

# 2021



National Centre for  
Truth and Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

# ANNUAL REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF

# the NCTR Governing Circle

*“Amplifying the voices of Survivors and sharing the truth about the damage of the Residential School system to the Indigenous peoples of Canada and building a path toward reconciliation is my honour.”*

- DR. CYNTHIA WESLEY-ESQUIMAUX, CHAIR, NCTR GOVERNING CIRCLE



I am honoured to serve as Chair of the Governing Circle of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR). All the members of the Governing Circle are shaped and guided by the cultures, values, and protocols of our Indigenous Nations. We are all deeply committed to furthering the work of the NCTR.

Since the NCTR was first established through an agreement between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the University of Manitoba, the Governing Circle has learned a lot about how to put into practice the original vision of shared governance between Survivors and NCTR partners.

In 2021, the University of Manitoba Board of Governors adopted a new NCTR Governance Policy brought forward by our Governing Circle. The new policy affirms and supports the NCTR's unique governance model which ensures Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors are always at the very heart of our work and that the NCTR honours and upholds Indigenous laws and protocols.

This policy also affirms the University and the NCTR's shared commitment to uphold and promote the rights of Indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As the TRC Commissioners stated, the UN

Declaration is “the framework for reconciliation” for all institutions and organizations.

As part of the NCTR's unique governance model, the Governing Circle works closely with a Survivors Circle which provides important advice and guidance to all aspects of the NCTR's policies and programming and to the ceremonies that are such a central part of this work. I want to acknowledge and honour the Survivors Circle for their profound contributions through a very challenging and emotional year.

I also want to express the Governing Circle's appreciation to the NCTR's leadership and staff. Their hard work and dedication were a critical part of this year of tremendous accomplishment.

Last year, the Governing Circle approved a new five-year strategic plan for the NCTR. This strategic plan will enable the NCTR to continue to grow in capacity and effectiveness in fulfilling its sacred responsibilities to Survivors, to Indigenous peoples, and to all Canadians.

As the Governing Circle, we are committed to ensuring the voices of Survivors continue to be heard on Turtle Island and that the truth of their experiences will help shape a better world for generations to come.

COVER IMAGE: Survivors' Flag held by Elder Sylvia Genaille and NCTR staff Storm Allard



MESSAGE FROM THE

# Executive Director

*“Reconciliation means my twin daughters are safe to walk the traditional lands of their ancestors, and my four grandsons will never feel the shame of speaking the truth of what happened to their ancestors in this country.”*

- STEPHANIE SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NCTR



In the early spring of 2021, the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation revealed it had located a large, unmarked burial site at the former Kamloops Residential School. This announcement confirmed what Survivors have known all along, and what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had reported: thousands of children never returned home from residential schools and their resting places have been shamefully neglected.

The location of the unmarked burials in Kamloops – and at other former residential school sites over the weeks and months that followed – was deeply traumatizing for Survivors, their families, and their communities. It was also an awakening for many Canadians who were deeply touched by this heartbreaking truth of residential school history. As I have said many times, I truly believe the voices of the little ones are finally being heard.

The NCTR has always been guided by the Survivors and their families. Through their resilience and their strength, they have shown us the way forward. This has been the case since we were founded in 2015. Their guidance is more important now than ever.

The work we do is heavy work, but it is essential work, and we have the benefit of a tremendous team of leaders, staff, partners, and supporters.

The NCTR has always benefitted from the strength and resolve of committed experts, leaders, and knowledge keepers who make up our Governing Circle and Survivors Circle. I am also very proud of all our staff and the vital contributions they make each and every day.

Collectively, we are grateful that the NCTR has been able to continue to expand our programming, resources, and staff, bringing in new skills and expertise and offering more opportunities for the Survivors, families and the public to engage with our work. This is made possible by partners in the public and private spheres, as well as a great many individual donors who stepped up to help the NCTR meet the challenges and opportunities before us.

Late last year, we signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Government of Canada enabling the NCTR to gain access to previously unreleased records related to residential schools. This co-developed approach will protect and respect the privacy of Survivors while also continuing to build a more complete and truthful account of residential school history.

In many ways, the highlight of the past year was a beautiful and moving land blessing ceremony held in August at the future site of our new permanent home for the NCTR on the University of Manitoba campus. A new home for the NCTR is part of the five-year strategic vision adopted by our Governing Circle in 2021. The new building will bring our collections securely under one roof for the first time. We are envisioning a space that Survivors can truly call their own and which will foster and support future generations of scholars and leaders committed to the work of truth and reconciliation.

MESSAGE FROM THE

# Survivors Circle

*“There was a sudden shift in conversations across the Nation. People started measuring our values and action as a country through a lens of Truth and Reconciliation,” said Garnet Angecone, “Part of this was due to the terrible news we were hearing from our relatives out West, but more and more, many Survivors were now finding they were ready to speak their Truth, which adds to our understanding of what really happened.”*

- GARNET ANGEONEB, LAC SEUL FIRST NATION, NCTR SURVIVORS CIRCLE



As Survivors, we are all acutely aware of the urgency of continuing to move forward on the path of Truth and Reconciliation. Since Canada's apology in 2008, so many Survivors have passed on. With each passing, the opportunity to listen and learn from their experiences has been lost.

