

2023



National Centre for  
Truth and Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

# Annual Report



MESSAGE FROM THE  
GOVERNING CIRCLE CHAIR

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*“The Governing Circle ensures Survivors are at the very heart of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), and that the NCTR honours and upholds Indigenous laws and protocols in everything we do.”*

– DR. CYNTHIA WESLEY-ESQUIMAUX, CHAIR OF THE  
GOVERNING CIRCLE FOR THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION



The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) continues its vital work undertaken on behalf of Survivors of the Residential School system in Canada under the guidance from the Governing Circle, the Survivors Circle, and its many Knowledge Keepers. There are many obstacles along the path to reconciliation, and progress is sometimes slow, but we will always uphold the crucial work of truth-telling.

Our work is guided by the cultures, values, and protocols of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Residential School Survivors, their families and communities. As we move forward, we are always drawn back to the NCTR’s spirit name “bezhig miigwan” meaning ‘one feather’. This name calls upon us to see each Survivor coming to the NCTR as a single eagle feather and to show them the same respect and attention an eagle feather deserves. This name also teaches us we are all in this together – that we are all

one, connected, and it is critical that we work together to achieve reconciliation.

Working with our partners, we saw the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions’ Calls to Action (CTA) 53 and 54 come closer to fruition as Bill C-29. This bill will create the National Council for Reconciliation and passed third reading in the House of Commons on November 30. This Council will require the Government of Canada to track the progress of reconciliation and be accountable for advancing truth as well as a strong process of reconciliation.

We are encouraged by the Vatican’s formal repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery and its support for the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Work will continue between the NCTR, the Government of Canada and the Catholic Church to further reconciliation and ensure Survivors, their families, and communities will lead the way in our pursuit of

justice and healing from the harms caused by colonization.

This past year saw us take important steps in realizing the vision of building a new home and ceremonial grounds for the NCTR. We began with a consultation process with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples and communities across Canada. This was done to ensure the new spaces are culturally inclusive and support the vision of Residential, Day, and Boarding School Survivors. I thank all those individuals who contributed during this process, including the Governing Circle, Survivors Circle, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, national Indigenous organizations, and our University of Manitoba partners.

In October 2023, I was honoured to meet with The Sami Nation of Norway and Sweden, and the Swedish Sami Parliament. These countries have established Truth Commissions to address the restoration of Sami history, knowledges, and language. In December 2023, I was also invited to Taipei, Taiwan to meet with the Council of Indigenous Peoples to discuss their Reconciliation and Co-Existence Commission and to share our story and outline the powerful work of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

***The Governing Circle remains committed to honouring Survivors and to supporting and guiding the work of the NCTR.***

Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux,  
*Chair on Truth and Reconciliation,*  
Lakehead University

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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***“While more Canadians engage in sincere acts of commemoration and reconciliation, the voices of the residential school deniers are getting louder – those voices are dangerous and must be countered through a clear and unwavering commitment to truth-telling, and continued research and education.”***

**-STEPHANIE SCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NCTR**

This year – the third in which September 30 has been officially recognized as a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – record numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people took part in reconciliation-focused events across the country. The world continues to watch Canada’s path to reconciliation, evidenced by the international visits to the NCTR by the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Taiwan’s Human Rights Commission and Sweden’s Truth Commission for the Sami People and the Sami Parliament of Sweden as they chart their own course towards truth and reconciliation.

Through these events, we grieved the thousands of children who did not come home from

residential schools and honoured the Survivors who continue to bravely tell the world about the truth of their experiences. These are hard truths about Canada's colonial history: truths that some people are still not prepared to hear and do not want to have told.

Unfortunately, even as more and more Canadians engage in sincere acts of commemoration and reconciliation, the voices of those who minimize, distort, and deny this history are also getting louder.

National and international media outlets have given a platform to residential school deniers who – despite having no expertise on the subject – loudly reject the findings of the TRC and dismiss the lived experiences of Survivors. The efforts of families to find the children buried at residential school sites have become a lightning rod for hatred.

The NCTR stands with Indigenous communities and families in calling for governments to urgently consider legal mechanisms that can effectively combat these hateful actions. We also call on all Canadians to educate themselves on the true history of residential schools.

For far too long, the truth of this shameful part of Canada's history was kept hidden. Survivors were told to be silent. The progress that has been made to finally acknowledge this history, such as Canada's official apology and the TRC, only happened because of the courage of Survivors and their steadfast commitment to the truth.

Reconciliation begins with a commitment to truth-telling. However, the burden of truth-telling should not be placed solely on the shoulders of Survivors. Reconciliation requires institutions, governments, and individuals to live up to their own responsibilities and complete and fulfill the TRC's 94 Calls to Action. We must all learn the true history of residential



PHOTO CREDIT: Darcy Finley

schools, listen to Survivors, and take a stand against deniers.

I am humbled by the Survivors and their courage and commitment to advancing reconciliation. The NCTR is committed to educating Canadians about the children who never returned from residential schools and why this truth must not be denied or diminished. We must all champion these truths, so that Canada will not falter or turn back on the road to reconciliation.

Stephanie Scott,  
*Executive Director*,  
NCTR





## MESSAGE FROM THE SURVIVORS CIRCLE

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*“The Survivors’ Flag represents the strength and courage of Survivors who shared their stories and experiences to make sure the past is never repeated. I’m proud to represent First Nation Survivors and communities as we move forward in our healing journeys.”*

— LAURIE MCDONALD, TWO-SPIRIT SURVIVOR AND NCTR SURVIVORS CIRCLE MEMBER

The Survivors Circle remains committed to ensuring Survivors voices and perspectives continue to be heard and remain central to the NCTR’s programs and policies.

*“We took great care in finding a prominent location worthy of the National Monument dedicated to residential school Survivors and those who did not make it home. It is our hope that the site on Parliament Hill will bring visitors from across the globe to learn about our history and what Indigenous people endured in these institutions.”*

— JIMMY DUROCHER, MÉTIS DAY SCHOOL SURVIVOR, AND FORMER SURVIVORS CIRCLE MEMBER

The past year provided many opportunities for Survivors voices to be amplified across Turtle Island. We were honoured to have many current

and past Survivors Circle members participate on the Survivor-led Steering Committee for the Residential Schools National Monument, which will be located on Parliament Hill. The Committee will continue to provide advice and guidance on such matters as the Monument design process and the development of educational content and programming, and to ensure the project remains grounded in Indigenous values.

In June, Survivors participated in the re-raising of the Survivors' Flag on Parliament Hill. It was first raised on Parliament Hill in September 2021 at a special ceremony to mark the inaugural National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Each Survivor was presented with a Survivors' Flag that had previously been flown on Parliament Hill. The flag will remain flying on Parliament Hill until 2024 when a decision is made about its permanent home.

The Survivors Circle worked closely with Canada Post on a series of four stamps issued in

September to commemorate the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The stamps are intended to increase awareness and reflection on the legacy of the residential school system. The Survivors Circle wishes to stress the importance of truth as a precursor to genuine reconciliation.

*"It's important for Canadians to learn the truth from us, the Survivors. We're the ones that lived it, we're the ones that were hurt."*

— EDNA ELIAS, SURVIVORS CIRCLE MEMBER

Our members and many others were involved in consultations about our vision for the permanent building and ceremonial lands for the NCTR. We see this new building and sacred site with ceremonial lands as becoming a beacon for reconciliation in Canada. We see it as a place of learning and dialogue where Survivors' experiences will be honoured and kept safe for future generations. We look forward with anticipation the next steps in making this vision a reality.

