothy Wynne (Moosonee)

# Our Services

- Northern Region
- Eastern Region
- Southern Region
- Western Region

- ★ ONWA Sites (10)
- 📍 ONWA Chapters (11)
- ONWA Councils (38)



\* AHBHC: Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children

# Our Strategic Picture Update

ONWA introduced the Strategic Picture 2016-2021 at the ONWA Annual General Assembly in September 2016, clearly defining our focus and direction for the next five years as we move toward a unified vision. Despite not being funded for our Strategic Picture, ONWA has already made great headway on each of the Strategic Directions in the first year. The full Strategic Picture can be viewed on ONWA's website and below is an update on the work that has been done.

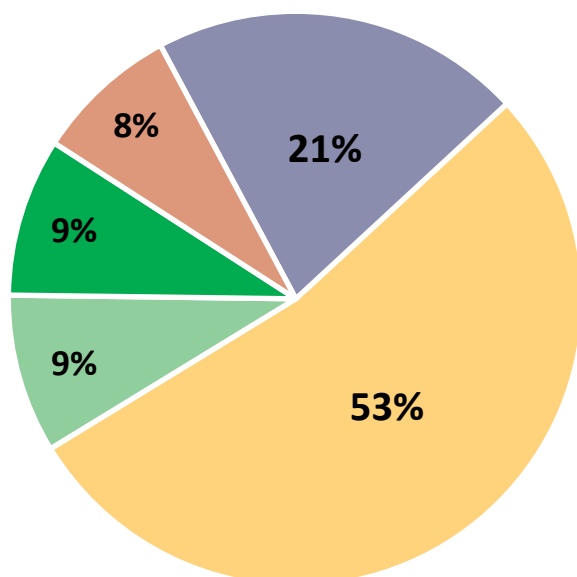
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	2016/2017	2017/2018
<b>1. ONWA IS BUILT ON A STRONG CULTURAL FOUNDATION</b>		
<b>A. Represent the diversity of the different Aboriginal cultures in Ontario</b>		
<b>Action 1:</b> Restructure the Grandmother's Council to reflect the diverse cultures and ensure that on the Council there is representation from the Ojibwe, Cree, Haudenosaunee, Confederacy and Métis.	✓	
<b>Action 2:</b> Develop program guidelines and an Elders protocol that identify the process for selecting Elders and Traditional Teachers for each program. Ensure that the Elders working in any program are selected from the Territory.	75%	90%
<b>Action 3:</b> ONWA is developing a culturally competency training curriculum that included on-line modules. Part of the curriculum is the history of Indigenous women in Ontario and Canada.	75%	✓
<b>B. Conduct ourselves based on culture</b>		
<b>Action 4:</b> Refocus the Grandmother's Council to work only at the Governance level and provide direction for the Board and the membership at the AGM.	✓	
<b>Action 5:</b> The Grandmother's Council work with the management team and board members over the summer of 2016 to develop an ONWA code of conduct that will be culturally-based and be the guidelines for the ONWA AGA.	✓	
<b>Action 6:</b> Start all of the work we do (policy, research, program work) with a teaching and cultural guidance. Focus those teachings on our responsibilities as women and our roles as mothers, grandmothers and aunts.		✓
<b>2. ONWA RECOGNIZES THAT IT IS THE TIME OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP</b>		
<b>A. Rights-Based Framework</b>		
<b>Action 7:</b> After the Board goes to the United Nation Permanent Forum on Indigenous People, ONWA will develop a governance and leadership approach that balances our rights and responsibilities.	✓	



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	2016/2017	2017/2018
<b>Action 8:</b> For all of the work done at ONWA, understanding the role and responsibilities of women in the Creation stories and our responsibility to Mother Earth, particularly the water. It will be how we describe ourselves and can be a specific campaign.		25%
<b>B. Responsibility to develop the Youth</b>		
<b>Action 9:</b> Raise funds to have youth go to Healing our Spirits in Australia.		✓
<b>Action 10:</b> In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) recommendations around sports and recreation to address violence, partner with Right to Play or another organization to establish a youth program that promotes restoring health and pride to Aboriginal youth. (Look into Ultimate Frisbee and Indigenous Lacrosse) Ensure that youth with disabilities are part of the programming.		✓
<b>Action 11:</b> That youth programming be developed that provides youth with the opportunity to be in relationship with and receive good guidance from the Elders.		✓
<b>C. Responsibility to develop the Youth</b>		
<b>Action 12:</b> The Research Department will review the TRC Calls to Action and identify the link between the work of ONWA and the specific recommendations. All policy and research work will link to the TRC recommendations.		50%
<b>D. Recognize our responsibility to Thunder Bay</b>		
<b>Action 13:</b> Thunder Bay has a number of unique factors in Ontario, including having the highest homicide rate in the province and having so many deaths of young First Nation youth. ONWA will work to consolidate the current unincorporated locals into one council and work to build capacity of the incorporated chapters to provide services.		50%
<b>E. Recognize our responsibility to the Indigenous women across the province</b>		
<b>Action 13.A:</b> Have a transparent process that shows how sites are chosen for new programs and ensure that ONWA is reaching out to all parts of the province. (It will help with the new structure.)		✓
<b>3. ONWA WILL APPLY A CULTURALLY BASED, WHOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE (FAMILY FOCUSED)</b>		
<b>Action 14:</b> In our work, consider how to do it in partnership with other Indigenous organizations in order to show our leadership as women is about building relationships.		✓
<b>Action 15:</b> Engage with the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation (NNAPF). They have developed the Mental Wellness continuum and ask that ONWA apply an Indigenous gendered lens to addressing mental wellness. This framework would inform all of ONWA's work.		✓

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	2016/2017	2017/2018
<b>Action 16:</b> Train all the ONWA policy, research and other staff that sit at tables to represent ONWA at policy tables to be clear advocates for ONWA's position and to be able to continue to advocate in the face of challenging situations and people.		✓
<b>A. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women</b>		
<b>Action 17:</b> Develop a human trafficking campaign from an Indigenous women's perspective. As part of the campaign, educate service providers about non-judgmental services to Indigenous women.		✓
<b>Action 18:</b> Establish a safe house for human trafficked victims with one of the Chapters of ONWA. Develop a model of care to support the women that is culturally based and strength based.		✓
<b>Action 18.A:</b> Over the next five years ensure that each region has a safe house.		✓
<b>Action 19:</b> Ensure that ONWA has a healing and supportive role in the MMIW process.		✓
<b>Action 20:</b> Launch a province wide campaign on who was lost in Ontario and what happens when we lose women in our families and in our communities. Consideration: Work with our local police to support the campaign.		✓
<b>B. Responding to Violence Against Women in the Family</b>		
<b>Action 21:</b> Work with the men and the Chiefs to establish an initiative that includes the men in our work.		25%
<b>C. Child Welfare - A child's right for stability and love</b>		
<b>Action 22:</b> Based on the mapping exercise currently being done through Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS), ONWA will identify what gaps exist and make a plan to respond.		50%
<b>4. ONWA IS A STRONG AND STABLE ORGANIZATION</b>		
<b>A. Credible Membership Structure</b>		
<b>Action 23:</b> Redesign the current membership regional structure to accurately reflect the four directions (establish a real East, West, South and North using a wheel).	✓	
<b>Action 24:</b> Establish two membership categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapters are incorporated organizations and can be full service delivery sites.</li> <li>• Councils are unincorporated locals that would be supported in their development.</li> <li>• ONWA will have a memorandum of understanding with each Chapter in order to strengthen clarity and accountability in the relationships, including: service agreement conditions; how to meet all the requirements including audit requirements; what happens when a Chapter is not in compliance and how to address an issue when it arises.</li> <li>• Establish that only one Council can be established in any city. There can be multiple Chapters in any city so as to ensure that there are multiple service sites for women throughout Ontario.</li> </ul>		75%
<b>B. Risk Mitigation Plan</b>		

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	2016/2017	2017/2018
<b>Action 25:</b> Implement all the recommendations in the Risk Mitigation Plan and the Management Plan.		✓
<b>Action 26:</b> To enhance the reputation of ONWA, ensure that well-trained staff are the representatives for ONWA on all external committees.	✓	
<b>C. Strong Governance</b>		
<b>Action 27:</b> Support the board in the policies and the board design to operate as a policy board.		✓
<b>D. Strong Executive Director and Management Structure</b>		
<b>Action 28:</b> Finalize the decision for the Executive Director position.	✓	
<b>Action 29:</b> Develop a policy on the management approach at ONWA and train all staff to operate within that policy.		50%
<b>E. Strong staff capacity</b>		
<b>Action 30:</b> Building on the work that was done by Jane Middleton-Moss and Rebecca Martell on lateral violence, and using the Four Agreements and other cultural teachings, build a policy, code of conduct and training for the staff of ONWA. The training can also be offered to the Board and the members of ONWA at the locals.		✓
<b>F. Effective Membership Engagement</b>		
<b>Action 31:</b> Use a community development approach to strengthen the chapters and councils.		75%
<b>Action 32:</b> Redesign the Annual General Assembly.	✓	



## Strategic Picture Report Cord

**ONWA HAS COMPLETED 74% OF THE STRATEGIC PICTURE WITHIN 2 YEARS.**

- 2016 - 2017
- 2017 - 2018
- 2018 - 2019
- 2019 - 2020
- 2020 - 2021



# Our Work

The foundation of our work comes from the stories of Indigenous women. These stories echo the experiences of their lives, including their needs and hopes. These stories are reflected in our program reports, our evaluations, and through engagement and consultation with membership and community partners. This work allows ONWA to make recommendation and collaborate on projects that will support the changes that Indigenous women identify as needed. This information is critical in moving forward; to create new programs and services, allow collection of new data, and tell new stories.