For each of us, the number of remaining tomorrows is fewer than the days that have already passed. We want to see real progress toward truth and reconciliation in the time that remains to us. We have much to contribute to helping Canada walk that path.

This past year – particularly with the revealing of unmarked graves at residential schools across Canada – many painful memories were brought forth from our own experiences. The year has also been one of tremendous accomplishments. It is the truth of our experiences, and of those who never returned home, that has opened these doors.

In 2021, the Survivors Circle called on all political parties to support a National Day of Commemoration in keeping with TRC Call to Action 80. Within a month of Tk'emlups te Secwépemc announcing it had located unmarked graves in Kamloops, federal legislation was passed proclaiming the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Amid controversy over how long flags should remain lowered to mourn the missing children, Survivors came together to create a Survivors' Flag to honour all the children who were taken and lost to their families and communities. The Survivors' Flag was unveiled in Ottawa on the eve of the National Day.

Orange Shirt Day 2021 was the largest yet. Orange adorned buildings from coast to coast to coast to signify that Every Child Matters. Survivors received messages of love and support and many expressions of solidarity. In stark contrast to the way we were made to feel in residential schools, this experience has been intensely healing.

The support expressed also sent a resounding message to political leaders and churches: Canadians want to see concrete action in correcting systems, policies, and doctrines predicated upon racism and colonial values.

There will be more difficult days ahead, but we embrace bringing the truth to light and following whatever path to healing and reconciliation awaits us.

IMAGE ABOVE:

Top (L-R): Phyllis Webstad, Garnet Angecone

Bottom (L-R): Eugene Arcand, Edna Elias,  
Maata Evaluardjuk-Palmer

# Operations

## COVID-19

Like many other institutions, the NCTR had to develop creative solutions to maintain operations through the pandemic. All visitors, students and staff of the NCTR and the University of Manitoba were required to be fully vaccinated. To maintain safe social distancing, much of the NCTR operations continued to be carried out primarily through remote work. Various staff were in the office on a part-time, staggered basis to manage mail, deliveries, Survivor Privacy and Access requests, as well as packing and sending the NCTR online shop orders. A brief pandemic hiatus allowed about 40% of the NCTR staff to return at the end of summer 2021. In December 2021, the Omicron variant sent staff back to working from home.

## NEW WEBSITE

Early in 2021, the NCTR launched a new and improved website to share the truth of residential schools and to provide Survivors and their families improved access to their school records. The site enables Survivors, educators, researchers and members of the public to learn about the history of residential schools in Canada and access the NCTR's comprehensive educational resources. To foster connections across the country, the site now provides a space for communities to submit truth and reconciliation events they are hosting.

*"By expanding our online presence, we are reaching more Canadians and helping them learn the truth about residential schools and start their personal journey for reconciliation,"*

SAYS STEPHANIE SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NCTR

## COMMUNICATIONS

The NCTR was able to reach larger audiences than ever before through its updated website and three social media channels. The number of visitors to the website increased by more than 10 times and stories and posts on social media channels were seen over 9 million times by followers.

Beginning in May, requests from news media for interviews with the NCTR staff increased to several hundred, requiring additional support to manage the volume of requests. This contributed to the increased awareness of the NCTR nationally and internationally.

## WEBSITE

	2020	2021	INCREASE
Visitors per month	15,000	96,814	45%
Users Total	104,437	1,161,773	1,112%

## SOCIAL MEDIA

	NEW FOLLOWERS		
	2020	2021	INCREASE
Twitter	1,500	6,951	463%
Instagram	2,578	5,809	225%

	REACH	IMPRESSIONS
Twitter	---	5,852,600*
Instagram	209,095*	---
Facebook	2,280,890	3,392,143

\*Reach for Twitter is not available due to how they track metrics. Similarly, Impressions are not available for Instagram for the same reason. Reach = number of unique users who saw a post or story Impressions = number of times a post or story is displayed

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Executive Director Stephanie Scott was appointed in 2021, replacing outgoing Director Ry Moran.

Scott is Anishinaabe from Roseau River First Nation and was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She joined the NCTR team in 2016 as Director of Operations. Before this she worked with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as the Manager of Statement Gathering. Scott, mother of twins and grandmother of four, is also a Sixties Scoop Survivor.

*“If I do not stand up and try to make change and work towards Reconciliation, I am doing a disservice to me, my family and the community at large,” said Scott. “That’s why this role at the NCTR is so important to me. I may not see the full journey for reconciliation in my lifetime, but I pray that the work I do improves future possibilities and advances our goals.”*

2021 saw the addition of 15 permanent employees and 7 contract (term) employees in supporting the work of the NCTR. They complement the existing staff and enhance the areas of Elder Support; Education, Outreach and Public Programming; Operations and Administration; Communications; Research and Access; Archives; and the Missing Children Phase 2 and the Na-mi-quai-ni-mak Support Fund projects.

Professor Brenda Gunn was appointed the New Academic and Research Director, beginning September 1, 2021. Gunn, who is Métis and a member of the Manitoba Métis Federation, was born and raised in Winnipeg. Gunn is a passionate advocate and expert on Indigenous peoples’ human rights and international law. Gunn will provide leadership and assist researchers to continue to uncover the full truth of the history of the residential school system, working within a framework of Indigenous law, principles and research ethics.