## 2023 Members of the Survivors Circle

**Eugene Arcand**  
Muskeg Lake  
Cree Nation  
(Saskatchewan)



**Abraham  
Bearskin  
Miiyubinoskum  
(One who gives  
New Life)**  
Cree Elder, Cree  
Nation of Chisasibi  
(Quebec)



**Susan Beaudin**  
Cree/Anishinabe,  
Cowessess  
First Nation  
(Saskatchewan)



**Dennis  
Saddleman  
E'Welsh (Great  
Uncle)**  
Merrit (British  
Columbia)



**Dorene Bernard**  
Mi'kmaki  
Grassroots  
Grandmother  
(Nova Scotia)



**Barbara Cameron**  
Neegaunibessikwe  
Bugonegizhik  
(Female leader of  
the Thunderbirds  
Hole in the Sky), Wolf  
Clan, Midewiwin  
Shkabehekwe to  
Minweyewwigaan  
Midewiwin Lodge,  
Roseau River  
(Manitoba)



**Florence Paynter  
Ozhoshko  
Binesi Kwe (Blue  
Thunderbird  
Woman)**  
Sandy Bay First  
Nation (Manitoba)



**Francis "Dickie"  
Yuzicapi  
WaHa Chunka  
Hoksheda (Great  
Shield)**  
Traditional  
Knowledge Keeper  
Okanese  
First Nation  
(Saskatchewan)



**Edna Agnes  
Ekhiyalak Elias**  
Inuk, Kugluktuk  
(Nunavut)



**Maata Tagaaq  
Evaluardjuk-  
Palmer**  
Inuk, Mittimatalik/  
Pond Inlet  
(Nunavut)



**Richard Kistabish**  
Ejinagosi, Anicinabe  
(Algonquin) First  
Nation community  
of Abitibiwinni  
(Quebec)



**Laurie McDonald**  
Two-Spirit Cree  
Enoch Cree Nation  
(Alberta)



**Brian Normand**  
Metis/Michif  
Red River  
Settlement  
(Manitoba)



**Navalik  
Navvalaalk  
Tologanak**  
Inuinnaq,  
Cambridge Bay  
(Nunavut)



**Phyllis Webstad**  
Stswecem'c  
Xgattem First  
Nation, Canoe  
Creek Indian Band  
(British Columbia)

## OPERATIONS

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The NCTR is located on the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Inineew, Anisininew, Dakota and Dene peoples, the National Homeland of the Red River Métis, and home to many Inuit. We are open Monday to Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM CST and can be found on the University of Manitoba Fort Garry Campus, in Chancellor's Hall, 177 Dysart Road.

## Communications

The growth of the NCTR communications channels (website and social media), to better serve Survivors and communities, began in 2021 with the launch of the new and improved website, continued in 2022.

### 4.7+ MILLION USERS REACHED ON SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Facebook	96,000+ followers
Instagram	16,800+ followers
Linkedin	2,000+ followers
Twitter	24,500+ followers
Youtube	5,970+ subscribers
Website	62,000 Visitors per month

## Human Resources

In 2023, the NCTR staff continued supporting learning and dialogue about the truths of the residential school experience in Canada. This included supporting Survivors, families, communities, and others affected by the residential school system. Work continues to raise the necessary funds for construction of a new permanent home for the NCTR.

In the wake of ongoing discoveries of unmarked burials at former residential school sites, the NCTR is expanding rapidly to increase critical supports for Survivors, their families, and communities.

Over the past year, important human resources were added to the NCTR team: Ten permanent employees and eight contract (term) employees. They complement the existing staff and enhance the areas of Education, Outreach and Public Programming; Operations and Administration; Communications; and Donor Relations. As the work at the NCTR continues and grows, we anticipate adding more human resources in 2024.

### CURRENT ELDERS-IN-RESIDENCE ARE:

*Special Advisor/Elder-in-Residence,  
His Honour Murray Sinclair, Mizhana Gheezhik  
(the one who speaks of pictures in the sky)*

*Elder Florence Paynter, Ozhoshko Binesi Kwe*

*Elder Harry Bone, Giizih-Inini*

Elders and Knowledge Keepers play a significant role at the NCTR. From visioning the turtle that sits in front of our building, to the sensitive work of honouring children that never returned home from residential schools, our work would not be possible without them.



**ADDITIONS TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM INCLUDE:**

**JOLENE HEAD**

*Associate Executive Director*



Jolene is a member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation and has occupied management and executive-level positions in the public service, beginning in 2001. Her most recent role was as Director of Indigenous

Procurement Policy. Jolene has a keen interest in leadership, decolonization, and reconciliation.

*“I am committed to learning how to incorporate Indigenous practices into colonial settings with the goal of decolonizing leadership.”*

**SHASTA CHARTRAND**

*Director, Communications and Digital Strategy*



Shasta is a communications leader with over 20 years of experience in the public sector. She is a proud Métis woman – born in Thompson, and raised in Winnipeg, Treaty One Territory.

Shasta’s work has varied greatly, and she has significant experience in leading and managing the development, coordination, and implementation of both external and internal communication activities.

*“I am honoured to join the NCTR team and am excited to contribute to the ongoing and historic work that is led at the NCTR, as it is essential to bridge the knowledge gap that non-Indigenous people have in their understanding of colonialism and the residential school system.”*

**PAT ROBERTSON**

*Senior Director, Major Gifts*



Pat brings decades of fundraising expertise to her role leading the team raising funds to build a permanent home for the NCTR, where the truths of the residential school experience will be honoured and kept safe

for future generations.

*“Reconciliation requires that each of us plays our part to move Canada closer towards being the nation we should be, and I am honoured to have the opportunity to play a small part in such an important legacy for our country.”*

**MARION MCKENZIE**

*Director, Major & Corporate Giving*



Marion is a passionate and top-performing Indigenous female executive leader, and her career experience has involved extensive relationship building, negotiation and facilitation. Her most

recent role was as Operations Manager for Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Inc.

*“I am looking forward to being part of such a dynamic team and helping to make the vision of the new NCTR home a reality.”*





## Open House

On December 19, the NCTR hosted its annual Open House, with more than 100 guests in attendance. This was an excellent opportunity for participants to visit our building, meet our staff and hear about the work we do to support residential school Survivors.

Manitoba's Premier Wab Kinew attended our Open House and offered important words on how his team will be working on furthering reconciliation in Manitoba, including designating Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30 as a provincial holiday, so that Manitobans can recognize the significance of the day and attend community gatherings.





## Progress on Future Home & Ceremonial Grounds

The new building and ceremonial grounds will be located on the Fort Garry campus, specifically on the Southwood Circle development lands where a ground-breaking ceremony was held in November 2022.

This building site is being offered to the NCTR as an act of reconciliation by the University of Manitoba. The new home will provide the NCTR with the space it needs to fulfill its mandate and will be an international learning centre for people across Canada and the world to learn the truth about residential schools. It will house sacred items and records, thousands of oral histories, and Survivor statements.

In 2022, the Government of Canada pledged \$60 million toward the construction of the building and grounds. The NCTR is undertaking to raise an additional \$40 million from donors to complete the project.

In 2023, community consultations were held with First Nations, Inuit and Métis residential school Survivors, and members of Indigenous communities and organizations across Canada, to help shape the vision of our future home.