Through our Portfolios, ONWA has the honour of building relationships with individuals, families, and communities. We use these opportunities to advocate for the reclamation of Indigenous women's voice and story, this is what guides our work. ONWA continues to provide strength-based culturally safe programming through a trauma-informed gender-based lens, that aligns with our Strategic Picture.

4,202

Community  
Events

76,956

Participants

9,643

Community  
Members Served

126

Partnerships

29

Programs

"Before the program I was a nervous single parent. I had no one to help/teach/talk to, since joining the program I learned a lot of skills and confidence. Thank you for doing such a great job."

"They helped me through bouts of depression and anxiety over the years, and have helped me with parenting my little girls on days when life just seemed like too much."

"The homeless program successfully helped in finding a safe and healthy place to live."

"Great conference and tackling a tough topic in a way that empowered and created a positive based learning."

"The help I received has improved my self-confidence. I feel I can speak for myself and advocate for myself now."

"I am learning more about my spirituality and heritage. My mom was taken in the 60's scoop, so we didn't get to know where we came from."



# Nibwaakaa-Inaadiziwin She Is Wise Conference

ONWA coordinated the Nibwaakaa-Inaadiziwin - She is Wise Conference held in Toronto, March 2018. This conference gathered frontline workers and agencies from across the province in a safe respectful space that recognized experiential knowledge, teachings, and stories of Indigenous women's experience, resilience and leadership within their families and communities. This conference captured the voices and perspectives of Indigenous women, fostering a discourse of strength that seeks to change the narrative of violence through collective cultural and gendered empowerment.

Attendees participated in various activities and workshops such as traditional teachings from the Medicine Wheel, drum and rattle making workshops based on the RATTLES Model; Our Responsibilities as Women; Indigenous Women's Stories Through Colonization; Telling our Stories as Women; Finding Your Voice as a Woman; Our Relationship and Responsibilities as Women; Working Together to End Youth Suicide in Our Communities; Supporting Families and

Communities with Loss of MMIWG, Anti-Human Trafficking/ Addressing Sexual Violence; Wise Youth; Storytelling; Teachings that guide in maintaining balance; and Self Defense. **130** participated in the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual She is Wise Conference.

Your silence will not protect you. Always speak the truth.

Joan Riggs



When you are kind to yourself and kind to others our communities will change, for we are imperfect perfect people.

Cora-Lee McGuire-Cyrette









# Community Knowledge Portfolio

## A VOICE FOR INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S ISSUES

The Policy and Research Department has been redesigned to the Community Knowledge Portfolio which still consists of Policy and Research but will now be known as Knowledge Exchange (Research) and Knowledge Reform (Policy). The conceptualization of our Community Knowledge Portfolio asserts ONWA as the Knowledge Specialists, where informed intellect is derived from the grassroots community for the empowerment of, and the advocacy for, Indigenous women and their families.

Strategic Directions: Goal 3  
ONWA will apply a culturally-based, wholistic understanding of the issue (family-focused)

### Knowledge Exchange

Knowledge Exchange consists of Researchers who engage in reciprocal exchanges of knowledge with our community members and formulate research and conduct evaluations based on the findings from these knowledge exchanges. This Indigenous women's information governance forms the basis of a culturally-rooted gender-based analysis within the RATTLES framework where these findings are used to enhance current programming and service delivery methods and to develop new and innovative ones.

### Building Our Bundles Pilot Project

Building our Bundles is an education research project that encourages relational cyclical learning between educators and learners as they explore Anishinaabe Ikwe lives from the 1930's -2017. The purpose of this project is to create Indigenous-informed learning material for educators and students with a focus on Ojibwe women from the Robinson Superior region. Storytelling is fundamental for transmitting knowledge, culture, and language for future generations to learn, create meaningful engagements, and honour their ancestors. As such, storytelling is the central method in the research and learning process. The research has yielded a wealth of knowledge directly from Anishinaabe women. The overarching theme is re-stor(y)ing Indigenous womanhood by





reclaiming our stories by honouring self-determined representations and identities. This knowledge will be transmitted to educators and learners using contemporary mediums such as digital storytelling, children's storybooks, digital grandmother turtle pedagogy, and Anishinaabe woodland art. Building our Bundles was presented at the Ontario Education Research Symposium, and recently, has been successfully accepted to present at 44th Annual Research on Women and Education Fall 2018 Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Local educators, leaders, students, Indigenous education organizations, and services are anticipating the official Building our Bundles launch in the Fall 2018 at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

## Gender-Related Priorities

### *Gender-Based Discrimination in the Indian Act – Bill S-3*

During the summer of 2017, ONWA began a campaign to support the Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples' Amendments to Bill S-3, made June 1st (6(1) (a) all the way). The Senate's amendments sought to remove the two-tier hierarchy of status which is the central problem in the registration provision. ONWA launched a multi-faceted campaign including contacting senators, members of parliament, and an online petition. More than three-thousand individuals have signed the petition from around the world, many of them are Indigenous women and their family members who share personal accounts of how gender-based discrimination in the Indian Act has

Follow the  
dictates of your conscience,  
to set our sisters free.

Mary Two-Axe Earley,  
Mohawk advocate for women and children

My mother Jeannette Corbiere-Lavell has been fighting for this change since 1970 when she lost her status because of marriage. She went all the way to the Supreme Court and now almost 50 years later she is still fighting to regain what was taken from her by the Government of Canada in 1970 - her human rights! It is 2017 and it's time to right a historic wrong before it's too late. 50 years of discrimination is long enough.

Dr. Dawn Lavell-Havard,  
President, ONWA

impacted their lives.

In December, the federal government passed the bill with the amendment but introduced a cut-off date of 1951. Currently, consultations are occurring across the country in order to determine the inclusion of pre-1951 registration. Many of the comments on ONWA's petition speak to the need for this historic wrong to be corrected. There are many Indigenous women and men, young and old, who speak of themselves being denied status or being unable to pass status to their children. The gender discrimination in the Indian Act has widespread impacts and correcting this injustice has the potential to positively impact many lives.

You can find the petition here:  
<https://www.change.org/p/a-call-to-action-to-end-gender-discrimination-in-the-indian-act-now>

## R.A.T.T.L.E.S.

As an organization that seeks to empower women and their families, the R.A.T.T.L.E.S. framework is a developed method of evaluating ONWA's program delivery and

The systemic exclusion of Indigenous women may seem like the past, but it still affects today.

Dr. Suzy Basile, Professor,  
first Indigenous student to receive a PhD from UQAT

as a means of self-evaluation for Indigenous women as they walk towards creating a life of social and cultural wellness. R.A.T.T.L.E.S. invokes Indigenous women's traditional teachings as a way of honouring our ancestors and allowing women to build their truths through storytelling. Pluralized, each part of the R.A.T.T.L.E.S. indicates an aspect of self-evaluation and leadership for women. ONWA utilizes these aspects to centralize Indigenous culture within its strategic model, and as such, each letter in the term corresponds to an essential quality of this methodology. These qualities include Responsibility, Alignment, Technique, Tactics, Language, Evaluation, and Storytelling. In the same way that the hide of our rattle holds and fosters our connection to traditional knowledge, it is ONWA's responsibility to centralize traditional teachings, protocols, and values in our service delivery in our engagement within the community and as we evaluate our effectiveness as an organization. R.A.T.T.L.E.S. has been successfully accepted to present at the Eighth Gathering of Healing our Spirit Worldwide (HOSW8); Our Knowledge, Our Wisdom - Our Promise, For Our Grandchildren's Grandchildren being held on Gadigal Land in Sydney, Australia.

**R**esponsibility  
**A**lignment  
**T**echniques  
**T**actics  
**L**anguage  
**E**valuation  
**S**tores



## Knowledge Reform

Knowledge Reform consists of Policy Analysts who are advocating from a women-centred and culturally strength-based, gender-based, safety-based analyses that informs and helps to reform policies and legislation that will premise the development and the improvement of wholistic service provision for Indigenous women and their families.

### Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women (EVAIW)

ONWA co-chairs the EVAIW Executive Committee providing oversight and guidance to the provincial implementation of *Walking Together: Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women* initiatives and EVAIW policy efforts continue with MMIW, AHT, trauma informed and safe spaces, sexual violence, and strategic framework updates.

### Anti-Human Trafficking

ONWA co-chairs the Human Trafficking Provincial Committee with the Director of Ontario's Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Office (PATCO). The Human Trafficking Provincial Committee coordinates information sharing among Indigenous and Ministry partners across the province on anti-human trafficking initiatives. The Committee receives updates and provides input on the implementation of the *Ontario Strategy to End Human Trafficking*, which includes specific funding for Indigenous-led approaches to support culturally-relevant services and responses to human trafficking.