*“As a proud Métis woman, I am humbled to work at the NCTR and build up the research capacity at the Centre,” says Gunn. “I aim to do research that will contribute to building a more just world for my daughter, nieces and all our relations.”*





## NEW HOME FOR NCTR

On August 12, the NCTR Governing Circle, the Survivors Circle, the NCTR staff and University of Manitoba executives were guided through ceremony by the NCTR Elders in Residence to envision and bless the NCTR's new home. The ceremony took place on the site of where the new permanent home for the NCTR will be built.

Like the NCTR's current site, our new home will be located on the University of Manitoba Fort Garry campus. The planned site is part of the newly acquired Southwood lands on the Red River. The collective visioning included how the building will be an Indigenous space that promotes learning and is able to respectfully care for the statements of Residential School Survivors, school records and sacred objects for the benefit of this and future generations.

*"The new home for the NCTR will be Indigenous led, as this is vital in creating the necessary environment. Reconciliation is a shared role. As such, the partnership with the University of Manitoba is vital, as are the partners and funders needed to support this work. To do this we need continued commitment from the federal government for capital funding as well as partners to make this home a reality," said Dr. Catherine Cook, Vice-President (Indigenous) at the University of Manitoba.*



IMAGE: Elder Margaret Lavallee at the ceremony



## RY MORAN, DIRECTOR OF THE NCTR FROM 2015 TO 2021, WAS HONoured WITH A CEREMONY ON DECEMBER 9, 2021.

In June 2021, he was appointed as the inaugural associate university librarian – reconciliation at the University of Victoria. His leadership at the NCTR and the University of Manitoba was invaluable and inspirational. He will be greatly missed by staff at the NCTR and by the University community. The NCTR views this not as a departure, but an expansion of our partnership with the University of Victoria to work together towards Reconciliation across Canada.

# Archives

## NEW ARCHIVE SYSTEM

In 2021, the NCTR launched a newly selected data system called: Access to Memory, that provides Survivors and the public with access to the archives. The new system makes it easier to look up schools, dates, statements and other related items such as attendance records, photos, objects and acts of reconciliation.



*“The new system provides the NCTR with the ability to continue its work on decolonizing the archives including accommodating Indigenous languages in the records.”*

DR. RAYMOND FROGNER, HEAD OF ARCHIVES, NCTR

Access to Memory is a web-based platform meeting high international standards in archiving with multilingual capabilities. NCTR chose this system because it is open source, which allows archival staff

to build and develop customized systems for projects and programs that fit the NCTR’s mandate and better serve our communities.

## MISSING CHILDREN

In 2020, the Government of Canada pledged \$3 million to the NCTR to help review archival holdings and identify more missing children who did not return home from residential schools. Ten researchers have received orientation to the data centre records system. Work will advance throughout 2022 to expand the Student Death Register, as additional records are added to the archive.

## RESPONSES TO INQUIRIES

In the wake of increased public awareness of unmarked burials in spring of 2021, the NCTR has received a tremendous increase in the volume of inquiries. Across the year the NCTR has received over 1,398 inquiries for records by Survivors and others.

## ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVE

The NCTR received 15 new donations of records with many coming directly from Survivors or community members. The NCTR is currently working to gain access to additional records confirmed to be held by OMI Lacombe Canada, the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Centre du Patrimoine, Deschatelets Archives, Royal BC Museum, Sister of St. Anne, the Grey Nuns, the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Library and Archives Canada, Service Ontario and the Manitoba Vital Statistics Agency.



## MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

*"Today's agreement is another step along the path set out for us by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission six years ago. Through these records, we hope to uncover more truth on behalf of Survivors, their families, and their communities."*

STEPHANIE SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NCTR

On December 10, 2021, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada and the NCTR signed an agreement outlining how and when Canada will share historical documents related to Residential Schools. The approach was co-developed and will ensure an efficient and secure transmission of documents while protecting and respecting the privacy of Survivors. The transmission of documents will occur in an order and schedule set by the NCTR and includes additional documents to those previously provided by the TRC.



# Education

## IMAGINE A CANADA

Imagine a Canada has worked with thousands of students across Canada from Kindergarten to Grade 12 (including CÉGEP) to envision the Canada they want to see now and in the future. The Imagine a Canada 2021-2022 program was presented in partnership with IG Wealth Management and invited Canadian youth to envision a reconciled Canada.

*“IG Wealth Management is proud to partner with the NCTR to educate youth across Canada on Truth and Reconciliation,” said Damon Murchison, President and CEO, IG Wealth Management. “Our firm has a long history of supporting Indigenous groups and we believe Imagine a Canada is a creative way to inspire the next generation and drive real, positive change.”*

Youth in the Kindergarten to Grade 5 stream submit an art piece, essay or other representation to express their vision of a reconciled Canada and what they hope

others will learn from their submission. Youth who participate in the Grade 6 to 12 and CÉGEP stream are asked to go one step further and submit a plan on how their project will address reconciliation in their community or school. The NCTR relaunched the Imagine a Canada program on September 30, 2021 and closed on December 17, 2021. An extension was offered to younger students to submit by February 11, 2022.

There were 130 entries submitted to the program with 87 from kindergarten to Grade 5 and 43 in Grade 6 to 12 and CÉGEP. Ten projects were selected from the kindergarten to Grade 5 and fifteen projects from the Grade 6 to 12 and CÉGEP for recognition, with youth coming together in April for leadership training activities and once again in June to share their projects in a public forum.