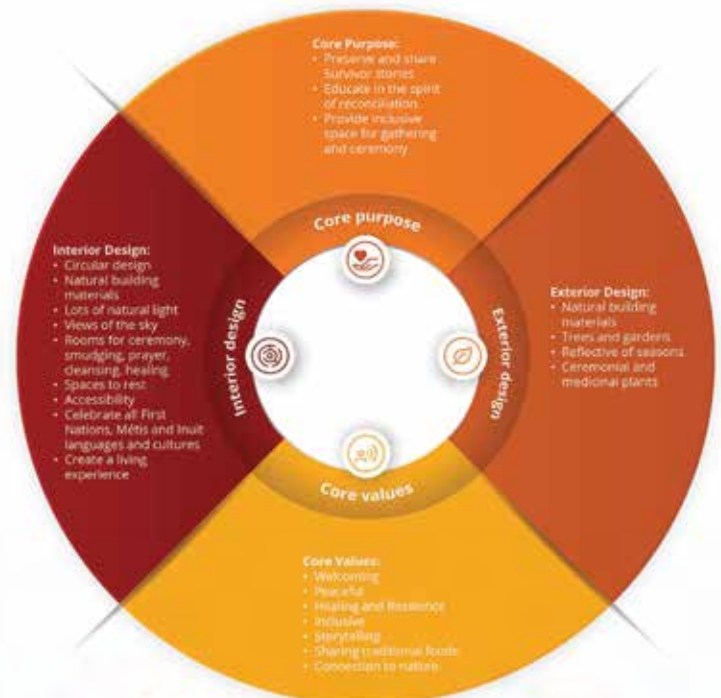
While respect and consideration has been given to the diversity of perspectives shared through

the engagement sessions, the true spirit of the framework is to develop a shared vision for the NCTR's new home. The framework is comprised of four main elements:

The Core Purpose of the new building and ceremonial grounds, as envisioned by Survivors and their families, as well as the Core Values the new design is meant to represent.

The Interior Design and Exterior Design elements that were most prominent in the feedback we received from participants.

All four of these elements work together to provide a shared vision for the design.



## ARCHIVES & PRIVACY OFFICE

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The NCTR is working to restructure and decolonize the archives. This important project, led by Raymond Frogner, Senior Director of Research and Head of Archives, aims to rebuild the digital architecture of our archives, which currently holds 5 million documents originally collected by government and church offices for colonial purposes. The project will shift focus towards individuals, allowing future users to trace Indigenous connections through different institutions. The new endeavour will involve Indigenous communities and expand perspectives, particularly around photographs from residential schools.

### ACCESS REQUESTS

Total Access Requests	279*
Total number of pages released	47,723
Total Individual Record Requests	386**

\* 29 of these requests were rush which are elevated when the requester notes the records are required due to a health issue, for legal reasons or for compensation submissions. As Survivors will not be with us forever, we recognize the urgency and importance of access to their records.

\*\* Requests are logged as one request regardless of how many family members' records are included in that requests, i.e. John Smith made a request for himself and eight family members. This would be recorded as one request to ensure that all records are kept together and provided back to the requester at the same time.

## Proactive Disclosure

Proactive disclosure requests have increased since the announcement in 2021 of the unmarked graves at Kamloops Indian Residential School.

### DISCLOSURE REQUESTS

Total Records Released	11,159
Video & Audio Footage Released	30:09:36

## UNESCO Recognizes Archives



The NCTR archives were inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register. The register serves to safeguard and promote access to documentary heritage of global significance: archives that chronicle the history of the world and the heritage of humanity. This international inscription recognizes the global significance of the NCTR's archives as a body of evidence and knowledge that documents the colonial attempt to assimilate and erase Indigenous peoples and their cultures, a human rights violation with parallels around the world.

*"The magnitude of the NCTR's archives reflects the incredible strength of residential school Survivors in speaking out about their experiences. I'm certain that the inclusion of the NCTR's archives in the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register can serve to honor and amplify their voices on a global level."*

— NATASHA CAYER, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT DELEGATE OF CANADA TO UNESCO



## New Agreement with Manitoba Vital Statistics

Copies of provincial records in Manitoba that could hold important information about the residential school system, including the identities of children that never returned home from the schools or who died because of their forced attendance in these institutions, will now be available to the NCTR. A memorandum of agreement is a first step in improving collaboration between Manitoba Vital Statistics and the NCTR.

*“Cooperation is part of reconciliation and healing. Governments must continue bringing records forward and work together with Survivors and the NCTR so that we can find and honour all those children who went missing at residential school.”*

— ELDER FLORENCE PAYNTER, SURVIVOR.

**PHOTO:** 1933 - Ecole - Mackenzie - Providence - Enfants nourris par les produits de la ferme.

## Oblate Rome Archives Report

In summer of 2022, Raymond Frogner, the NCTR's Head of Archives spent five days reviewing Rome's Archivum Generale O.M.I. Romae (AG) which mostly holds the administrative records of the Oblate Order's Missionary operations around the world.

The report created houses key findings from records reviewed between 1830-2020 and consist of five different series: manuscripts, audio/visual, provinces, administration, and personnel.

The full report is available by visiting: <https://nctr.ca/oblate-rome-archives-report-now-online/>

The NCTR is working toward a memorandum of agreement recommending all Oblate personnel files be open to researchers, educators, and Survivors and their descendants. While these archives are likely not a resource that will resolve the search for many lost children, it will add valuable context to the operations and processes of an organization very closely involved in the residential schools in Canada.



*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada tabled 94 Calls to Action (CTA) 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.*

*As many of the CTAs represent ongoing work rather than a prescriptive checklist, much of the 2023 activities for the NCTR represent iterative updates to this work. These updates include the following:*



### TOWARDS RECONCILIATION EDUCATION

#### *Calls to Action 65*

*We call upon the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.*

The NCTR is working with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to set up the Reconciliation Hub. Six projects will be funded through SSHRC with the selection and grant coordination to be done in collaboration with the NCTR. In addition, the Reconciliation Hub will be hosted on a web site at the NCTR. The NCTR will also manage social media concerning the activities of the award-winning grants.



### TOWARDS RECONCILIATION MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES

#### *Calls to Action 70*

*We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Association of Archivists to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of archival policies and best practices to:*

- i. Determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Joint-Orontlicher Principles, as related to Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools.*
- ii. Produce a report with recommendations for full implementation of these international mechanisms as a reconciliation framework for Canadian archives.*

The Head of Archives served on the committee that drafted the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) Reconciliation Framework. This is a published guide to decolonizing archives functions composed by Indigenous representatives and

ACA members. Since publication the NCTR Head of Archives wrote a review of the Guidelines with other Indigenous and settler academics. *Archivaria*, the ACA professional journal has accepted this review to be published in the edition of the journal.



## TOWARDS RECONCILIATION MISSING CHILDREN AND BURIAL INFORMATION

### *Calls to Action 71*

*We call upon all chief coroners and provincial vital statistics agencies that have not provided to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada their records on the deaths of Aboriginal children in the care of residential school authorities to make these documents available to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.*

The NCTR continues to work with Manitoba Vital Statistics to acquire records from the provincial government office. The NCTR continues dialogue with the Manitoba Coroners' Officer to acquire records on children lost at residential school. The NCTR is also in dialogue with the Government of Québec to acquire vital stats and coroners' records, but has not yet received any of those records. The NCTR is in dialogue with the Government of Saskatchewan for both coroners' reports and vital stats documents. The coroners' offices records of British Columbia, Ontario, and the Yukon have not been transferred to the NCTR.