### Community Safety and Healing

Committee members are focused on providing feedback for sustainable and enhancement of Indigenous victims' programs; Family Information

Liaisons Unite; Indigenous Pilot Program for Offenders; Sexual Violence Counselling and Helpline Review; and Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program Policies.

### Improved Data and Research

Committee members are focused on improving the collection and availability of data on violence against Indigenous women. The main priorities of this work have been the co-development of a Performance Measurement Framework and a research project about the role of ceremony in the prevention of violence against Indigenous women.

### Housing and Poverty Reduction for Indigenous Women and Families

ONWA supports the ongoing requirement of improving access to safe affordable housing while advocating for a Housing First approach that removes barriers to Indigenous women and their children experiencing homelessness into being rapidly re-housed.

### Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS)

ONWA collaborates with OAHS on housing related issues affecting Indigenous people by continuing to promote the Ontario Urban and Rural (OUR) First Nation, Metis and Inuit Housing Policy Framework advocating for increased funding and resources. Additionally, ONWA policy efforts have been in the form of infrastructure proposals, Indigenous Women's Economic Empowerment Calls to Action position paper, tenant relations engagements, political acuity, homelessness, OMSA Affordable Housing, and the Indigenous Women and Housing Newsletter.



*"Economics of an Indigenous society is not wealth, it is knowledge, ancestral knowledge. I believe we are all millionaires, no actually billionaires, people are coming back and questioning how we have survived genocide."*

-Jan Longboat (Elder)



What is the secret to wellbeing?  
Women know how to look after men, men  
know how to look after women and both know  
how to look after the children.

Jan Longboat (Elder)

### **Special Priority Policy (SPP) Working Group**

ONWA provided recommendations to the SPP that falls under Ontario's Modernizing Social Housing Program. ONWA continues to advocate the position where priority needs to be given to Indigenous women and their families; specifically, Indigenous women who are fleeing violence and sex trafficking and require swift access to safe and affordable housing.

### **Indigenous Children and Youth and Families**

ONWA works collaboratively with the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy (OICYS), in partnership with the Ontario Government, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Metis Nation of Ontario and Tuunsgaavit Inuit.

### **Children, Youth Family Services Act (CYFSA)**

Following the amendments to the Child and Family Services Act enacted January 1, 2018,

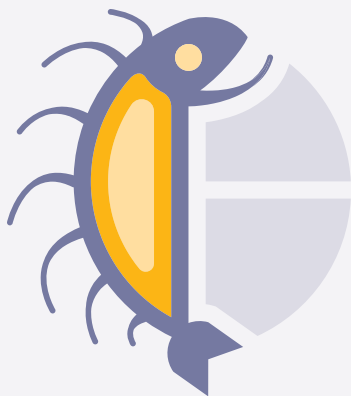
ONWA, OFIFC and MNO engaged community and collectively determined key regulatory priorities that needed to be addressed. These included the following:

1. Accountability: Lead Agencies;
2. Children's and Young Person's Rights;
3. Child Protection Services;
4. Diversity and Inclusion;
5. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis-Specific Provisions;
6. Mechanical Restraints;
7. Physical Restraints;
8. Residential Licensing;
9. Funding and Accountability; and,
10. Personal Information and Privacy.

Using the key priorities as a guide, an extensive joint review and analysis was conducted on the proposed regulations. This review informed a collaborative submission that outlined the concerns and recommendations of Indigenous communities and partners. This submission was shared with ONWA staff, board, membership, and MCCSS. ONWA anticipates that the second phase of regulation development will begin September 2018.

### **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)**

ONWA is committed to assessing the current capacity for Indigenous Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) service provision for Indigenous children, youth, their families, and caregivers



## **Reconciliation and Education of Teaching Indigenous Ideologies - RETII App**

In September 2017, ONWA launched RETII, a learning website and app with a course to help learners discover the history, worldview, experience political organization, and advocacy of Indigenous women in Ontario. In 2018, ONWA launched the app to a wider audience at the “She is Wise” Conference in Toronto.

Register for the course online: <http://reconciliation.onwa.ca>

in Indigenous communities across Ontario. The purpose of the Indigenous approach is to explore, build, and connect culturally-relevant foundational supports for Indigenous communities to increase awareness and share knowledge addressing FASD prevention and support services within Indigenous communities.

### **Youth Life Promotions (YLP)**

ONWA co-developed and co-designed the *Who Am I? Embracing Life: Gichabida’odan bi biimaadiziwinn* advocacy and awareness tool with Indigenous youth throughout Thunder Bay.

ONWA hosted four of these *Who Am I?* Youth Workshops with whom we shared the tool, and received knowledge, stories and feedback from the Youth to inform the upcoming leadership and mentorship opportunities for the land-based programming and services this fall 2018.

### **Indigenous Women’s Health and Well-Being**

ONWA aims to increase the overall well-being of Indigenous women and was able to secure funding on a number of issues including diabetes and chronic care, traditional health and healing, in-home and community care, Ontario Public Health Standards’ relationships with Indigenous people, renewed mental health and addictions indicators, and health care reform in prisons.

### **Urban Indigenous Health Table (UIHT)**

ONWA participates at the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care’s (MOHLTC) UIHT, where the UIHT priorities focused on four strategic areas of activity:

1. Community Engagement and Accountability
2. Mental Health and Addictions
3. Quality Improvement
4. Systems Renewal

This history contains the seeds of our shared past, continued present and our future relationships as Indigenous women. It is necessary, now, for all people in Ontario to learn this history and to learn the impacts on Indigenous women in Ontario.

Dr. Patricia McGuire, RETII course creator and Professor at Carleton University



# Partnerships

## Knowledge Exchange

Research partnerships with post-secondary institutes are new to this Portfolio. They are:

### ***Creating a Safe Space for Indigenous Youth in Urban Areas: The Case for Young women in Thunder Bay.***

A Collaborative Research Project: Ontario Native Women's Association, Social Sciences, and Humanities Faculty at Lakehead University with Dr. Chris Southcott, and external investigator Dr. Patricia McGuire.

### ***Gii Minwaajimo Mindimooyenyag Gikendaasowin: Holding our World Together Women's Knowledge(s) and Stories.***

A collaborative Research Project: Ontario Native Women's Association, Faculty of Public Affairs, Social Work at Carleton University, and principal applicant Dr. Patricia McGuire.

### ***Negahneewin "Leading the Way" Project: Supporting Community Development through Indigenous Women's Leadership.***

A collaborative Research Project: Ontario Native Women's Association, Bora Laskin Faculty of Law at Lakehead University and the Centre for Policy and Research in Indigenous Learning, at Confederation College.

## Knowledge Reform Partnerships

### ***Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative for Vulnerable Populations***

CDVPIVP identifies unique risks experienced by certain vulnerable populations in order to enhance risk assessment; understand the barriers to domestic violence prevention mechanisms these specific populations face; and learn about best practices that are already occurring in these communities. The creation of a National

domestic homicide database will be a central repository for this data that will ensure evidence-based research, decision making, risk assessment and practices in this area.

### ***Cancer Care Ontario***

ONWA has developed a relationship protocol with Cancer Care Ontario to reference Aboriginal Cancer Care strategies that ensure the principles guiding the relationship are sustained and strengthened. The priorities are to build productive relationships with First Nation, Inuit, and Métis leadership and communities to better understand their cancer issues and needs. The relationship of this protocol is to enhance the quality of life for FNIMI women and address certain cancer and disease prevention priorities. It provides means to build on existing and new programs, and joint initiatives to improve and advance cancer care and chronic disease prevention for FNIMI women and girls.

ONWA & CCO's 2017/2018 strategic priorities are;

1. Build productive relationships
2. Education
3. Palliative and End-of-Life Care
4. Prevention
5. Screening
6. Research and Surveillance

The Screen for Life Coach was at ONWA February 13, 2018. This service was provided due to the relationship developed between Cancer Care Ontario and ONWA. The mobile bus delivered screening services for Breast, Cervical and Colorectal Cancers to Indigenous women and girls.

### ***Violence Against Women Learning Network***

ONWA was part of the planning committee for the Annual Sexual Violence Forum which occurred in February 2018. We also co-wrote a newsletter '*Indigenous Women, Intimate Partner Violence & Housing*' which was released in March 2018. ONWA was also featured on a webinar with Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women being the subject of discussion.





## Grandmother Earth Dress Healing Jingles

Mindimmowaynaanadan Dannoway  
Shebashkwewannan Magodin

Grandmother Earth Dress is a red jingle dress created by ONWA, and inspired by Jaime Black's REDress Project. Grandmother Earth dress honours and acknowledges Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people. She serves as a sacred item of healing for families as well as communities to commemorate their loved ones. She is meant

for families to visualize their loved one in a beautiful traditional regalia.

365 jingles on the dress represent a year round call for justice and safety for Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people. While the colour red is not normally part of the Journey Ceremony, this specific dress was born out of vision and ceremony through the guidance and consultation of Elders, Healers, and Knowledge Keepers, where she received her name Grandmother Earth Dress. Through ceremony and teachings, guidance and explanation told that Grandmother Earth Dress came from the Southern Direction to honour women, girls, and Two-Spirit people as missing loved ones and as mothers, daughters, aunties, sisters, grandmothers, nieces

and cousins. They will know the dress is made for them. They will know that they are loved.