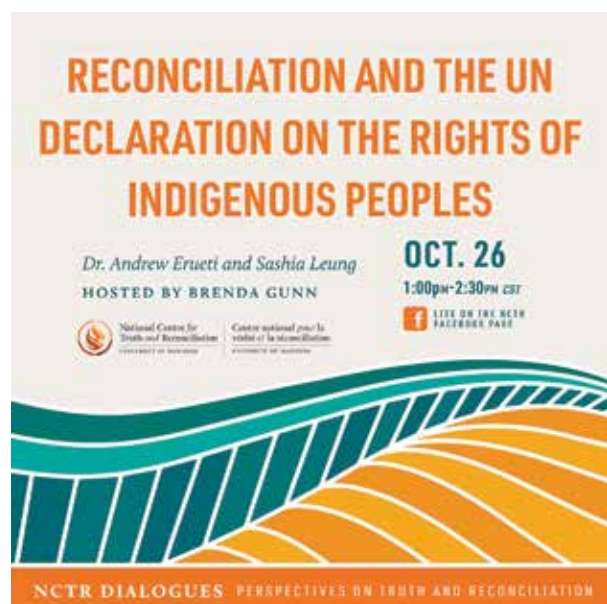
IMAGE BELOW: Path of Reconciliation by James Teng, Grade 5, Mississauga



I learned that reconciliation means lots of different things to different people when I researched, wrote letters and painted these words on the stone path. The dictionary says that reconciliation means to restore a friendship, but I learned that it means much more than that. To learn more about reconciliation, I wrote to an indigenous educator. I learned a lot about what reconciliation means to him from his letter. For example, one thing I learned from him is that it is important to value the perspectives of indigenous people in reconciliation. I found stones along the river, and I painted each stone with words that symbolize what I learned about what reconciliation means in the future. As a matter of fact, the center of the path represents the start of reconciliation and your walk along the path represents reconciliation into the future. Interestingly, I thought of making a spiral path on a hike near the Credit River (Mississauga). To share what I've learned with more people, I included Ojibwe, French, Chinese and English words. I included some unpainted stones so that other people in my school and community can write what reconciliation means to them. Finally, I took a picture of the path near the Credit River and talked about it with people who walked by. When I think about reconciliation in the future, I think of these words and this stone path.

## NCTR DIALOGUES

The NCTR Dialogues is a popular series of lectures and panel presentations exploring diverse perspectives on reconciliation. With the continuing pandemic and reduced ability to host in-person events, the Dialogue series has been held entirely online through video streaming. One advantage to this approach is that the NCTR has been able to expand the range of guest presenters, hosting Survivors and other experts from throughout Canada and around the world.



The eight events in 2021 were extremely popular, with some attracting more than 6,000 participants. Topics included the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaty relationships, missing children and Mino-Bimaadiziwin (2spirit) communities. Links to all past and future events can be found at [nctr.ca/dialogues](https://nctr.ca/dialogues)

## DECOLONIZING LENS



This film and discussion series continued in 2021 creating a space to celebrate the works of Indigenous filmmakers in Canada and the incorporation of Indigenous actors, directors, producers and narratives in film. The series is supported by the Women's and Gender Studies Program at the University of Manitoba. A special presentation was held in celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day with the premiere of *The Lake Winnipeg Project*. Join the Decolonizing Lens on Facebook.

## PRESENTATIONS

Engagement via presentations, workshops, webinars and tours continued in 2021, with 115 unique institutions, organizations and groups interacting with the NCTR. This resulted in over 20,000 people learning about the experiences of Survivors and the residential school system.

Examples of presentations include:

- Virtual book launch of *Did You See Us? Reunion, Remembrance, and Reclamation at an Urban Indian Residential School*
- 2Spirit screening and sharing event for Fierté Canada Pride with 2Spirit Survivors of Residential Schools
- Truth and Reconciliation Week panel discussion with the Winnipeg Art Gallery
- Developing webinars with and for Natural Resources Canada staff
- Beading workshops with stories and lessons for the University of Manitoba community



# Governance

The NCTR Governance Policy was approved by the University of Manitoba Board of Governors on June 22, 2021. The policy provides greater clarity about the unique shared governance model created when the NCTR was founded and has continued to evolve. The policy affirms the University's continued support of the NCTR as an Indigenous led, self-governing organization, fulfilling its unique mandate as a national – and indeed, international centre – responsive and accountable to the Indigenous peoples whose rights it promotes and to the Residential School Survivors whose truths it preserves.

## GOVERNING CIRCLE

The NCTR is overseen by a Governing Circle. The Circle includes Survivors and representatives of the University of Manitoba and other partners. The majority of Governing Circle members are First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The Governing Circle is guided by a Survivors Circle, as well as by Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Establishing these governance

structures was essential to ensuring Survivors and partners are always at the very heart of the NCTR and that the NCTR honours and upholds Indigenous laws and protocols.

Current continuing Governing Circle members are:

Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux (Chair), Andrew Carrier (Vice-Chair), Dr. Catherine Cook, Dr. Digvir Jayas, Dr. Crystal Gail Fraser and Elder Levinia Brown. The Governing Circle thanks outgoing member Stephen Kakfwi for his service.