### *Calls to Action 72 – 76*

*We call upon the federal government to allocate sufficient resources to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to allow it to develop and maintain the National Residential School Student Death Register established by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.*

*We call upon the federal government to work with churches, Aboriginal communities, and former residential school students to establish and maintain an online registry of residential school cemeteries, including, where possible, plot maps showing the location of deceased residential school children.*

*We call upon the federal government to work with the churches and Aboriginal community leaders to inform the families of children who died at residential schools of the child's burial location, and to respond to families' wishes for appropriate commemoration ceremonies and markers, and reburial in home communities where requested.*

*We call upon the federal government to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried. This is to include the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.*

*We call upon the parties engaged in the work of documenting, maintaining, commemorating, and protecting residential school cemeteries to adopt strategies in accordance with the following principles:*

- The Aboriginal community most affected shall lead the development of such strategies.*
- Information shall be sought from residential school Survivors and other Knowledge Keepers in the development of such strategies.*
- Aboriginal protocols shall be respected before any potential invasive technical inspection and investigation of a cemetery site.*



**THE NCTR HAS DONE  
THIS WORK IN THREE PHASES:**

NCTR Missing Children & Burial Information

**Phase 1 (2018-2019)**

The NCTR began to address CTA 72 in phase one of the ongoing missing children project. At the time, we planned to work with communities to try to identify as accurately as possible the identity of missing children who were sent to residential school.

*Research:*

Reviewed student death research completed by the TRC MCWG

Completed pilot study of remaining 2.2 million TRC records not researched

*Community Engagement:*

Engaged with Survivors and 170 communities across Canada to build a shared vision for a new National Student Death Register

*Development:*

Established the National Student Death Register, a secure NCTR database containing specific data elements related to student deaths

Established the National Student Memorial Register, a public NCTR website ([memorial.nctr.ca](http://memorial.nctr.ca)) containing a limited set of information on each student death

**Phase 2 (2021-2023)**

*Research completed:*

Fully analyzed the remaining 2.2 million TRC records

Over 17,000 references to student loss were identified, but not cross-referenced to other documentary evidence due to project constraints

All NCTR records in the internal database are now fully searchable through the fields that describe the records. This opens great possibilities for data analytics

Greater usability for community researchers

**Phase 3 (2023-2025)**

*Research goals:*

Verify 4,141 deaths in the NCTR National Student Death Register

Cross-reference over 17,000 indications of loss identified in the previous Phase 2

Deliver plan to research:

*New records acquired by the NCTR since opening in 2015*

*New records to be acquired by the NCTR in the future*

*Community Engagement goals:*

Build trusted relationships with communities to confirm and commemorate children who died or went missing

Engage with Survivors and communities across Canada to build a shared vision for a new National Student Burial Register

## Education Program Review

The NCTR Education Program Review was created to inform the development of an educational program to contribute to advancing truth and reconciliation in Canada. There were three phases to the project including a landscape analysis, stakeholder engagement, and a final report.

The landscape analysis reviewed current educational programs across Canada related to truth and reconciliation. Stakeholder engagement was conducted with Indigenous peoples, students, Elders, organizations, NCTR Governing Circle members, Survivors, Francophone community, 2S individuals and partner organizations. A national survey was also developed to inform the final phase of the project.

A report of recommendations was developed and advised that an education program should focus on an ongoing learning journey tailored to learners' knowledge levels. This would be achieved using the strengths of the NCTR such as the expertise of Survivors, archival resources, and collaborative, strategic partnerships.

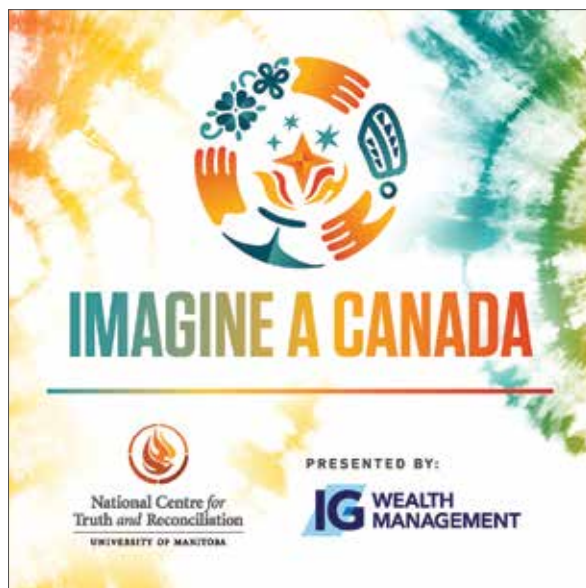
An education framework will guide learners on where they're at today and will help them go from an awareness stage to a stage where they are empowered to act and lead others. Benefits of this framework include being Indigenous led, done alongside partner organizations, looking ahead to the needs of the future, and focusing on a national impact.

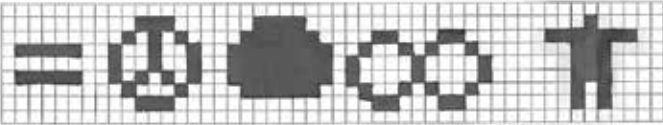
## Imagine a Canada

The annual Imagine a Canada national program recognized 25 submissions who were selected in the 2022/2023 program. Fourteen art and essay submissions and 11 reconciliation projects were selected as being uniquely beautiful, inspiring, and educational. These projects, and the meaning behind them, will be reproduced in one of two publications showcasing their creativity as well as their understanding of reconciliation. In addition to being featured in the publication, the chosen projects received a grant of up to \$1,500 to turn their visions into reality.

*"It is really moving to see so many young people submit what they believe to be reconciliation and what that means to them. It's so important that these voices of our future leaders and change-makers are heard and celebrated."*

— NAVALIK TOLOGANAK, SURVIVOR CIRCLE MEMBER





The youth were recognized at the National Celebration and Honouring Ceremony in June at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, where guests heard from the youth themselves about their projects and what reconciliation means to them.

The Imagine a Canada program asks youth from kindergarten to Grade 12 and CÉGEP to envision a Canada reconciled. Since 2016, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) has received more than 1,400 submissions and has worked with thousands of students to realize their hopes and dreams of a Canada they wish to see.

Submissions for 2024 opened September 30, 2023. For more information about the program, visit <https://nctr.ca/education/educational-programs/imagine-a-canada/>

Imagine A Canada is presented with generous support from IG Wealth Management and Power Corporation of Canada.



PHOTO: 2023 Imagine a Canada National Celebration



## Decolonizing Lens

The Decolonizing Lens is a film and discussion series that features the work and words of Indigenous artists from Winnipeg and beyond. It provides a space to celebrate the work of Indigenous filmmakers in Canada and the incorporation of Indigenous actors, directors, producers, and narratives in film.



The 2023 season screened seven films and has had a total 38 events, 101 films, and 104 guests over its eight-year run.

**Films:** The Beacon Project: Stories Along the Qu'Appelle Valley; Stories Are in Our Bones, Life Givers; Bill Reid Remembers; Honour to Senator Murray Sinclair; Upstairs with David Amram;

and Mino Pimatisiwin Wiisiniwin (Living the Good Life Food).

Local Cree film-maker Sonya Ballantyne supported the series as host and moderator with special guests: Janine Windolph, Diane Whelan, Alanis Obomsawin, Jaimie Isaac, Elder Mary Courchene, Dawn Isaac, and Lorena Fontaine.

Sponsors: Margaret Laurence Endowment Fund of Women and Gender Studies, University of Manitoba; the University of Winnipeg; the Winnipeg Art Gallery; and the NCTR.