Grandmother Earth Dress travels throughout Ontario to support families and communities. She is never meant to be worn in this realm but is symbolic of those in the spirit world. ONWA cares and provides ceremony for her four times per year, when she travels, and to prepare her for the community she will be visiting.

- Before working with the Grandmother dress be sure to carry cedar in your shoes. It was explained that when doing this work the cedar is meant to protect whomever is caring for her that day from negativity that may arise from the sensitive topic.
- The dress has a bundle and because of her work and impact in communities her bundle has been growing, we place her items at the base of the dress.
- The dress also uses medicines. They are as follows: woman's sage, sweet grass, tobacco, cedar, beaver castor, and bear root.
- After any community event or ceremony, where she is present, she is to be cleansed.
- Once the grandmother is back home (ONWA), it is imperative that the dress be fully cleansed with a cedar bath. To do this, boil cedar and, while using a feather, fan the steam to the dress thus ensuring the Grandmother Earth Dress can continue with her work.
- The Grandmother may be called to ceremony. This usually comes in the form of the grandmother sweat lodge.

9

Communities  
Visited

918

Contacts with  
community  
Members

8,903

hits MMIW website  
Grandmother Dress  
Video



# Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls (MMIWG)

ONWA has been working diligently to support families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. These projects are complex and ONWA focuses on honouring the memory of the individual first and foremost. Providing the family with support to navigate systems that can be traumatizing to them for various reasons is also crucial. Educating the broader public is vital to this work as this also is to support families. Oftentimes, families are faced with a lack of interest or knowledge of this issue due to stereotypical images or preconceived notions of Indigenous women and of those who are missing or are murdered.

ONWA supports Indigenous women through their journeys as they grieve for their loved ones, as they raise their children and move within a world that does not always recognize their worth and contributions to the societies they once led. We lead through love and kindness in hopes that the families we support feel this and do the same. Supporting families as individuals, as family members and as community members centres the work around Indigenous women and this helps to transform the grief and trauma to healing and safety. The issue of MMIWG is widespread, ONWA has developed a comprehensive approach through frontline service delivery, policy and research development, and healing supports to respond to this issue.

ONWA uses a trauma-informed approach to working with families of MMIWG. This approach supports the healing activities used to honour and support the women and families. All areas of

work from our organization use this knowledge to better our services to community.

Community gatherings to support families of MMIWG were held throughout the province in: Kenora, Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, Ottawa, Mississauga, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, Toronto and Kingston. A total of **636** family and community members were in attendance for one-on-one sessions with a Healer, Sharing Circles, Drum Circles, and Ceremonial Feasts. These are the supports that families request and recognize as their supports. The ceremony is the medicine needed for them and their loved ones. During the community healing gatherings, ONWA provided education, resources and support to an additional **993** participants.

The ONWA launched a MMIWG website in 2018 to provide trauma-informed and Traditional Healing supports, information, toolkits, guides and resources to family members and community connected to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. This website has been accessed by the community **12,760** times.





## 2<sup>ND</sup> Annual MMIWG Pow-Wow

This event is to support for families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It was held in September 2017 with **350** people in attendance. The pow-wow allowed ONWA to provide a space for Community Members of MMIWG to access traditional healers and sacred ceremony. Grassy Narrows Women's Group attended, brought their drum to support the Community. There was also an unveiling of a quilt created by the families of MMIWG. The pow-wow included traditional teachings, healing, medicines, and a chance for people to share their experiences and stories.



# Community Development Portfolio

## EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS WOMEN TO BE LEADERS AND HELPERS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

ONWA's Community Development Portfolio delivers education and awareness programs to empower communities on issues that affect Indigenous women and their families. Programs are delivered in two ways - the first being by providing knowledge and information exchange through a Program Coordinator that utilizes a service delivery model that encompasses a combination of workshops, education campaigns, and regional activities. The second is through a flow-through funding model that delivers direct client services through our sites, Chapters, and partnering organizations based on community need and organizational expertise. ONWA has developed our service structure to reflect the reality of Indigenous women's lives, and we work with community to ensure that their needs are being met through capacity building.

Strategic Directions: Goal 1  
ONWA is built on a strong  
Cultural Foundation

2,397  
Engagements/  
Workshops/Events

19,894  
Participants

6,990  
Community  
Members Served

### Aboriginal Diabetes Education Project (ADEP)

The ADEP began in 2002. The ADEP objectives are to support and increase physical activity; to create diabetes awareness and prevention presentations and workshops; to ensure information given out is age and culturally sensitive; and to develop presentations about proper foot care management for Indigenous Women and their families.

During the past year, the ADEP Portfolio has served **1,759** community members through education and training workshops and presentations.

The Annual Mocc Walk 2017 was another huge success. A total of **940** community members participated provincially. This community-based initiative creates collaboration and provides education to Indigenous women and their families on the importance of being active, foot care and the importance of well-being of the community as a whole.





I am writing this letter to thank you and your team for the awesome opportunity to join the Mocc walk 2018. I was surprised to learn how fit I could become by walking every day! I am down two pants sizes and my sugar levels have been amazing. I am a type two diabetic and plan to beat it with nutrition, water and exercise. I didn't know where to start, but when I saw this opportunity I jumped on it and started walking that same day 😊 I just want to send my gratitude to you and your team for bringing awareness to the benefits of walking and promoting a healthier lifestyle for people like me who are making an effect to end diabetes.

Community Member

## Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Awareness Program (ARGAP)

This program provides community awareness, education, prevention, and resource development for the benefit of all Indigenous women and their families.

The ARGAP programming focuses on community development using a Traditional Indigenous and land-based approach to provide education, identity, self-location, and healing. The ARGAP Portfolio has provided workshops, presentations, training, and Information Booths services to Waterloo, Kingston, Fort William First Nation, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Mississauga, Orillia, Hamilton, Curve Lake First Nation, Sault St. Marie, Windsor, Whitesand First Nation, Rocky Bay First Nation, Blue Mountain, Peterborough, and Thunder Bay with a total of **3,403** participants.

The ONWA Community Garden launch is always a huge success. With a turnout of **80** community members and partners the launch focused on planting tobacco, fruit and vegetables. The community garden provides

Thank you for encouraging me to do this walk. I am a diabetic; it helps me to bring my sugar down big time. And also lost weight. And got a routine of walking.

Thank-you.

Timmins Mocc walker

families the opportunity to be involved in an activity that is useful for the whole family. It connects them not only to each other, but also to community and Mother Earth.

## Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy Program (ASETS)

Over this past year the ASETS Program has supported **over 63** women across the province in securing employment and pursuing their educational dreams.

Indigenous women living off-reserve were able

"I got accepted to the University of Geneva, a world-class University and received personal praise from the department of Social Sciences for my research interest and dedication to bringing this research to a more global stage..... Thank you so much, Gitchi-Miigwetch, for providing students with this opportunity."

ASETS Program Participant

to access two types of programming supporting their skill development. The Job Creation Partnership component allowed for on the job training for up to 26 weeks. This included a Targeted Wage Subsidy component that allowed employers to contribute a portion of wages. The Individual Initiatives Program allowed Indigenous women to access post-secondary support funding for last year of studies, for up to 52 weeks. The ASETS program empowered Indigenous women to fulfill their career aspirations, ensuring that Indigenous women had the necessary resources and tools by providing access to services such as resume and cover letter writing, computers

#### UNIQUE PROGRAM STATS - ASETS:

358

Number of Connections

8

Number of Community Members Supported through Targeted Wage Subsidy & Job Creation Partnerships

29

Number of Group Activity Participants

63

Number of Active ASETS Program Participants

for job searching, and career research, printing, copying and faxing of resumes, as well as workshops such as Personality Dimensions and Safe Food Handling.

As of April 1st, 2018 ONWA no longer has an ASETS Program.

## Building Aboriginal Women's Leadership (BAWL)

ONWA's BAWL program focuses on building capacity and supporting Indigenous women as leaders in their communities. Requests for educational and training presentations on leadership development included: Traditional Roles and Responsibilities of Indigenous Women, Life Balance, Effective Communications, Board of Directors Roles and Responsibilities, Professional Boundaries and Navigating, and Building Effective Partnerships are only a few of the leadership workshops available upon request. The BAWL portfolio has provided training to **1,135** Indigenous women in **39** communities across the province.

The BAWL program is responsible for maintaining our relationships with ONWA's membership. By supporting our Chapters and Councils endeavors, the BAWL program collaborated with **over 2,200** Indigenous women by supporting their cultural gatherings, educational events, demonstrations, community crises, and community celebrations.

## Circles of Care

The Circles of Care program has supported Indigenous women throughout the province to navigate through the complex systems encountered when experiencing violence and involvement with child welfare. The Circles of Care Program is located in 9 service delivery sites working collaboratively across the province, ensuring program consistency and success of program deliverables: Fort Erie, Sioux Lookout, Midland, Hamilton, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Timmins, Kenora, and Ottawa.

The Circles of Care Program created safe spaces

and supported Indigenous women to create, build upon, and share their “bundles”. Family Support Workers partnered on events, initiatives, and workshops using a trauma-informed and culturally-based lens. FSW’s worked closely with Indigenous women and their families to provide a circle of care that responded to their needs through direct service provision and through close collaboration with other community services to promote a wholistic approach. Programs focused on crisis management, traditional supports, systems navigation, advocacy support, information and education provision for mothers on their rights and responsibilities, cultural and traditional supports including sharing circles, teachings, ceremonies and guidance from Elders, as well as working with families and CAS to resolve conflicts while upholding the rights of both the mother and child. The Circles of Care Program also provided drum kits and teachings to **over 60** Indigenous girls, youth, women and Elders.

