



# IMAGINE A CANADA

2019 HONOUREES





The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation's (NCTR) *Imagine a Canada* is a national art and leadership program for youth across Canada to lead our nation through Reconciliation.

Imagine a Canada is an educational tool for all ages. It is an invitation for students from kindergarten to grade 12 and CÉGEP to share their vision of what Reconciliation can be in a poem, a song, a painting, a sculpture, a rap, a drawing, an essay, anything!

Learning about the history and legacy of Residential Schools can be challenging. Learning through art can transform, heal and empower youth to create change in Canadian society.

Friends and partners of the NCTR from across the country helped select, recognize and honour submissions in each region of the country, and also identified candidates to attend the national celebration of Imagine a Canada, which took place in Manitoba.



Imagine a Canada 2020 will be launching this fall. To get involved visit [education.nctr.ca](https://education.nctr.ca) for more information.



# National Centre for Truth *and* Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Through this Imagine a Canada program, we celebrate the accomplishments of young people, teachers, schools and families as they tackle the complex and difficult realities of Canadian history.

The materials in this book and the hundreds of other submissions from across Canada are proof that the words Survivors shared are echoing loudly from coast to coast to coast. Schools are responding to the call and young people of today are increasingly aware of the full scope of our history.

This year marks the most successful year of the program to date. More schools than ever submitted works of art, poetry, essays and other forms of personal expressions to the program.

The art featured in this book gives us a powerful vision of what our future can and should be. We are inspired by their vision of a world based on respect, mutual recognition and revitalized Indigenous languages, cultures and identities. This vision places responsibility back on all of us to help protect and realize their dreams of a better country.

On behalf of the Governing Circle and the Survivors Circle of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba, I wish to congratulate all of these young people who have shared their vision of what Canada can be. I also wish to commend their teachers, parents, communities and friends, for it truly takes a community to support our next generation.

**Ry Moran**

*Director of National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation*

# Story Through Song

DANIELLE LEWIS (THOTHINE TSEQWE GUNAS) • GRADE 7 • BRITISH COLUMBIA

Dani is a proud Kumugwe dancer who promotes, protects and preserves culture and language.



"In my drawing you can see a dancer—that dancer is dancing to songs that have been passed on for generations since the beginning of time. Learning about the importance of each song, dance and the language is healing."



# Wolf Child

HAZEL RAINE PEEL-HODGSON • GRADE 6 • ALBERTA

Through Hazel's love of reading and writing she learned about Residential Schools and became involved in Reconciliation. Working with a Residential School Survivor, she developed the heartfelt story "Wolf Child."

Excerpt from:

## Wolf Child: A story of bravery and truth

What is it that makes you dislike my tribe,  
my culture?

What is it that makes you pull faces or throw  
objects at us when we are on the street? Because  
my people are humans, just like you. We have  
skin and faces, just like you. We eat and drink and  
feel pain and love and anger, just like you. And we  
help each other, just like you and your family or  
friends. You may think it strange, but in my tribe  
we do not just treat each other like good friends.  
We laugh and quarrel and wrestle like brothers and  
sisters. We kiss and hug and share our feelings like  
partners. We smile and hold hands like family. So  
my tribe means everything to me, and if someone  
is taken away or leaves, we all feel a great sorrow.

I want to leave you with an idea for you to try  
and practice:

To feel love and give love. That's all I want you to  
try to bring into your life. It's okay to be different.  
Be someone who accepts all, and feels all.

*Nitsíniyi'taki.* Thank you.



# Indigenous Rant

KAYLEIGH OLSON (BEAUTIFUL THUNDER VOICE WOMAN) • GRADE 12 • SASKATCHEWAN

Kayleigh is an intergenerational Survivor. She became engaged in Reconciliation by sharing her story, culture and teachings. She wants to be a strong voice for Indigenous people on behalf of her Grandmother, a Residential School Survivor whose voice was silenced.

Her work of art is about the stereotypes Indigenous people face. "It would be so awesome to see no more racism, have no First Nations children in the foster care system, have families stay together, have more shelters for our homeless people, and having more support and places for our people that are facing substance abuse."

## Indigenous Rant

I am not a prostitute or a drug user.

I don't drink or smoke.

I don't get free money,  
although treaties were signed.

I have a job, not a criminal record.