## NCTR Dialogues

The NCTR Dialogues series presents lectures and discussions that explore diverse perspectives on reconciliation. They take place on the NCTR Facebook page, and an archive of presentations can be found there. The 2023 topics were:

***Effects of intergenerational trauma*** with panelists Dr. Richard Verdan, Associate Professor at UBC School of Social Work; Kathy Pompana, Regional Health Support/Knowledge Keeper with ANISH Corporation; and Jonathan Meikle, Executive Director of Strength in the Circle Inc.

***Land Back Movement*** with panelists Tina Munroe and Clayton Thomas-Müller, author of *Life in the City of Dirty Water - A Memoir of Healing*, to discuss Indigenous perspectives of the land back movement.

***Research and Access to Residential School Files*** with panelists Jesse Boiteau (NCTR Archives) and Jenna Lemay (Shingwauk Residential School Centre) on residential school archives, what is contained in the collections, and the impacts of working with such heavy documents.

***We Matter on International Youth Day*** with panelists Ally Trick, Keenan Bird (We Matter) and Makadee-Makoons, to discuss the Ambassadors of Hope, an Indigenous youth-led organization

dedicated to Indigenous youth support, hope and life promotion.

*Stolen: Surviving St. Michael's* with Connie Walker and Betty Ann Adam. This Pulitzer Prize and Peabody Award winning podcast in the Audio Reporting and Radio Category was the first to win both awards in the same year (2023).

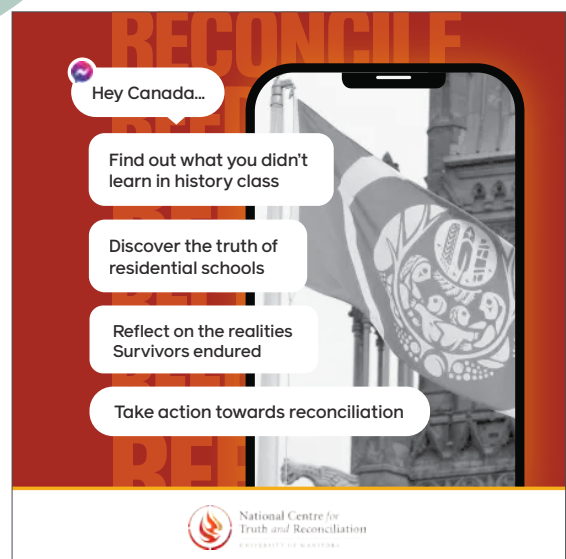
## New Educational Endeavour

The NCTR has partnered with Meta to bring an educational endeavour online through a Messenger experience, accessible on Facebook and Instagram channels. It was launched during National Truth and Reconciliation Week. The experience is designed to guide Canadians as they learn the truths of the residential school system – allowing them to act towards reconciliation.

Learn more about the truths of residential schools and the path to reconciliation, all through an interactive Messenger experience.



SCAN THE QR CODE NOW!





## GATHERINGS

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### National Survivors Gathering

*Breaking the Colonial Mindset* was the theme of the National Survivors Gathering held in August in Winnipeg, Treaty One Territory. This gathering was an opportunity to acknowledge, honour, and support residential school Survivors and those who walk beside them on their journey – the regional health support workers and cultural workers from across the country. Over the three days, speakers and experts shared their experiences and insights, as we continue the path of truth-telling.

*“This gathering is of the utmost importance to bring together residential school Survivors across the country to know that our truths are not unique to one or two people. Thousands of us experienced similar horrors at those institutions – they tried to break us, but we are here, and we survived so the truths are never denied or will be forgotten.”*

— JIMMY DUROCHER, MÉTIS DAY SCHOOL SURVIVOR, AND FORMER SURVIVORS CIRCLE MEMBER

### Statement Gathering

In 2023, the NCTR invited Survivors of the residential school experience, intergenerational Survivors, and their families to share their experiences at several in-person gatherings in communities across Canada. The truths of the impacts of residential and day schools, as well as those impacted by other colonial systems, were audio and video recorded and will be preserved and honoured by the NCTR.

**PHOTO:** Dr. Gabor Maté presenting at the NCTR's National Gathering for Survivors 2023: *Breaking the Colonial Mindset*



At least 92 statements were collected in gatherings that took place in Chisasibi, QC; Montreal, QC; South Porcupine, ON; Toronto, ON; Six Nations, ON; Timmins, ON; Saskatoon, SK; Regina, SK; Winnipeg, MB; Opaskwayak Cree Nation, MB; Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, MB; Guy Hill Gathering, MB; Dawson Creek, BC; Vancouver, BC; Halifax, NS; and Truro, Mi'kma'ki.

By sharing their experiences, a place of learning, dialogue, and understanding is created, where the collective and individual truths of Survivors and others impacted by residential schools are honoured and protected to advance reconciliation.

To learn about how preserving your story visit: <https://nctr.ca/records/preserve-your-records/>

## Residential School Documents Advisory Committee

Many important steps towards a renewed relationship with Indigenous Peoples, increased accountability and addressing the ongoing impacts of residential schools were taken in 2023.

Chief Cadmus Delorme of Cowessess First Nation was appointed as the chairperson of the new Residential School Documents Advisory Committee. This came out of the directive issued in 2021 by the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, to establish a committee that would develop recommendations on the identification and sharing of documents of historical interest with the NCTR.

*“There were over 130 sponsored residential schools in this country. Today many local communities, ad hoc committees and First Nations are leading the way in the validation of unmarked graves attached to former residential schools. This advisory committee’s goal will help by empowering*

*the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to house records many are seeking to help in their healing journey.”*

— **CADMUS DELORME, FORMER CHIEF OF COWESSESS FIRST NATION; CHAIRPERSON, RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL DOCUMENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

After the inaugural meeting of the Residential School Documents Advisory Committee in June, Cadmus Delorme, with Stephanie Scott, NCTR Executive Director, and the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, the membership of the Committee was detailed along with an update on the exercise to identify documents related to residential schools.

Committee members were identified through consultations with the NCTR, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council. They are:

**Eugene Arcand:** Survivor, Muskeg Lake First Nation, Saskatchewan

**Maata Evaluardjuk-Palmer:** Survivor, Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet), Nunavut

**Shirley Horn:** Survivor, Missanabie Cree First Nation, Ontario

**Brenda Macdougall:** Chair of Métis Research, University of Ottawa

**Dr. Gwen Point:** Intergenerational Survivor, Skowkale First Nation, British Columbia

Committee membership will also include representation from the NCTR, as well as: Agriculture Canada, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Department of Justice, Employment and Social Development Canada, Health Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Library and Archives Canada, the National Film Board, Parks Canada, Privy Council Office, Public Services and Procurement Canada, the RCMP, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, and the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked

Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools.

Through an initial scoping review, the departments and agencies noted above have identified as many as 23 million additional documents related to residential schools and the implementation of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) for the committee to consider. This collection goes beyond the type of documents that were required to be disclosed to the TRC under IRSSA and are in addition to the more than 1.5 million documents and higher-quality images recently provided to the NCTR through the MOU signed in January 2022.

The independent Committee will provide recommendations to the Government of Canada on removing barriers to sharing documents, while respecting Survivors' and their families' wishes, legislation, court orders, settlement agreements and ongoing litigation processes. One of the top priorities of the Committee is to ensure that stakeholder views—including those of Indigenous nations, communities, and Survivors—are reflected in discussions and decisions regarding the important work of identification, review of, and recommendations on sharing of residential school-related documents of historical interest to the NCTR.