2018-2019 is the final year of the three year funding agreement through the Family Wellbeing Program and MCYS. The focus for this year will be on program evaluation to ensure the program continues to meet the needs of Indigenous women and community members.



#### UNIQUE PROGRAM STATS - CIRCLES OF CARE:

3,112

Number of Individuals Provided Services

2,317

Number of Activities Provided

71

Family Reunification

1,303

Number of Traditional Activities/Services Provided

1,483

Number of Outreach & Referrals

193

Number of Attendees at Program Launches

Successes of the Circles of Care program include a woman who has been accepted to a 2 year college plan, and stated how excited she is to expand her education, and hopes to have a good job with this degree so she can provide and support her family.

A huge success was a youth who was supported and empowered to use her voice to make a domestic violence statement. Supporting women to make choices to end violence, ensures society as a whole supports the community to heal.

With the support of the Circles of Care Family Support Worker, a program participant was able to develop a reunification plan and propose it to Family Services. Their children had been in care for five years. The Plan was well received and the client now has regular weekend visits with the goal of the children returning home in the fall. Prior to their involvement with the Circles of Care program, the agency refused to work with the community member. The FSW was able to assist in terms of advocacy and case management.



One woman wanting to exit was supported through Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services, Thunder Bay Police Department and ONWA. This partnership provided the woman wrap around service supports needed in order for her to get the help she needed. She was able to access food and resources until she was able to enter a long term healing and rehabilitation centre. The woman was provided a space where she could tell her story which gave her the opportunity to recognize her own strengths. In total, the ONWA IAHTL Project was able to support five women throughout the province to exit trafficking.

#### UNIQUE PROGRAM STATS - IAHTL:

254

Number of Survivors Supported

784

Number of Service Providers

25

Number of Training Activities

29

Number of Education & Awareness Sessions

14

Number of Community Engagements

68

Number of Participant-Based Activities

3,570

Number of Individuals who accessed Participant Based Activities

750

Number of Service Providers who received Training

3,510

Number of Program Contacts

## Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison Project (IAHTL)

The IAHTL, under Ontario's Strategy to End Human Trafficking, supported Indigenous communities in providing survivor-focused and localized responses to Human Trafficking (HT) over the past year. The IAHTLs were located at six key partnership sites each supporting one of the five identified regions in which HT have been identified as an issue: Métis Nation of Ontario (Ottawa Region), Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Northern Ontario), Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (Toronto & GTA), Fort Frances Tribal Area Health Services (Treaty 3), Chiefs of Ontario (Golden Horseshoe) and Ontario Native Women's Association (Thunder Bay Region).

The Project Lead supported the project provincially through training, education, mentoring, guidance, and ensuring Indigenous survivor's voices were central to the work. The Project Lead was responsible for the design and delivery of the "Orientation to Indigenous Human Trafficking, Culture-based (OIHTC) Trauma-Informed Practices" Training in communities around the province. Approximately **250** participants, including survivors, youth, Elders, and organizational representatives, have taken part in the OIHTC Training. The IAHT Liaisons capacity building included intensive HT Orientation and Strategic Planning Sessions, a three-day Training and Service Model Development Session. A Policy and Research Methodologies Training for ONWA staff was also delivered. All IAHT Liaisons were responsible for Education and Awareness Sessions that were conducted across the province. The IAHTL project was the first large-scale provincial Indigenous engagement process in Ontario with **over 3,360** community participants taking part in the project. This initiative was created by and for Indigenous people with the goal to respond HT in our communities in hopes of ending it.



## Mental Health Program

The Mental Health program provides trauma-informed and Traditional Healing supports and treatment services to Indigenous women and their families. The Mental Health Program is delivered in two designated service delivery sites, and works within both our Community Services Portfolio and our Community Development Portfolio.

The Mental Health Worker in our Sioux Lookout site works from a Community Services approach to provide direct counselling, case management, and education and awareness building to community:

- One to one support trauma-informed Traditional services to **22** community members,

## Painting Through A Woman's Perspective

ONWA's **International Women's Day** theme was Painting Through A Women's Perspective, where we hosted a "paint night" activity with the community. We had **35** participants paint a beautiful blue portrait of a night scenery. They were guided through the whole painting process, step by step, with each painting coming out similar but different through everyone's perspective. All women who attended really enjoyed this relaxing activity and provided positive feedback. We gained insight on what the community wanted to see happen in Thunder Bay as it relates to International Women's Day in the future. This was an amazing event that we hope continues annually.







- Provided a combination of educational/informational workshops and cultural activities (beading, quilt, and regalia making) to a total of **513** community members through **61** group activities.
- Community events such as medicine harvest, walks, ceremonies, and feasts were also planned with a combined total of **1,821** community members in attendance.

The Mental Health Coordinator in our Thunder Bay site works within the Community Development portfolio to provide community development and capacity building through a coordination of education and awareness building services.

- **11** Capacity Development training sessions in the area of First Aid CPR, Mental Health First Aid, Depression, Non-Violent Crisis Prevention, Assessing for Suicide, Human Trafficking, Assault Care and Treatment and On the Front Line Project (supporting Indigenous peoples in the justice system) with a combined participation of **229** community members;
- **12** training sessions were developed on trauma-informed practice with a total of **106** participants who were able to utilize the training and resources that were provided.

### Ska-Be (Helper) Program

The goal of the Ska-Be Program is to provide support services to improve the health and wellbeing of urban Indigenous Elders, with a particular focus on women Elders, with mental health needs, chronic illness or disabilities so that they can achieve a good quality of life, reflective of their needs and culture.

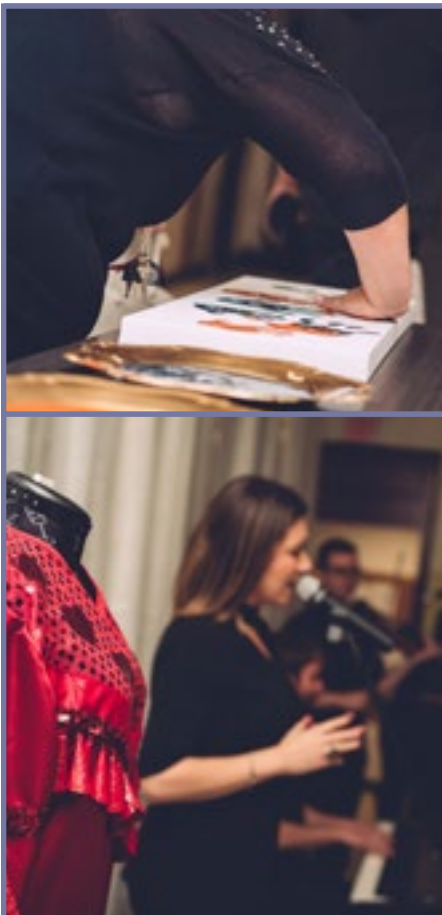
The key service areas include; Case management, Respite care, Assisted living, Transportation, Family workshops, Individual community cultural care, and Advocacy and navigation. The Ska-be program also creates an opportunity for ONWA to work within the community, to ensure that all of our community members are able to access the care and support that they need to remain in their homes and communities and to ease the concern of loved ones who provide critical care and support day in and day out, often without respite.

This program rolled out at the Thunder Bay site in March 2018. In this short time, service is being provided to **18** individuals on a weekly basis. Following a request for proposals from our chapters, two additional flow-through sites have also been awarded funding within the Ska-Be program. These sites are the Niagara Chapter of Native Women Inc. and the Georgian Bay Native

Women's Association. The story of the Ska-Be program, will be told through the improved health-outcomes, of those who accessed services through the program.

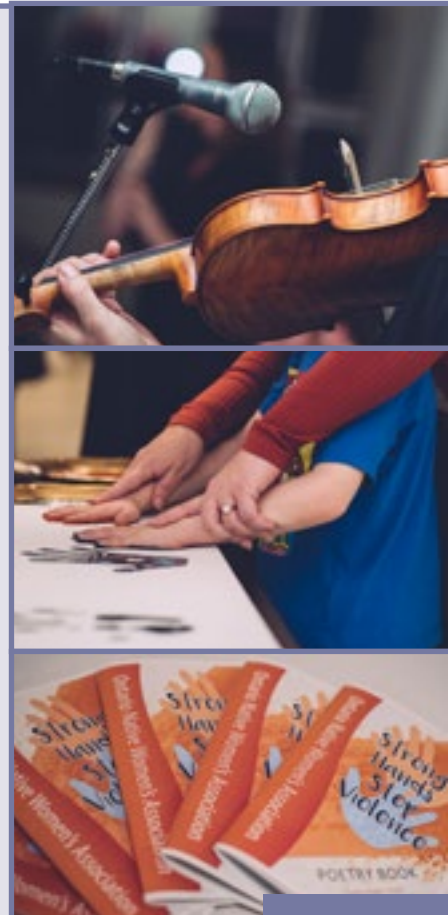
The Circles of Care Program has been extremely supportive in their role and have helped filled a huge area (gap) in services. This not only empowers women, but provides them with opportunities to thrive... I strongly believe this program is more than a community resource, it is the lifeline for women and their families.