## SURVIVORS CIRCLE

The seven-member Survivors Circle guides the NCTR and ensures that Survivors' voices and perspectives remain central to programming and policies. They provide critical guidance and advice to NCTR staff, the Governing Circle, the University of Manitoba and partners.

The Survivors Circle welcomed new members in 2021: AJ Felix, Nêhiyawak Elder, Sturgeon Lake First Nation  
Edna Elias, Inuk (Kugluktuk, Nunavut)  
Maata Evaluardjuk-Palmer, Inuk (Mittimatalik/Pond Inlet)

They joined continuing members:  
Eugene Arcand, Muskeg Lake First Nation

The Survivors Circle thanks outgoing members whose terms have expired for their dedication and guidance in supporting the work of the NCTR:  
Lila Bruyere, Couchiching First Nation  
Jimmy Durocher, Métis (Ill-à-la-Crosse)  
Phyllis Googoo, We'koqma'q First Nation  
Wanbdi Wakita, Sioux Valley First Nation

*For us, as Survivors, it is important that we see the NCTR as our home, where our truths, experiences and lives are validated, honoured and never forgotten. The staff carry the responsibility – both today and tomorrow – to ensure our voices are carried forward in a good way.*

-EUGENE ARCAND, NO. 781, RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVOR, AND SURVIVOR CIRCLE MEMBER, MUSKEG LAKE CREE NATION



# Research

## NEWS FUNDS FOR RECONCILIATION RESEARCH

For Malcolm and Catherine Dewar, one of the key words in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) 94 Calls to Action is "action." To support action that is intentional and effectual, the University of Manitoba alumni couple has established a fellowship to reward the academic achievements of graduate students at the University pursuing research in the area of truth and reconciliation.

"This gift is generous, meaningful, and a big step in building healthier relationships between Indigenous communities and Canadians because it allows for a focused, nuanced, and thorough approach by those with the most to inherit from reconciliation today," says Niigaan Sinclair, Professor in Native Studies at the University of Manitoba and member of the fellowship's selection committee.

The fellowship will award \$8,000 to a University of Manitoba graduate student who is undertaking or plans to undertake research focused on the TRC's 94 Calls to Action. They must also self-declare as a First Nations, Métis, or Inuit person from Canada and have a direct family connection (intergenerational or otherwise) to a residential school.

*"We have been appalled for many years by the treatment of Indigenous people in Canada," explains the Dewars. "The Truth and Reconciliation Commission addressed many of these in their 94 Calls to Action and we are concerned that many will gather dust on a shelf. A graduate student's thesis is a way of evaluating and implementing a course of action for one or more of the calls. Hopefully, they will be a role model for researchers or activists to follow in the future."*



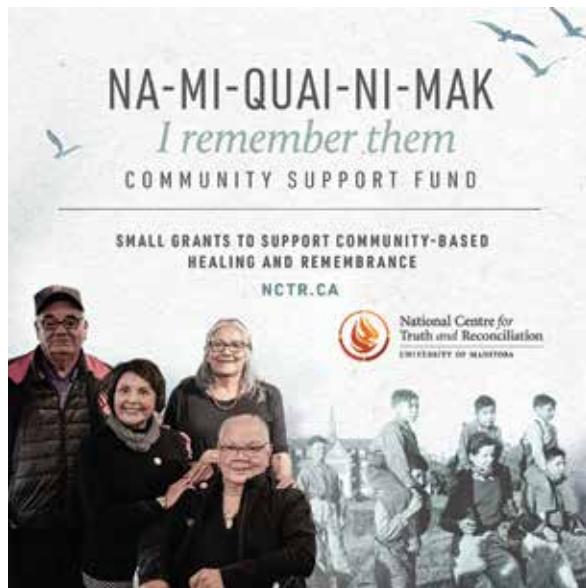
The first recipient of the Malcolm & Catherine Dewar Truth and Reconciliation Fellowship is Robin Neckoway. Robin is an intergenerational Survivor, with family members on both parents' sides having attended residential schools. Robin obtained a BA in Economics from the University of Winnipeg in 2011 and is currently obtaining his Master of Arts in History at the University of Manitoba.

Robin's research looks at the colonial experiences surrounding hydro development in northern Manitoba and examines the power records have in restoring relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the state.

# Special Projects

## NA-MI-QUAI-NI-MAK

The NCTR's Na-mi-quai-ni-mak ("I remember them") Community Support Fund provides grants to Indigenous communities for memorial and healing activities such as community ceremonies and feasts, commemorative markers such as gardens and plaques and maintenance of burial sites.



In 2021, BMO made a generous donation of \$250,000 to the Na-mi-quai-ni-mak Community Support Fund. BMO selected the Fund – in consultation with BMO's Indigenous Advisory Council – because of the NCTR's focus on promoting emotional and spiritual healing for Survivors, their families and communities. Parks Canada and other donors also contributed to the fund in 2021.