## Indigenous History & Heritage Gathering

In June, during Indigenous History month, the NCTR and the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres hosted the Indigenous History and Heritage Gathering in Ottawa, ON in unceded Algonquin territory. It brought together diverse groups working to amplify the distinct stories of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island. The 350 attendees learned about how communities are building their narratives and how specialized

historians, and researcher are addressing gaps in the historical record. Expert panels provided perspectives on the legacies of the Truth Commissions and historic research and commemorative practices to support the amplification of truths related to Residential and Day Schools.

The gathering was presented through the gracious support of Know History, the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres (FNCCEC) and the NCTR.



PHOTO: Elder Claudette Commanda sharing remarks at IHHG





Remembering The Children

Síberjérvés

Reserved Seating  
←

VOLUNTEER



## National Truth & Reconciliation Week:

*Honouring Survivors* was the theme of Truth and Reconciliation Week 2023 and ran from September 25 -30. Throughout the week, daily educational programming took place with age-appropriate materials for students in grades 1 through 12, that featured both live and pre-recorded materials provided through a virtual platform. Students from all provinces and territories were able to learn directly from residential school Survivors, Indigenous artists and athletes, and other subject matter experts.

A new series of virtual Lunch & Learns was launched and the series was open to all. These were led by Survivors, with sessions including discussions around the history of the residential school experience, intergenerational impacts and ongoing systemic discrimination, Indigenous rights, acting towards Reconciliation, and so much more.

For a second year, the NCTR hosted a special live in-person and virtual youth gathering *Gidinawendimin – We Are All Related* in unceded Algonquin Anishinabeeg territory that brought together 5,000 students. Students heard impactful words from Survivors and witnessed powerful performances from artists across Turtle Island.

On September 30th we co-hosted *Remembering the Children* with APTN, a live national broadcast and gathering held on Parliament Hill in unceded Algonquin Anishinabeeg territory. This commemoration was a special moment to memorialize the children lost to the residential school system and honoured Survivors and their families. The gathering saw more than 2,000 people attend in-person and had a record number of 17 Canadian broadcasters participate in amplifying the truths of Survivors.



*“Remembering the Children* is where we come together to honour residential school Survivors and the little ones who never came home,” said Stephanie Scott, Executive Director, NCTR. “This commemoration is our time to reflect collectively as a nation as we listen to the Elders and Survivors who are sharing their oral histories and their healing journeys. Only then can we truly begin to walk the path of reconciliation together.”

Truth and Reconciliation Week is hosted by the NCTR with the generous support of our funders and partners. Funders included Air Canada; Arc'teryx; Canadian Heritage; META; North West Company; Royal Bank of Canada (RBC); Telus; The Winnipeg Foundation; and provincial and territorial governments of New Brunswick; Alberta; Northwest Territories; Manitoba; Nunavut; Ontario; Quebec; Nova Scotia; Newfoundland and Labrador; and Prince Edward Island. Partners included Canada's History; Canadian Museum for Human Rights; Canadian Commission for UNESCO; Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE); Canadian National Railway (CN); Hubilo; National Film Board (NFB); Télé-Québec en classe; and Wapikoni.

## HONOURING SURVIVORS

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### Knowledge Keepers Forum

In November, the NCTR hosted a two-day Traditional Knowledge Keeper Forum at the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba, Agowiidiwinan Centre, located at The Forks in Winnipeg. The forum brought together 12 Traditional Knowledge Keepers from across Turtle Island to engage in dialogue and share traditional teachings on reconciliation, forgiveness, and healing to help inform the work of the NCTR and to revisit reconciliation.

Knowledge Keepers led participants in ceremony, knowledge sharing, traditional and ceremonial songs, and reflection. Guest observers were also invited to witness and write their reflections based on what they learned and how they would incorporate this knowledge moving forward in their own work. A follow-up virtual meeting will be held for observers in early 2024 with Knowledge Keepers presenting their thoughts and to implement feedback and provide further insight.

### Survivors' Flag

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada joined residential school Survivors, the NCTR and



PHOTO: Traditional Knowledge Keeper Forum at the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba, Agowiidiwinan Centre

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on June 21 in unceded Algonquin Anishinabeg territory, to re-raise the Survivors' Flag on Parliament Hill to commemorate and celebrate National Indigenous Peoples' Day.



This commemorative flag was created by Survivors to honour all Survivors, families, and communities impacted by the residential school system in Canada, and to share their expression of remembrance across the nation. The flag was developed through consultation and collaboration with Inuit, Mi'kmaq, Atikamekw, Cree, Ojibway, Dakota, Mohawk, Dene, Nuuchahnulth, Secwepemc, and Métis Nation Survivors.

*"The re-raising of the Survivor flag is a symbolic act that not only recognizes the importance of our voices but is also an opportunity to educate everyone on the history of residential schools and the children who didn't come home."*

— ANDREW CARRIER, MÉTIS SURVIVOR

## Spotlight on the Truth about Residential Schools

On September 28, Canada Post unveiled four new stamps that shed some light on the truth and tragic legacy of the residential schools, whose impacts are still felt by Indigenous Peoples today.

The stamps were developed in close collaboration with the NCTR Survivors Circle as well as researchers and experts Dr. Crystal Gail Fraser and Dr. Tricia Logan. The Survivors Circle stressed the importance of truth as a precursor to genuine reconciliation. That includes coming to terms with the full history of the residential school system, and its enduring impacts.

*"Reconciliation is not going to happen until people really understand and know the truth."*

— JIMMY DUROCHER, MÉTIS DAY SCHOOL SURVIVOR, AND FORMER SURVIVORS CIRCLE MEMBER

Featuring stark archival images of residential schools in different parts of Canada, the stamps serve as a reminder of the fear, loneliness, pain, and shame experienced by generations of Indigenous children in these federally and church-created institutions. The stamp issue serves as a vehicle for truth about Canada's residential school system to help support



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the process of reconciliation and, ultimately, healing.

The residential schools and school residence featured on the stamps are Kamloops Residential School, Kamloops, British Columbia; Île-à-la-

Crosse Day and Boarding Residential School, Île-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan; Sept-Îles Residential School, Sept-Îles, Quebec; and Grollier Hall, Inuvik, Northwest Territories.

As a partner of the NCTR, Canada Post has entered a five-year sponsorship to support NCTR's important work sharing the truth and fostering healing. The stamps are available at [canadapost.ca](http://canadapost.ca) and postal outlets across Canada.



## Residential Schools National Monument

In keeping with the spirit and intent of Calls to Action #81 of the TRC, the Survivor-led Steering Committee announced in June that the Residential Schools National Monument will be installed on Parliament Hill. The site, near West Block, was blessed by Elders during a special ceremony. The Residential Schools National Monument will be a meeting place where Indigenous people and all Canadians can gather to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

*“We worked in collaboration and with the Algonquin people and followed their Indigenous protocols to decide that the Residential Schools National Monument will be located on Parliament Hill. There is no better place than the national capital to bring Canadians and visitors together to honour the lives impacted and lost to residential schools.”*

— EUGENE ARCAND, CREE SURVIVOR

The Monument site is located on traditional unceded Algonquin territory. Consensus on the location from Algonquin Anishinabe Nation and Survivors is a first for any monument on Parliament Hill. The 16-member Survivor-led Steering Committee was established to oversee the Monument project through to its completion and ensure the project remains grounded in Indigenous values.