Service provider about the Circles of Care Program



## Poetry Night

Events happen throughout the world to honor the **United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women** (November 25) and bring awareness to the issue. This day provides a great opportunity to create a space where Indigenous women can gather and celebrate strength and resiliency. ONWA Thunder Bay Office, created a warm and inviting atmosphere, empowering the community and giving voices to the women. Entertainers sang and played music, artists of spoken word performed, visual artists displayed their work, and together they continued the collective art project entitled "Orange the World". The event was MC'd by Collin Graham and all left with a feeling of empowerment and progress.





# Community Services Portfolio

## WORKING WITH A FOUNDATION OF CULTURE

ONWA Community Services is guided by the vision of ONWA, with culture at the foundation of all service delivery and programming. Staff share cultural knowledge, traditional bundles and teachings, healing tools, and offer support to foster growth and achieve optimal outcomes for community members. ONWA programs seek to enhance and build upon Indigenous women's leadership and encourage our community members to share their gifts. Through this reclamation, we build upon Indigenous women's interconnection to culture and teachings, to mutually support one another, and to empower them to embrace and take up their traditional responsibilities within their families and communities.

Strategic Directions: Goal 2  
ONWA recognizes that is the Time of  
Indigenous Women's Leadership

1,805  
Workshops

57,062  
Participants

2,663  
Community  
Members Served

6,940  
Home visits

649  
Families

### Aakode'ewin - Courage for Change

The Aakode'ewin Program supports the unique needs of Indigenous women, youth, and girls that are affected by sexual exploitation. All services provide a trauma-informed, anti-oppressive framework with culture-based practices and models to ensure a seamless integration of cultural and mainstream supports.

Program services are grounded in a harm-reduction approach that acknowledges that all women walk their own paths. As a 24/7 crisis response team, we work collaboratively with women to address their own needs. Individual safety plans highlight dynamic mobile strategies and continuous supports to Indigenous women, youth, and girls ensuring their own healing journey and successes. The uniqueness of this program includes a collaborative partnership with the Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaisons, providing services within other communities in Ontario. This program is survivor-lead and incorporates peer components to provide capacity building and realistic information in relation to women, youth and girls of sexual exploitation. The combination of cultural support by Elders and Knowledge Keepers to service delivery and evaluation allows for the continuous cultural capacity building with Indigenous



The ONWA AHBHC staff member in Hamilton shared that a mother that regularly accessed the AHBHC programming had attained her goal of securing full-time employment. This is a step towards further achieving her career and life goals, creating hope, and empowering her children to work towards achieving their future aspirations. ONWA recognizes this community member's accomplishment and her Indigenous women's leadership that she brings to her family and community.

women, youth and girls. These key activities ensure this is a living program that allows service delivery to change based on the needs and recommendations of Indigenous women, youth, and girls that are affected by sexual exploitation.

## **Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (AHBHC)**

The Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program (AHBHC) is a prevention/intervention program for families with children six years of age or younger, including expecting moms.

### ***Maamawi Parenting Program***

The Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (AHBHC) Program acknowledges the strength of the sacred bond between mother and child to create the best possible opportunities for the healthy development of children. Grounded in the Seven Sacred Teachings, the Maamawi Parenting Program focuses on teaching traditional parenting practices and continues to foster the creation of having a safe, respectful space and knowledge exchange among the program participants.

Knowledge exchange includes traditional parenting, dental care, stress management,

breast and bottle feeding, baby massage, baby proofing, injury prevention, and positive discipline. As culture is the foundation for all Community Services programming, the staff actively integrate culture into workshops, programming and home visits:

- Introducing each workshop using ONWA Traditional Bundle, Medicines, and Smudging,
- Teachings from Elders in workshops, offering prayer, sharing circles, and culture-based teachings,
- Painting with youth by fostering artistic expression and celebrating their gifts,
- Baby Walking-Out Ceremony to welcome community members into circle and to honour mothers and children,
- Medicine picking: sage and sweet grass and learning to clean and braid,
- Traditional culture-based practices: making bear-grease salve, feasting regalia's, cedar tea,
- Hosting Water Ceremony and acknowledging women as water carriers,
- Moss Bag Making offered to the community members,



## Maamawi “All Together” Parenting Program Manual

ONWA had a soft launch last year introducing the Maamawi Parenting Program and Manual. We are celebrating the printing and launch of the manual this year and are extremely excited and proud of it. This Manual and program will be a user friendly traditional parenting program and training will be offered with it. This full colour manual brings beautiful pictures, along with facilitator tips and helpful resources to key traditional and contemporary parenting milestones. Culture, as well as confidence are what we hope to inspire in our young parents, grandparents and aunts/uncles as they journey with us in Maamawi way. Please stay tuned for roll out announcement.

In Geraldton, the CHOW worker and a student doing her placement at ONWA, developed a Painting with Youth Workshop. The initiative was led by the student whose artistic ability and creativity inspired the youth to share their talents and create beautiful art. This workshop was successfully facilitated over four Fridays in January and February. ONWA staff recognized and acknowledged the strengths and gifts of the youth, as well as, celebrated and honoured the gifts of other community members.

- Mino-Bimaadiziwin Workshops to foster healing and encourage healthy lifestyles,
- Dream Catcher Making workshops and teachings,
- Two sites started Drum-Circles to bring community members together and learn songs,
- Birch Bark Biting teachings,
- Art-based programming that builds upon strengths and celebrating our gifts.

Program staff reach out to the community and offer workshops that are tailored to the expressed needs of the community which include land-based activities such as berry picking, medicine picking, and fishing that support traditional parenting teachings and techniques.

## Community Health Outreach

ONWA’s Community Health Outreach Worker (CHOW) program recognizes that Indigenous women are the cornerstone of community transformation, when she is in a ‘good space,’ safe and healthy, the community will also be safe and healthy.

CHOW workers create opportunities for women to gather, share stories, create artistic pieces,





cultural crafts, and master new skill-sets, thus increasing Indigenous women's leadership capacity building within their families and communities. CHOW program will continue to support healing within the community (OATC Sharing Circle, outreach work, weekly workshops) and create opportunities for women to lead community in culture-based activities that contributed to improved health-outcomes for families and community members.

## Community Wellness

Community Wellness Workers (CWW's) provide family violence services, referrals, support, and case management to community members.

CWW's assist community members to develop action plans to address their personal health, healing, and wellness concerns. The program works in collaboration with health and social agencies to assist in wrap around services based on the individual needs of community members.

## Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women

Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women (EVAIW) staff provide advocacy, assistance, and support services to Indigenous women who have experienced sexual assault and various forms of abuse and violence. These services are confidential, culturally grounded, and unique to the individual community members needs based on their plan of care and request to assist them on their healing journey.

## Justice Department

As an Indigenous women-led organization, we are committed to strengthening our communities by empowering and supporting Indigenous women. As part of that commitment, ONWA expanded our front line services and supports to help further access justice for Indigenous women and their families.

This year, ONWA developed two distinct


The Sacred Tree program is held weekly at the Thunder Bay site. A Community Wellness Worker was able to build a meaningful relationship with one of the participants and create a plan to meet her needs and goals to *improve her current life situation. With a support system in place, including support with systems navigation* and the use of a wraparound service model, the community member was able to complete her goals and is now employed and able to provide for herself. This individual continues to stay connected in programming to support and build her Indigenous women's leadership skills and to share the changes that positively affected her own lived experiences.

programs: The Babaamendam Trauma-Informed Care Program for Indigenous women, which promotes and supports trauma recovery; and the Gladue Program, for Indigenous Women with criminal matters before the courts. As of fall 2018, the programs will be fully operational.

### ***Babaamendam Trauma-Informed Care Program***

Babaamendam, Ojibwe for "she pays attention or she worries", was developed as a culturally grounded, trauma-informed care program, to support trauma recovery and to empower Indigenous women to live healthy and balanced lives.

The program is designed to create safe spaces for Indigenous women who wish to exit oppressive and violent situations. Such work includes assisting Indigenous women with identifying traumas and related symptoms experienced throughout their life span. In many instances, this may be the first time they participate in self-reflection and identify the complexities of not only their own traumas but the inter-generational traumas of their families resulting from colonization. A part of the Babaamendam team's work is to educate, guide and support women on the effects of trauma, identify healthy coping



Having ONWA in the City really helps Native mothers feel comfortable to ask questions, get help, and to meet other females. Knowing someone else that has similar backgrounds really helps. You are not judged about the way you were brought up or how you parent.

Community Member

mechanisms and culturally appropriate trauma recovery processes.

The Babaamendam program has trauma informed care workers located in Thunder Bay, Timmins, Napanee, Ottawa, and Hamilton. At each location, team members strive to increase access to cultural and traditional supports, and wholistic services for Indigenous women dealing with trauma; while developing and fostering relationships with community service providers who are working with high risk and trauma-affected Indigenous women.


### ***Gladue Program***

Gladue Program Background: The Gladue program is named after a young Cree-Métis woman named Jamie Tanis Gladue. Jamie, a young Indigenous woman living off-reserve, was convicted of manslaughter in 1996, the same year Parliament amended the sentencing provisions of the Criminal Code including s. 718.2(e), which directed the courts to explore alternatives to imprisonment when sentencing, with particular attention to the circumstances of Indigenous peoples. The trial judge held that the sentencing provision did not apply to Jamie as she lived off-reserve.