I am proud of who I am,  
proud of my culture and not ashamed.

I tell my story and learn from our elders,  
and don't listen to racist people.

I live in a house not a tipi.

I am on the honour roll and not  
a high school dropout.

For coping and healing I choose not to shoot  
needles up my arm, but to smudge to heal.

I am not in a gang or in fights; instead I ask the  
spirits to be with me throughout my hardships.

I love powwows and all things  
ceremonial, not drugs.

I don't live off of child welfare or in a dirty house.

I live with my family who supports me  
from their jobs.

I am a beautiful person and not a dirty Indian.

I live with intergenerational trauma  
and cannot "just get over it".

I am a person and not a "squaw"

I pay for my belongings and am not a thief.

My ancestors didn't know alcohol,  
the Europeans had gave it to them.

My ancestors were not dirty and sick, but the  
blankets they were given were full of disease.

My family were not drunks;  
they were hurt and traumatized.

My name is Beautiful Thunder Voice Woman  
and I am proud to be Indigenous.

*The reason on why I say Beautiful Thunder Voice is because that is my traditional Indian name. In my culture we are given these names by our elders, the process is that they will smudge and pray and then they will have a dream about what name to give the child. Most names are given to us when we are babies.*



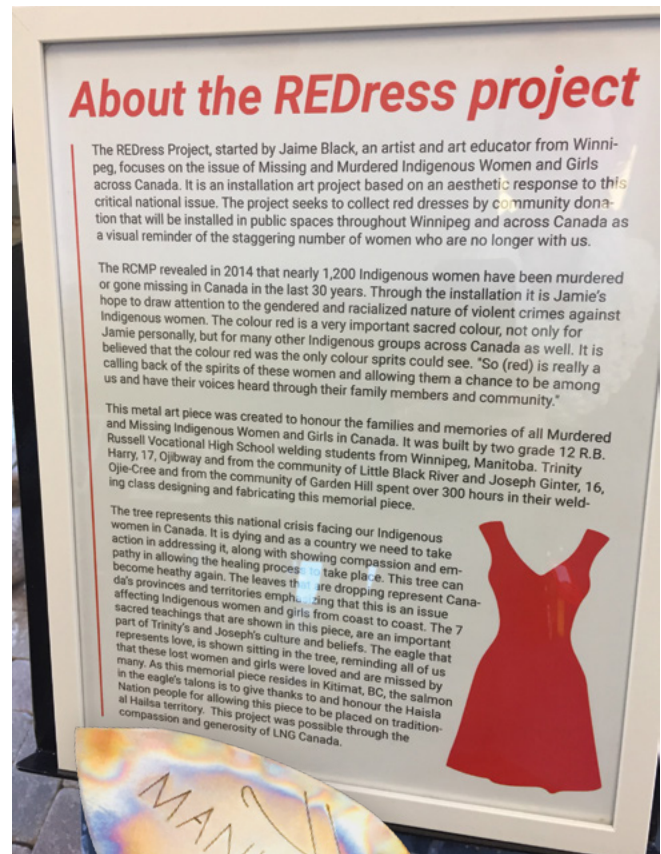
# The Tree

JOSEPH GINTER & TRINITY HARRY • GRADE 12 • MANITOBA

Joseph and Trinity, intergenerational Survivors, have created several welding projects in response to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, as well as taught welding classes to inner city youth in Winnipeg and Kitimat, BC. "We will continue to advocate and make art for people whose voices have been ignored or silenced."

"The Tree holds significant meaning. The seven branches represent the seven teachings—love, respect, courage,

honesty, wisdom, humility, truth. There are 13 leaves; each leaf is a province or territory where women and girls have gone missing. The red dress hangs from the tree in the spirit of the Red Dress Project. The eagle represents the love and care of those who have lost loved ones. Finally, a salmon in the eagle's claws represents respect for the Haisla nation in BC where we ran the welding camp and shared our knowledge of Residential Schools."



Welded leaves, as seen on sculpture.



**LOUGHBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOL • KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 8 • ONTARIO**





Half of the wampum is made of garbage. The other half is made from the gift of wiigaas (birch). In the middle of the art piece is a dish, made of purple garbage on one side and the other made from Amik (beaver). Traditional harvest protocols were transcribed onto the recyclable material and wiigwaas to honour the school's commitment to this ancient responsibility.