*“Having Inuit input into the location of this National Monument is of great importance to our communities and the Inuit people who suffered greatly in residential schools. Our voices are as strong as our will, and I am proud to represent the Inuit on this committee dedicated to honouring Survivors.”*

—NAVALIK TOLOGANAK, INUIT SURVIVOR

## PARTNERSHIPS

### Native Healing Coalition

In efforts toward uncovering the truth about the historical impact of Indian boarding schools in the United States, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) has released a digital map containing a total of 523 Indian boarding schools across the United



States. This is the most extensive known list of schools to date and encompasses both federally operated boarding schools and institutions run

by various religious entities. The digital map was created in partnership with the NCTR.

“NCTR is honored to partner with NABS to expand the international research of these assimilative institutions,” said Jesse Boiteau (Métis Nation), Senior Archivist for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. “Through this digital map, we are not just capturing history. We have created a tool that can be used today to impact what happens in the future.”

The 523 schools are shown alongside known Indian residential schools in Canada, demonstrating an international scope and context geographically for the first time. Users will be able to find the locations and general information about all 523 schools, including known dates, operators, and historical notes.

## GOVERNANCE

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### 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 Peoples. The Governing Circle is in turn guided by a Survivors Circle, as well as by Elders, legacy members of the Survivors Circle, and Knowledge Keepers. These governance structures are essential to ensuring Survivors are always at the very heart of the NCTR, and we rely on their advice and guidance to uphold Indigenous laws and protocols.

#### MEMBERS IN 2023:

##### *Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux (Chair)*

Dr. Wesley-Esquimaux served as Vice Provost for Aboriginal Initiatives at Lakehead University for three years, and effective September 2016 was appointed as the 1st Indigenous Chair for Truth and Reconciliation in Canada.

##### *Andrew Carrier (Vice-Chair)*

Andrew has served the Manitoba Métis Federation for the past 20 years as a Regional Director and in 2018 became the elected Vice-President for the Winnipeg Region.

##### *Dr. Catherine Cook, MD, MSc, CCFP, FCFP*

Dr. Cook is Métis and grew up in northern Manitoba. She is the Vice-President (Indigenous) at the University of Manitoba. Prior to this, she was head of Ongomiizwin – Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing and Vice-Dean,

Indigenous Health, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences and Provincial Lead, Indigenous Health at Shared Health.

##### *Dr. Crystal Gail Fraser*

Dr. Fraser is Gwichyà Gwich'in and originally from Inuvik and Dachan Choo Gèhñjik in the Northwest Territories. Her PhD research focused on the history of student experiences at Indian Residential Schools in the Inuvik Region between 1959 and 1996.

##### *Dr. Levinia Nuqaqlaak Brown, LLD (honoris causa)*

Levinia Brown is an Inuit Survivor from Rankin Inlet. She served as the first female mayor of Rankin Inlet from 1989-1991 and was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut in 2004, at one point serving as Deputy Premier.

##### *Dr. B. Mario Pinto*

Dr. Pinto is the Vice-President (Research and International) at the University of Manitoba. Before joining the UM in 2022, he served as Griffith University's Deputy Vice Chancellor and Director of the Gold Coast Health & Knowledge Precinct in Queensland, Australia.

*A call for the seventh member of the Governing Circle went out in fall 2023 and the new member will be announced in 2024.*

### Survivors Circle

The NCTR exists to support Survivors so their truths and oral histories are recorded and safeguarded for all time. This crucial work is guided by the Survivors Circle, and their voices and perspectives remain central to our programming and policies. Their guidance and advice is essential to the NCTR team, the Governing Circle, the University of Manitoba, and our partners.

## OFFICIAL VISITS

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### Manitoba's Lieutenant Governor

On September 13, the NCTR was pleased to host her Honour, Anita Neville, Manitoba's Lieutenant Governor who came to the Centre to hear about our work at the Centre and potentials for shared collaborative efforts that could further contribute to reconciliation. Ideas were shared and this partnership continues into 2024.

### Governor General of Canada

On June 8, the NCTR was honoured to host her Excellency, the Right Honourable Mary May Simon, who made a special visit to meet the

NCTR team. Her Excellency toured the gallery that holds sacred items, including the Bentwood Box, and the seal skin adorned report she gifted to the Box in 2014. She was presented with a copy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) final report wrapped in broadcloth – this was particularly symbolic as the NCTR was born of the TRC.

### Taiwan's National Human Rights Commission

In October, the NCTR hosted Taiwan's National Human Rights Commission on Treaty One Territory. Representatives were taken on a tour of the NCTR and were provided with an overview of the work undertaken on behalf of Survivors. It was a very successful knowledge exchange as discussions included respective education efforts, and the work around record keeping and accessibility.

**PHOTO:** Representatives from Taiwan's National Human Rights Commission and the NCTR





## UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples

In March, the NCTR was pleased to host José Francisco Calí Tzay, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, during his visit to Treaty One Territory and the homeland of the Red River Métis. The meeting was an opportunity for residential school Survivors, the NCTR, and representatives of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Manitoba Métis Federation, the MMIWG2S+ Implementation Committee and Grassy Narrows First Nation to share concerns about the human rights situation of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. The importance of Parliament's recent recognition that the residential school system constituted a form of genocide under international law was highlighted.

***The Special Rapporteur is expected to submit a full report of his visit and recommendations for action.***



**PHOTO (top):** Elder Brian Normand, Elder Harry Bone, The Honourable Murray Sinclair and José Francisco Calí Tzay, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples

**PHOTO (middle):** Elder Brian Normand, Elder Harry Bone, The Honourable Murray Sinclair and José Francisco Calí Tzay, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples

**PHOTO (below):** José Francisco Calí Tzay, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples



## Update on Reconciliation Barometer

The Canadian Reconciliation Barometer measures progress of non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples' shared journey toward reconciliation. The update provided in late 2023 is based on progress made since 2021 and comparing that to 2022 data. The study uses 13 indicators of reconciliation to measure good understanding of the past and present, acknowledgement of ongoing harm, respectful relationships, personal equality, and systemic equality. The data is based on nationally representative survey responses of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in six regions.



## Canadian Reconciliation Barometer

The report indicates that in 2022, more respondents were aware of residential schools and their harms than in 2021. Non-Indigenous respondents' views also became slightly more aligned with Indigenous respondents' views from 2021 to 2022, especially in the areas of reconciling with nature. With these

improvements in mind, the report concludes that there is still "a lot of work ahead of us."

The Canadian Reconciliation Barometer research project is led by researchers from the University of Manitoba, the University of Victoria, Toronto Metropolitan University, Probe Research Inc. in partnership with the NCTR.

## Reconciliation Network Coordination Hub

In 2022, the NCTR and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) formed a partnership on a national research program to advance understanding of Reconciliation. This partnership responds to the TRC's CTA 65: *"To establish a national research program in partnership with SSHRC with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation."*

As part of the Reconciliation Network Hub (RNH), the teams funded under this initiative will participate in coordination activities managed by the NCTR in its role as coordination hub for the network. In September 2023, NCTR hired Madeleine Ricard as Knowledge Mobilization Coordinator for the RNH.

Six projects will be undertaken by the RNH. The intention is to create a balanced network, which covers:

- Multiple geographic regions across Canada, and especially has representation from regions in the north
- Multiple themes and aspects important to reconciliation
- Reaches a wide range of communities including First Nations, Metis Nation, and Inuit

The RHN will ensure that projects are meaningful for Indigenous peoples, community engaged, and grounded in proper protocol and ceremony.





## AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

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### Helen Betty Osborne Memorial Fund

For a third year in a row, the NCTR has worked with the Indigenous Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the Winnipeg Foundation to oversee the Helen Betty Osborne Memorial Fund. The application portal, hosted on the NCTR website, accepted applications until October 31, 2023. Applications were reviewed by an independent adjudication panel with representation from the NCTR and the ICC with 40 students awarded \$2,000 each for a total of \$80,000 funds distributed.