Jamie appealed her matter all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. The court held that judges are required to apply the provision to all Indigenous people regardless of where they reside, on and off-reserve. As such, alternatives to imprisonment ought to be adopted in sentencing

Indigenous peoples, where appropriate. The purpose behind the criminal code amendment was to address the gross over-representation of Indigenous people incarcerated in Canadian jails. Twenty years later, the over-representation has further increased to dire levels, where now Indigenous people account for five percent of the general population and 27 percent of those persons incarcerated. The over-representation is even more pronounced for Indigenous women, who in federal prisons account for over 30 percent of the inmate population. The increase has occurred despite the evolution of the Gladue principles which apply whenever an Indigenous person's liberty is at stake.

Gladue Program and Services: ONWA is providing the first ever Gladue Program specifically for Indigenous women including: Gladue Reports, Gladue Aftercare supports and a dedicated Gladue Researcher/Policy Analyst. Indigenous women have been affected by colonization, racism and gender-based discrimination in ways distinct from their male counterparts. As the heart of our nations, Indigenous women are resilient and strong despite the intergenerational and direct trauma they have endured. This program strives to reconnect Indigenous women to culturally-grounded supports that seek to address the contributing factors to her involvement in the criminal justice system. Gladue Reports will tell her life story, giving her a voice in the criminal sentencing process. The Gladue Report Writer will work with her to tell her story and where appropriate, make recommendations alternative to incarceration for the court's consideration. While the Gladue Aftercare Worker will provide support to her in accessing culturally appropriate services in the community. Lastly, the role of the Gladue Researcher/Policy Analyst is to identify, investigate, and advise on the socio-economic trends and opportunities that have the potential



to impact Indigenous women, their families and communities in relation to Gladue. The Gladue Services will be provided to Indigenous women with matters before the courts in Hamilton and Ottawa.


## **Nihdawin - My House – A Place Where I Live Program**

The Nihdawin - My House – A Place Where I Live Program assists Indigenous people within the city of Thunder Bay experiencing homelessness, or at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness. Throughout this year, Nihdawin has successfully housed **25** individuals using the Housing First Approach. Housing First looks at assisting homeless community members with life skills and advocacy tools, and the financial means community members require to create, sustain, and maintain a self-sufficient life. The Nihdawin program provides culturally-grounded services, geared to individual needs, to empower community members to reach attainable goals.

## **Youth in Transition**

The Youth in Transition program supports Indigenous youth in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay in their transition from the child welfare system to identify, access, and navigate the adult services systems sector. The Youth in Transition Workers (YITW's) guide youth in development and achievement of goals they have set for themselves through the program. YITW's support youth to identify their goals to increase their ability to live a healthy, independent adult life.

One success story is of an Indigenous woman with physical disabilities (amputation at the knee) who lived in a hotel for over a year with her teen son. The difficulty with this situation was that the Family Support Worker (FSW) had to secure housing at market value, while the community member is on the wait list for accessible GTI housing. The FSW established a positive relationship with a landlord who called her to notify her that there was an accessible unit available for her. The FSW assisted the community member with the move and the purchasing household items. The community member was extremely excited and grateful and said "I can't wait to cook a home cooked meal!" The FSW looked at this from a strengths-based lens and purchased the necessary ingredients to cook a meal and supported the community member to purchase an appropriate height stool to enable this individual to cook for herself and her son. This proved to be a true success as the community member continues to live independently with the ability to maintain her home on her own.



The Youth in Transition Worker supported four youth to acquire employment and to complete their individualized goal plan. Goals and activities included resume building, accessing job banks, and assisting with transportation to apply for jobs. The youth continue to stay connected in programming offered at the Thunder Bay site. The YITW assists youth looking into completing high school and post-secondary educational options.



# Our Growth

The Operations Portfolio consists of the Finance Department, Info structure, Marketing and IT. The Portfolio is relatively new and most of these duties were previously managed in the Community Services Portfolio. The needs of these items became too big for one portfolio to effectively manage and were separated in order to receive the required attention. The recent growth of ONWA has been tremendous in the last few years.

ONWA has grown from **30** Contribution agreements to the current **57** contribution agreements in the last 3 years. ONWA's Strategic Picture #4, "ONWA is built on a strong foundation," is the goal the Operations Portfolio primarily focuses on. We are implementing a number of items in the coming years to ensure ONWA is a strong cultural organization that has core values to ensure we have a good foundation that encompasses culture that instills the values for our women to be strong leaders in the community.

Strategic Directions: Goal 4  
ONWA is a strong and  
stable organization

57  
Contribution  
Agreements

\$12  
Million  
in funding

41  
Indigenous  
Vendors

\$1,817,326.<sup>86</sup>  
spent on  
Vendors

71  
Employees

## Human Resources

### HR's Commitment

The Human Resources Department's stakeholders are both internal and external. Internal stakeholders and their needs have been designated as follows:

#### 1. *Employees and their families*

Employees and their families desire a compensation and benefit package that will allow them to enjoy a reasonable standard of living. We at the ONWA strive to ensure the needs of our employees and families are met by consistently evaluating our programs in place and ensuring they are current with today's market.

#### 2. *Board of Directors*

The Board looks for sound and prudent advice on policy recommendations as well as recommendations pertaining to employee performance, compensation and benefits, and employee relations. Human Resources attends all Board meetings to participate



and gather information relative to proactive practices within the organization.

### **3. *Managers and Directors***

Managers and Directors look for guidance and counsel regarding the appropriate, consistent and legal handling of various matters pertaining to employment, discipline/termination and/or employee conduct. Human Resources works closely and collaboratively with all Managers and Directors, ensuring we make the best decisions regarding our team.

### **4. *All Portfolios***

All Portfolios within ONWA rely on accurate and accessible information regarding employment. Human Resources prides itself on maintaining efficient, organized, and transparent processes to assist our teams with inquiries.

### ***External stakeholders and their needs have been designated as follows:***

#### **1. Job Applicants**

Job applicants need fair, equitable and considerate treatment as they vie for employment opportunities at the ONWA.

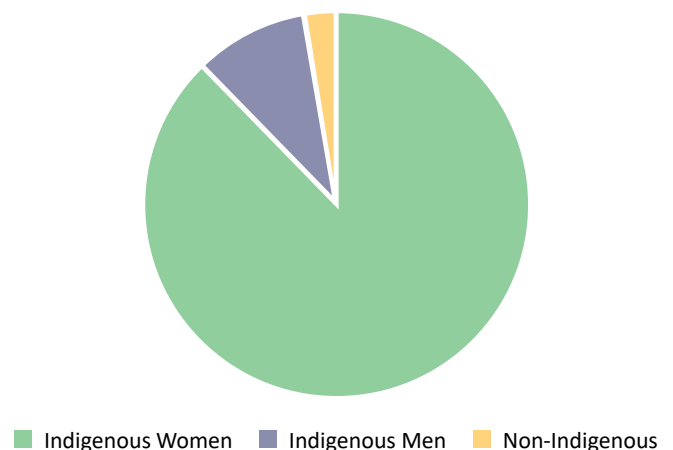
#### **2. Community**

The community at large relies on a variety of services provided by ONWA. Members of the community will experience quality programs that are supported by employees who are knowledgeable, willing, and passionate in providing effective and meaningful services.

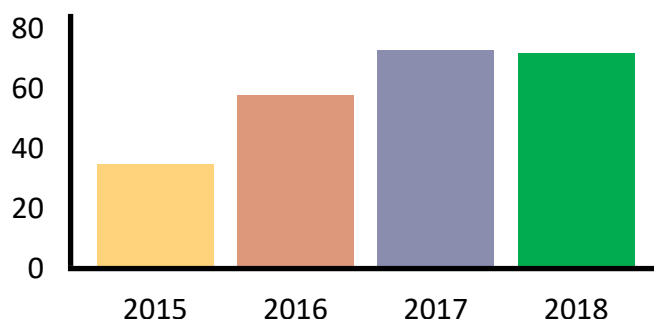
### **Our Workforce**

We are pleased to show that the majority of our workforce represents the community members we serve with **70% being Indigenous peoples and 90% of these being Indigenous women:**

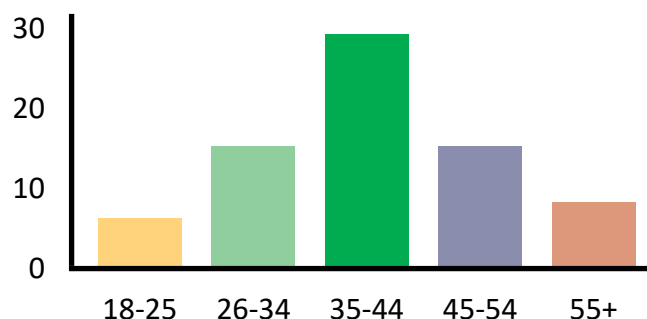
**ONWA Demographics**



**Number of Employees**



**Age of Employees**



## Bamboo HR

We successfully implemented Bamboo HR in the Winter of 2017. Bamboo HR is a transparent and very efficient human resource information system and communication tool for all employees. We have implemented the time off, performance management, and tracking of goals functions. All employees are on an annual review cycle where every year their overall performance is evaluated and goals/objectives are set for the coming year. This is all tracked within the system making it simple to stay on top of goals.