*“BMO is honoured to support the Na-mi-quai-ni-mak Fund to build programs that will make it possible for Survivors, their communities, and the broader public to heal and grow together,” said Mike Bonner, Head, Canadian Business Banking, BMO Bank of Montreal and Co-Chair, BMO Indigenous Advisory Council.*

## SURVIVOR HOLIDAY SPECIAL

The NCTR held its first ever Survivor Holiday Special virtual gathering on December 19, 2021. Online presentations and special guests included segments from Survivors, youth, allies, friends and communities across Canada. The series of video segments covered a range of subjects from learning how to bead to showcasing traditional foods and cooking to hearing inspirational stories from Survivors to musical performances. Special guests included Susan Aglukark and Tom Jackson, Steve Wood, The Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers, Gerry Barrett, Chef Ray Bear, Elder Harry Bone, Edna Buffalo, Julie Desrochers, Sean Lessard, Stephanie Scott, Ernie Kadloo, Dina Kayseas and Skinny Kookoo.





## THE SURVIVORS' FLAG

To mark the first official National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the NCTR unveiled a new Survivors' Flag. The commemorative flag was created by Survivors to share their expression of remembrance with Canadians and to honour all Residential School Survivors, families and communities. Inuit, Mi'kmaq, Atikamekw, Cree, Ojibway, Dakota, Mohawk, Dene, Nuuchahnulth, Secwepemc and Métis Survivors came together over six weeks in a series of discussions to develop the flag design. With this input, Shaun Vincent from Vincent Design, made their vision a reality. With support from the Government of Canada, the NCTR distributed flags to the Survivors who contributed to its design and to a number of Indigenous partners to incorporate into National Day for Truth and Reconciliation events.

*"As children, Survivors were told they couldn't be who they were because they were Indigenous. We were made to believe we were not good enough," said Wanbdi Wakita, Dakota Survivor and contributor to the Survivors' Flag. "As a veteran, to be honoured with a flag has special significance. I will bring this flag with me to gatherings and ceremonies. I hope Canadians will also incorporate the flag into their own gatherings in the future to mark remembrance."*

**The Family** - Some saw the adults as our ancestors watching over us; others saw these as parents signifying whole families ripped apart and also reuniting to represent healing.

**The Children** - More than one child is depicted in the design as often whole sibling groups were taken from their parents, younger siblings, grandparents and community.

**The Seeds Below Ground** - Represent the spirits of the children who never returned home. Although they have always been present, they are now seen and searched for.

**Tree of Peace** - Haudenosaunee symbol of how nations were united and brought to peace, which in turn, provides protection, comfort and renewal.



**Cedar Branch** - Sacred medicine that represents protection and healing, but also what is used by some Indigenous cultures when one enters the physical world and then again when they pass on to the next (i.e. medicine bath). The seven branches acknowledges the seven sacred teachings taught in many Indigenous cultures.

**Cosmic Symbolism** - Represents Sun, Moon, Stars and Planets. The Sun represents the divine protection that ensure those who survived came home. The North Star is prominent as it is an important navigation guide for many Indigenous cultures.

**The Métis Sash** - The Sash is a prominent ceremonial regalia worn with pride. Certain colours of thread represent lives that were lost, while others signal connectedness as humans and resilience through trauma. All the threads woven together spell out part of history, but no single thread defines the whole story.

**The Eagle Feather** - The Eagle Feather represents that the Creator's spirit is among us. It is depicted pointing upwards which mirrors how it is held when one speaks their Truth.

**The Inuksuit** - Inuksuit are used as navigational guides for Inuit people and link to tradition.

The NCTR Survivors Circle has directed that the flags only be used to educate and nurture a collective commitment to remembrance.

## NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Every September 30th, the NCTR joins with First Nations, Métis Nation and Inuit communities and other partners to honour Orange Shirt Day. In 2021, the federal government passed legislation recognizing September 30th as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

*“The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Call to Action 80 not only called for the establishment of a statutory holiday, it also invited Indigenous Peoples and all Canadians to continue to reflect on the legacy and true history of Residential Schools. This day is set aside to honour all the children who survived Residential Schools as well as those that did not return. We invite everyone across the country to mark September 30 – Orange Shirt Day – every year by wearing orange and ‘lighting up’ our communities orange.”*

—STEPHANIE SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NCTR

The NCTR marked the day with a prime-time broadcast special developed in partnerships with APTN, CBC/Radio-Canada, Insight Productions and Canadian Heritage. The unique one-hour, commercial-free broadcast honoured the stories and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples impacted by tragedies of the residential school system in Canada. Musical tributes and ceremonies in Indigenous communities across the land were broadcast in French, English and multiple Indigenous languages, beginning in the east and travelling across Canada to the west and north.

The NCTR consulted Survivors, Elders and Chiefs on stories and perspectives that would be shared as part of the broadcast. Viewers heard directly from Residential School Survivors, Knowledge Keepers, storytellers and musical artists. Communities represented included Sipekne’katik in Nova Scotia, Mani-Utenam in Quebec, Wanuskewin Heritage Park in Saskatoon, Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc in Kamloops, and Carcross, Yukon.



## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WEEK

The inaugural Truth and Reconciliation Week was held online from September 27 to October 1, 2021. Each day, teachers across Canada shared videos with students in Grades 5 to 12. More than 1 million students watched and learned. The videos were created by Indigenous storytellers, showcasing artistic performances and traditional ceremonies and included a moving tribute to Missing Children.

Survivors were brought virtually into classrooms across Canada to continue truth-telling and to spark a national conversation about the future of reconciliation. The week dedicated a day each to Land and Treaties, Languages and Culture, Truth and Reconciliation, Orange Shirt Day and Elder-Youth Knowledge Transfer.