Nescia Giangrosso, a student participant who identifies as Anishinaabekwe and who was selected to represent her school at the National Gathering explains: "Sharing knowledge can create awareness, awareness comes with responsibility and if we each start to respond to our own ability we can create real change."





# Closing the Gap

**MATTHEW HUGHES, ALYSSA LUNNY, ERIN MCCREADY, CHLOE LAROSE-ST. ONGE**  
GRADE 10 • HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL • ONTARIO

Four students inspired by the teachings of Theresa Cook (Mohawk) and Brenda Rivers (Cree) created the painting, "Closing the Gap."

The painting "...is about building bridges and bringing everybody together from all four directions, which is

emphasized by the Medicine Wheel and the Four Beings." The students plan to continue learning and informing others about the history and mistakes which affect all Indigenous peoples and communities.



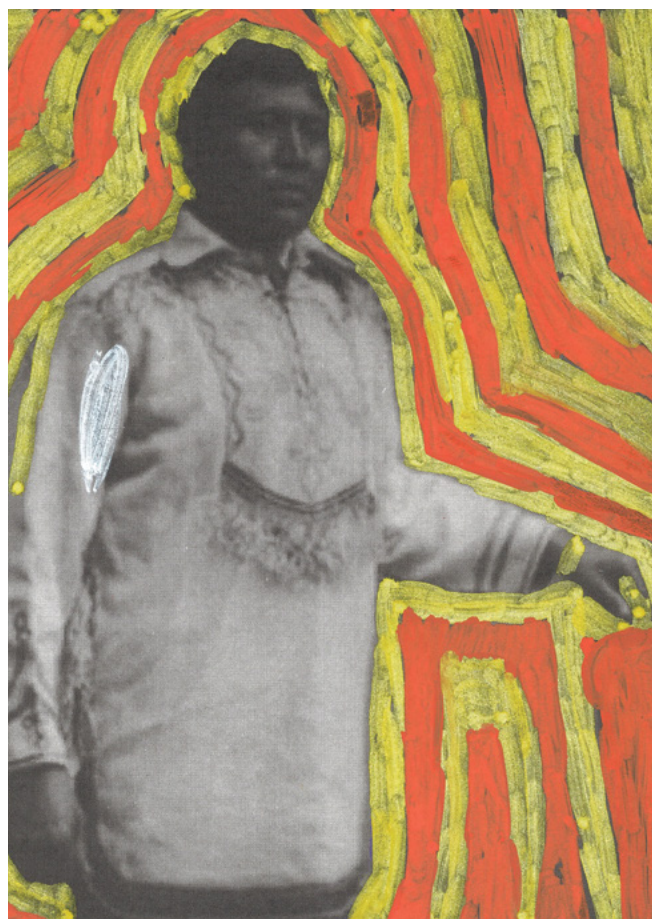


# Breaking Down Stereotypes, Reclaiming Our Ancestry

VOYAGEUR MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL • GROUP PROJECT • GRADE 7 TO 11 • QUEBEC

The Mikw Chiyam Art Concentration students worked with Ojibwe artist Cedar-Eve Peters, who introduced the students to the history of First Nations' portraits taken by white settlers, who dressed First Nations people in inaccurate regalia, and how they became the stereotypes of Indigenous people.

The group of students hope their piece opens the discussion about the importance of Indigenous people reclaiming their identity. "Since first contact, their land has been stolen, their languages have been slowly erased, their identities have been faded away and stereotypes have been imposed onto them by colonizers."



Ryan Pelletier



Liam Quinn



Maggie Minister



Diane Coon-Come



Annbellarise Shecapio

# A Woman's Story

SEQOYA BAYNE (KAWDENÉ) • GRADE 7 • YUKON

Seqoya, an intergenerational Survivor, plans to make her vision of Canada a reality by being strong and proud of who she is: "It is only when I am strong and proud that I can share the stories that have been passed down to me from generations."

Her drawing represents a First Nation woman, complete with the stories that have been passed down through generations and have become part of her DNA. The stories visible in the sketch are: Crow Stealing the Sun; The Woman Who Was Turned into a Bear; and Rabbit Stealing Fire.

"It is only when I am strong and proud that I can share the stories that have been passed down to me from generations."