We are able to evaluate our overall organizational performance and this is something we will do each year going forward. For the first year of the system being implemented, our results show we have high engagement levels and the majority of our employees feel valued.

## Growth and Recruitment

Fiscal Year	Total Recruitment Competitions
2015 - 2016	13
2016 - 2017	35
2017 - 2018	32

Recruitment over the last fiscal year has remained relatively the same when comparing to 2016-2017. However, our projections for the coming year show tremendous growth with the addition of several new programs along with our expansion of services in Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton in an effort to increase our presence within the province. We have restructured our organization to include key roles required to accommodate this growth including Director of Operations, Info-structure Manager, Marketing Manager and Associate Director. As a result, we currently anticipate hiring 30-50 employees over this next year and anticipate an increase in staff by 35% for fiscal 2018-2019, giving us a total of approximately 100 employees.

## Training & Development

A large focus for HR this year was to provide ongoing support that enhances the skillset and development of ONWA employees. We will fully implement the on boarding system in Bamboo HR and integrate the Coming Together on-boarding program to ensure our employees are set up for success starting from the first day of employment and carried on throughout their first year. We recognize and understand the value of investing in our employee's to ensure we are meeting the needs of our community members.

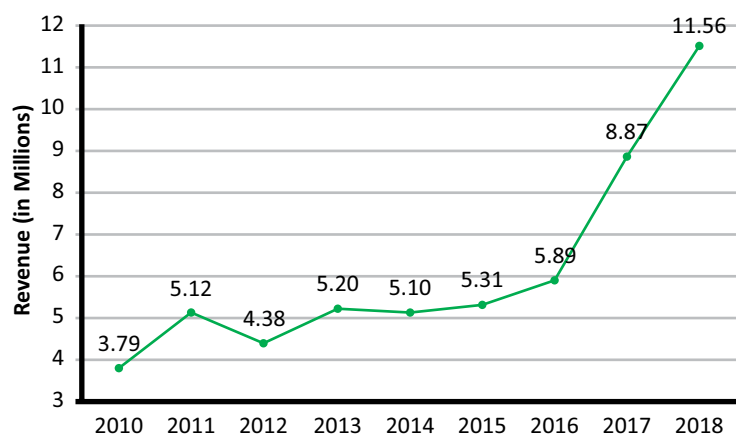


# Finance

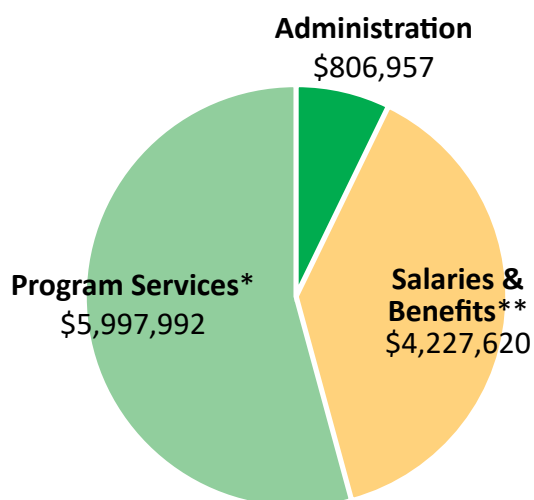
The Finance department ensures compliance with both the Canada Revenue Agency and Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and is responsible for payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, receipt revenue, audit and financial accounting. The department is also in charge of recording fixed assets and deferred capital contributions.

Total assets as of March 31, 2018 were **\$6,743,326**, up from **\$4,726,049** the previous year. Cash is **\$3,011,454**, up from **\$2,141,575**, an increase of **\$869,879**. Working capital is at **\$2,262,830** up from **\$875,802** at the same time last year.

**Growth in Funding, 2010-2018**



**Expenditure by Service, 2018**



\* Operating part of budget

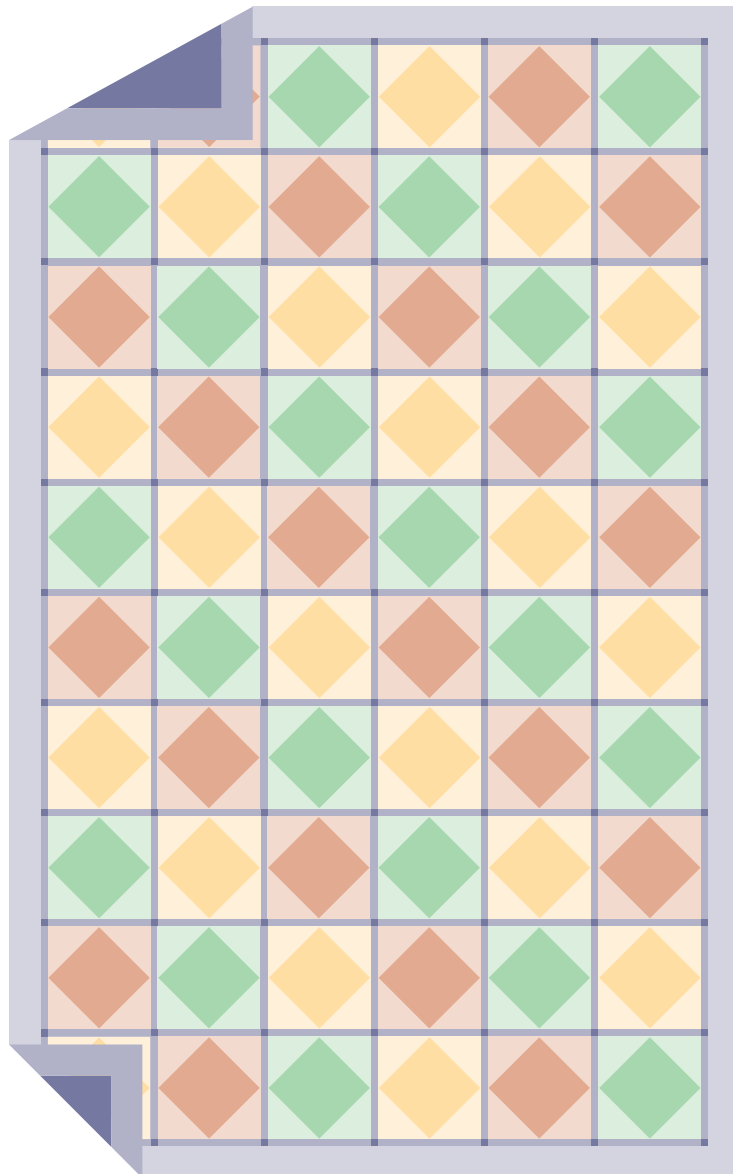
\*\* This is low Not-for-Profit Organization normally have 50 to 70% percent in wages allocated

*Auditor's Report is available upon request.*



# Agreements

This Friendship Quilt illustrates the 57 separate funding agreements ONWA holds. Each of the 57 agreements includes specific reporting requirements due on a quarterly, six-month, or annual basis, consisting of either financial reporting or a combination of financial and program reports. Managing all of these agreements is administratively intensive and the funding we receive does not always fully meet the needs of community. However, as Indigenous women we are very resourceful. We have learned how to stitch together the pieces to create a blanket to wrap around the women and communities we serve.



## Friendship Quilt

- Beendigen Inc
- Government of Ontario, Various Ministries
- Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services Corporation
- Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre

# Communications

ONWA has modelled our Media and Communications team to be part of our overall strategy as the “Voice for Indigenous Women’s Issues in Ontario.” By writing our own story, we can begin to challenge the societal norms and reclaim our traditional roles as community leaders.

ONWA is committed to an open and transparent communication process and strives to strengthen our efforts through media relations, publications and advertising, as well as the use of social media.

Social Media is where many people go for news; its reach is far and wide, from urban locations to remote northern First Nations communities. As such, it has been important and influential over the past year. ONWA is strategically utilizing these platforms to increase our outreach and raise awareness around our strategic priorities, programs and events.



**515,417** Page Views  
**248,126** Visitors  
+ 108,891 from last year  
**198,411** Unique Visits  
**139,456** New Visits  
**58,955** Return Visits

**1,406,084** Hits

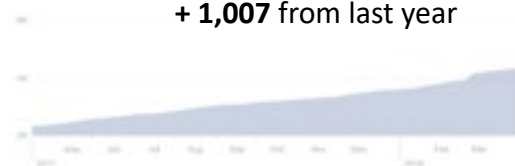
MMIW Website:  
[www.mmiwontario.ca](http://www.mmiwontario.ca)

Launched:  
February 14, 2018

**32,373** Page Views  
**12,760** Visitors  
**68,370** Hits



**1,560** Average Post Reach  
**4,116** Page Followers  
+ 1,080 from last year  
**4,170** Likes  
+ 1,007 from last year



**450** Tweets  
**412.5 K** Tweets Impression  
+ 230 K from last year  
**7,449** Profile Visits  
+ 1,124 from last year  
**499** Mentions  
+ 305 from last year  
**2,115** New Followers  
+ 1,475 from last year



# *A Voice for Indigenous Women's Issues*



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