*“We hope this Truth and Reconciliation Week will foster a place of understanding, resilience and connection through truth-telling.”*

STEPHANIE SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NCTR

In honour of children whose unmarked burial site had been located in Kamloops, the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Nation drummed for the children at 2:15 pm Pacific Time on September 30, joined by all people on Turtle Island and around the world in marking the moment together.

Thousands across the nation marked the week by wearing orange, displaying orange lights inside or outside their homes and by projecting orange lights on local buildings and landmarks – all in honour of the children who came home from residential schools and those who did not.

Truth and Reconciliation Week activities were hosted by the NCTR, with sponsorship from the Royal Bank of Canada and funding and support from the Government of Canada, NIB Trust, the Winnipeg Foundation and the governments of Manitoba, Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Yukon, Prince Edward Island and the Northwest Territories, Canada's History, Historica Canada, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the McConnell Foundation, APTN, CBC, Wapikoni & Télé-Québec, Facebook, the National Film Board of Canada, and Know History. French programming was developed in partnership with Télé-Québec and Wapikoni.





# International Connections

NCTR hosted a diplomatic delegation from Germany on September 11, 2021. The guests were welcomed with a ceremony by Elders Harry Bone, Florence Paynter and Phillip Paynter. The purpose of their visit was to learn about truth and reconciliation and the legacy of the residential school system in Canada and to tour the NCTR.

Stephanie Scott, Executive Director of the NCTR led a tour of the NCTR building. Presentations were made by Governing Circle member Dr. Digvir Jayas, Vice-President (Research and International), University of Manitoba, on the University's relationship with the NCTR and their commitment to reconciliation. Head of Archives Raymond Frogner, Academic and Research Director Brenda Gunn and Education,

Outreach and Public Programming Supervisor Kaila Johnston each provided overviews of their units' work and activities.

## THE DELEGATION WAS MADE UP OF:

**Christian Lange**, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Justice and Consumer Protection, German Bundestag

**Manuel Furtwängler**, Head of Political Section, German Embassy Ottawa

**Dr. Hannah Volmer**, Legal Officer, Division for International Legal Cooperation, Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection



# Partnerships

The NCTR is working with the Indigenous Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the Winnipeg Foundation to relaunch dozens of scholarships honouring the late Helen Betty Osborne. The application portal opened on November 13, 2021 and marked the 50th anniversary of Helen Betty Osborne's tragic death. Thirty, \$2,500 awards will be given to Indigenous students. Representatives from the NCTR and the ICC will lead the scholarship awards selection committee.

*"The Indigenous Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of investing in, and supporting, First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth education," said Jamie Dumont, Chair of the Indigenous Chamber of Commerce. "It is through education that we build our future leaders, and we are honoured to be part of the relaunch of the Helen Betty Osborne memorial awards."*



Helen Betty Osborne was a high school student attending Margaret Barbour Collegiate Institute and was on the home placement program administered by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada when she was brutally murdered in northern Manitoba in 1971. It took 16 years for anyone to be charged with her murder.

## COLLABORATION WITH OBLATES

In December 2021, the NCTR and the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate announced further collaboration that will grant the NCTR full access to critical residential school records in the Oblate General Archives in Rome, Italy.



The Oblates operated 48 residential schools in Canada, including the Marieval Indian Residential School in Cowessess First Nation and Kamloops Indian Residential School in Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation where unmarked graves have been identified.

*"The Oblates hope that any relevant files might contribute to a greater understanding of our shared history and contribute to the important work of reconciliation," said Father Ken Thorson of OMI Lacombe. "As part of our ongoing collaboration, we are looking to the NCTR for guidance in the development of this process."*

# 2SLGBTQQIA+ Engagement

On Tuesday, November 9, 2021, a virtual meeting facilitated by Mr. Albert Beck, was held between the NCTR Executive Director Stephanie Scott and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Residential School Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and advocates.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how the NCTR could better reflect the truths of 2SLGBTQQIA+ Residential School Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors and build better relations with the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community.

In the invitation to the meeting, the following action areas were identified as an entry point for further discussion:

- Increasing the role of 2SLGBTQQIA+ Survivors, Intergenerational Survivors, Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the governance and operations of the NCTR, including prioritizing recruitment of 2SLGBTQQIA+ Survivors or Intergenerational Survivors to fill upcoming vacancies on the Survivors Circle
- Expanding collaboration between the NCTR and 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations on public events

such as the NCTR's Decolonized Lens screening series, public forums or other events

- Creating new educational content on the experiences of 2SLGBTQQIA+ Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors
- Reviewing current NCTR educational materials from the perspective of 2SLGBTQQIA+ to ensure inclusive language is utilized
- Adopting Operating Procedures to make the NCTR a more inclusive and culturally safe space for 2SLGBTQQIA+ Survivors, Intergenerational Survivors and community members

This initial meeting was recognized as part of a longer process that will involve working together toward positive change.

IMAGE CREDIT: Red Rising Magazine by Sadie-Phoenix Lavoie





# Calls to Action

*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada tabled 94 Calls to Action to address the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of reconciliation. The NCTR reports annually on its own contributions to advancing the Calls to Action.*



## LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

*Calls to Action 13, 14 and 17*

NCTR is developing an application to support Indigenous peoples in describing archival records that concern their Nations, cultures and histories. The application implements standards and principles for Indigenous ownership and control of knowledge in the archival description process.