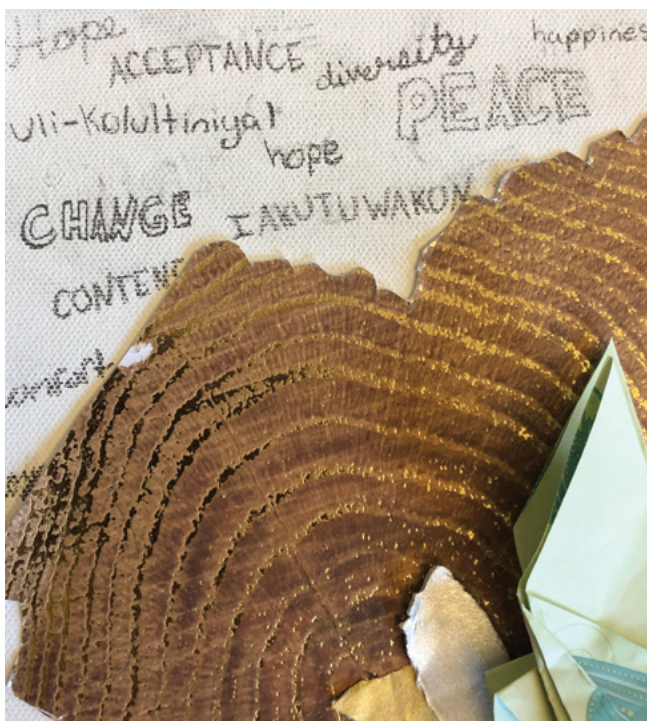


# Branches of Hope

MEREDITH WORLEY • GRADE 8 • NEW BRUNSWICK

Mery, who identifies as Mohawk, was inspired by totem poles and used origami animals for her work. The animals were chosen for their significance in Indigenous stories and culture.

"The tree growing across the image of Canada was placed in order to present my hope that we will grow in our understanding and empathy for all Canadian people."





# Ensemble vers la réconciliation

ÉCOLE CHAMPLAIN • GRADE 7 • NEW BRUNSWICK

The Champlain School's Truth and Reconciliation committee, made up of Grade 7 students, meets weekly to learn about Indigenous cultures, Reconciliation, and taking action. With the guidance of Indigenous Elders,

the committee is dedicated to helping educate other students on Indigenous histories, including Residential Schools, before engaging them in a multi-year large-scale project.







“The committee’s vision is a permanent space for sharing circles to serve as a reminder that we are committed and moving forward towards Reconciliation.”





# 2019 National Leadership Workshop and Honouring Ceremony

Honourees traveled to Manitoba to take part in the 2019 National Leadership Workshop and Celebration, where they attended traditional ceremonies and worked closely with Elders and Survivors. The honourees also collaborated with Aboriginal Youth Opportunities (AYO!), a youth movement from Winnipeg's North End, and Wapikoni Mobile, a mobile studio that captures Indigenous stories and experiences for film.

Honourees heard from several inspiring speakers including the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba the Honourable Janice C. Filmon, C.M., O.M., The University of Manitoba President David Barnard, and Ted Quewezance a member of the NCTR's Survivor Circle.

The honourees ended the two and half day experience by sharing what they learned with each other and made personal declarations on how they will continue their journey towards Reconciliation.



2019 Imagine a Canada Honourees at Fort Gibraltar with Ry Moran, Ted Quewezance, and Michael Champagne.



THANK YOU TO THE 2019  
IMAGINE A CANADA PARTNERS  
FOR MAKING IT ALL POSSIBLE

A special thank you to all the  
volunteer selection committees  
from across the country that made  
Imagine a Canada 2019 a success.





## 2019 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP AND HONOURING CEREMONY L'ATELIER NATIONAL DE LEADERSHIP ET CÉRÉMONIE D'HONNEUR 2019



Honouring Ceremony Round Dance • Cérémonie commémorative de la danse traditionnelle en cercle



Wapikoni Mobile workshop • L'atelier mobile de Wapikoni





Elder Katherine Whitecloud sharing teachings • L'Aînée Katherine Whitecloud partageant ses enseignements



Honourees participating in the Yarn Ball exercise • Les honorés participant à l'exercice de pelote de laine



Honourees participating in the Two Lines exercise • Les honorés participant à l'exercice à deux-lignes