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.

### Malcolm & Catherine Dewar Truth and Reconciliation Fellowship

Stephanie Sinclair is the recipient of the 2023 Malcolm & Catherine Dewar Truth and Reconciliation Fellowship. Stephanie is working towards a PhD in Native Studies. She is an Anishinaabe woman from Sandy Bay First Nation who is the single mother of two children.

Her research focuses on the impact of restoring Indigenous birthing knowledge on the mental health of birth helpers. Reclaiming and restoring

**PHOTO:** Stephanie Sinclair, recipient of the 2023 Malcolm & Catherine Dewar Truth and Reconciliation Fellowship



Indigenous birthing practices is a step towards returning birth knowledge and births back to communities.

The Malcolm & Catherine Dewar Truth and Reconciliation Fellowship was established to support action that is intentional and effectual. The University of Manitoba alumni couple established the fellowship to reward the academic achievements of graduate students at the university pursuing research in the area of truth and reconciliation.

Stephanie's research connects to Calls to Action #12 and #22 on culturally appropriate early childhood education programs and for the recognition and use of Indigenous health knowledge within the health care system.

## 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 2023, a total of \$347,012 in grants funds were awarded to a diverse memorial and healing initiatives across Canada. Thirty-five of those initiatives were funded by Parks Canada and eleven were funded through the NCTR Donor Fund.

An example of one project in Saskatchewan, is the Flying Dust First Nation's Traditional Powwow. It exemplifies the profound significance of cultural expression and communal healing. This annual event honors the community and the children impacted by residential schools, providing a space for remembrance, perseverance, and community bonding. Survivor gatherings like these play a crucial role in empowering Survivors

and communities, fostering a sense of belonging, solidarity, and hope amidst ongoing challenges.

## The NCTR Research Grants Fund

The NCTR awards funding to researchers from various Canadian institutions annually. Some of the projects underway in 2023 included:

A project that involved interviewing community grassroots walking initiatives spearheaded by Survivors and intergenerational Survivors that seek to promote healing through physical act of walking and strengthening oneself, through connection between other Indigenous people, and through ceremonies held at significant sites including residential schools. These walks are examples of important collective healing initiatives.

An archival research project that examines the development of child welfare concerning two communities in Nunavut. The project explores the process, communication, and decision-making that led to these two communities holding authority over child welfare, then foregoing this same authority years later.

A project to develop curriculum resources for K-12 education across Canada, based on an open access, interactive, and dynamic map of the Indian Day Schools. The project includes developing lesson plans for specific Indian Day Schools that operated in Curve Lake First Nation and Peguis First Nation.

Development of a student journal called *Muses from the North*, which provides Indigenous students with a platform where they can showcase their literary works. One of the guiding principles of the journal is that no one can tell one's story better than oneself. Some of examples of student literary works included in issues is poems about being an intergenerational Survivor and interviews between students and their Survivor relatives.

## DONORS

The NCTR would like to thank and acknowledge our generous donors who supported us in 2023.

Many donors chose to support the NCTR Fund which provides important support for the Centre's highest priority projects and initiatives, as determined by the NCTR leadership.

Examples of initiatives include:

- Ongoing Statement Gathering from Survivors and intergenerational Survivors
- Educational programming, and gatherings such as the 2023 National Gathering for Survivors held in Winnipeg in August 2023

Other gifts provide support for specific priorities including the TD Internships for Truth and Reconciliation, the Na-mi-quai-ni-mak Community Support Fund, Truth and Reconciliation Week, and Imagine a Canada.



## Canadian Armed Forces Gift

The Canadian Armed Forces CANEX stores held a national campaign selling orange shirts in honour of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and raised an approximate total of \$50,000. This amount was graciously donated to the NCTR and will be used to support Truth and Reconciliation Week 2024 programming.

### GIFTS RECEIVED

Gifts	1,250
Donors	489
<b>Total Gifts Received</b>	<b>\$421,171.22</b>

### GIFT DESIGNATIONS

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation	\$210,242.06
TD Internships for Truth and Reconciliation	\$100,000.00
Na-mi-quai-ni-mak Community Support Fund	\$71,951.66
Truth and Reconciliation Week*	\$49,158.12
Imagine a Canada*	\$7,680.00
Other	\$2,139.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$441,171.22</b>

\*These amounts do not include sponsorships for Truth and Reconciliation Week and Imagine a Canada

**PHOTO:** Jimmy Durocher is a proud Métis veteran who served with the Royal Canadian Air Force and is a legacy member of the NCTR's Survivors Circle.

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

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*Robert (Bob) Fraser is a retired hospital pharmacist with a passion for woodworking. Several years ago he saw a documentary about Haida carvers and was moved by the dilemma they faced in trying to encourage young people in their community to begin carving and carry on the skills and tradition. The need for more tools would help to provide more opportunities.*



Bob had a large collection of woodcarving tools and decided that he wanted to contribute them to be used to teach the young people in the Haida community to carve. He connected with the carver Kihlyahda Christian

White. One thing led to another, and he ended up driving a container of carving tools to Old Massett on Haida Gwaii. While he stayed with them, he was moved by the level of respect he saw being practiced towards each other and everything around them. This began a relationship with the Haida people that has deeply affected Bob.

He became aware of the history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and the crimes committed against them and began reading about reconciliation. This sparked a desire in him to learn about reconciliation and how to action this every day forward.

“Anything I can do to do my tiny bit for reconciliation, and if that inspires others, we can magnify each other. We all need to help.”

Bob believes that to practice reconciliation requires practicing respect towards all of creation and he tries to practice that in his daily life.

When it came time to update his estate plans, Bob wanted to commit half of his estate to an Indigenous organization in Manitoba. A contact told him about the Na-mi-quai-ni-mak Fund at the NCTR. Having learned about the suffering that Survivors endured, and still endure because of their residential school experiences, he decided, as a personal act of reconciliation, to contribute half of his estate to the fund, which provides funding for community and Survivor-led activities that support healing, memorials and remembrance in their communities.

“Indigenous Peoples have taught us how to respect all things in creation. If we all followed the seven teachings, the world would be a much better place.”



**REVENUE**

March 31, 2023 General Funds

Donations	\$ 1,153,410
Non-Government Grants	—
Advanced Education and Training (AET)	\$ 938,815
Other, Province of Manitoba	\$ 110,000
Federal and Other Government Grants	\$ 3,546,222
Sales of Goods and Services	\$ 1,440,872
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 7,189,319</b>

**EXPENSE**

March 31, 2023 General Funds

Salaries	\$ 2,581,985
Staff Benefits and Pay Levy	\$ 478,881
Materials, Supplies and Services	\$ 2,532,235
Professional and Other Services	\$ 2,150,744
Travel and Conferences	\$ 577,463
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 6,204
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ 8,327,512</b>

Inter-Fund Transfers	\$ 2,315,288
NET	\$ 1,177,094
Fund Balances Beginning of Year	\$ 4,055,996
<b>FUND BALANCES END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 5,233,090</b>



Carla Buchanan, B.Comm.(Hons.), CPA, CA, CIM®  
Director, Financial Reporting, University of Manitoba

2024.01.29

Date

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.



National Centre for  
Truth and Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

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**PHOTO:** This is the Memorial Cloth being brought out during the live in-person and virtual youth gathering *Gidinawendimin - We Are All Related* during TRW 2023