## HEALTH

*Calls to Action 21*

Launch of the Legacies project with the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy is underway. This Canada Foundation for Innovation funded project will take archival evidence of Residential School trauma and anonymize the records to track the impact of this trauma in social indicators such as health, education, child services and justice. Statistical understanding of intergenerational trauma will lead to better social programs and benefit Indigenous communities. It will also lead to a clear and more respectful understanding of the impacts of Residential Schools in the form of education programs, academic research and national dialogue. This is a three-year study with hiring and planning fully underway.



## JUSTICE

*Calls to Action 28 and 50*

Discussions and work have taken place with the University of Victoria Joint Degree Program in Canadian Common Law and Indigenous Legal Orders to supply access to the NCTR Archives for purposes of research material for the program.



## RECONCILIATION

*Calls to Action 48*

NCTR is working with the Oblates OMI Lacombe to acquire all relevant records and open them for access and use.



## EDUCATION FOR RECONCILIATION

*Calls to Action 65*

A list of projects has been identified in collaboration with the Research Unit. Plans and resources for the projects are now being set up.



## LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES CANADA

*Calls to Action 69*

In November 2021, Raymond Frogner, the Head of Archives at the NCTR, published an article titled: "The train from Dunvegan: implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in public archives in Canada (springer.com)" in the journal *Archival Science*. The article focussed on implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the NCTR. It set out the NCTR's perspective on how archives can uphold the rights and standards of the UN Declaration.



## MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES

*Calls to Action 70-72 and 73-76*

NCTR Head of Archives participated in the publication of the Association of Canadian Archivists' "Reconciliation Framework" document. Calls to Action 70 has urged the Association to publish a report with recommendations on fulfilling international standards relevant to the role of archivists in reconciliation.

A research position was initiated at the Royal B.C. Museum and the Archives of Manitoba to review the coroners' files for copy and transfer to the NCTR as required. A similar initiative is under discussion with the Archives Nationales de Québec.

The Death Register continues to be updated with the Missing Children Phase II project which will be ongoing for the next 1.5 years. The project is currently submitting bi-weekly reports and scoping all remaining records in the NCTR database that have not been inspected for the loss of children.

Survivors and families also contact the NCTR with updates for the Commemoration Site and Death Register. The project is developing a name filtering component to better capture the names of children sent to the schools.

Planning is underway to develop an unmarked burial registry. This work will continue in collaboration with community investigations of burial sites.

A data research repository has been set up for communities to use as a free digital storage space in support of ongoing investigations. Drafting of Memoranda of Understanding is also being done to provide community researchers full access to the NCTR database to research the context of unmarked burials.



## NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

*Calls to Action 77 and 78*

Over one million documents were received from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada in 2021, as well as copies of narratives used in the Settlement Agreement. In addition, the NCTR has continued negotiations to acquire reports from the SADRE database used in the Independent Assessment Process under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement process. This would provide information on the 38,000 Survivors who participated in the IAP process. An agreement has been drafted with the Oblates OMI to give reference copies of all their records to the NCTR and to make the NCTR the principal repository of reference for all research into the history of the Oblates, OMI Lacombe and the Residential School system in Canada. Negotiations are also being finalized to acquire the records of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the records of the Common Experience Payment Process (also under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement).



## COMMEMORATION

*Calls to Action 79 and 80*

Discussions are underway with Heritage Canada and several Band Councils on the project to transform still standing residential schools into sites of conscience. Funds have been identified and this is in the planning phase.



## ARTISTIC WORKS

*Calls to Action 83*

An artist-in-residence program is being developed at the NCTR.

# Financials

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation  
Revenue and Expenditure Statement - For the Year Ended March 31, 2021



## REVENUE

March 31, 2021 Total Funds

Donations	\$ 132,405
Non-Government Grants	\$ 125,000
Economic Development and Training	\$ 1,688,481
Other, Province of Manitoba	\$ 18,000
Federal and Other Government Grants	\$ 2,084,525
Sales of Goods and Services	\$ 99,389
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 4,147,800</b>
Carryover spent for FY20220-2021	\$ 2,396,917
<b>TOTAL REVENUE &amp; CARRYOVER</b>	<b>\$ 6,544,717</b>

## EXPENSE

March 31, 2021 Total Funds

Salaries	\$ 1,322,150
Staff Benefits and Pay Levy	\$ 247,022
Materials, Supplies and Services	\$ 589,247
Professional and Other Services	\$ 1,358,181
Travel and Conferences	\$ 1,441
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 9,758
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ 3,527,798</b>
Inter-Fund Transfers	\$ 18,760
<b>FUND BALANCES END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 2,998,159</b>

*Carla Buchanan*

Carla Buchanan, CPA, CA, CIM\*  
Manager, Financial Reporting, University of Manitoba

2021.09.03

Date

## OTHER (NOT INCLUDED IN AUDIT)

January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

Total NCTR online sales revenue	\$ 370,734
Donations to Na-mi-quai-ni-mak project	\$ 427,243*
Donations from individuals, business enterprises, foundations (within Canada and foreign)	\$ 750,000

\*\$250,000 was donated by BMO





National Centre for  
Truth *and* Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

The NCTR is a place of learning and dialogue, where the truths of the residential school experience will be honoured and kept safe for future generations.

**NCTR.CA**

