



# Indspire

Indigenous education,  
Canada's future.

L'éducation des autochtones,  
L'avenir du Canada.

## DONOR UPDATE

### A message from Roberta Jamieson

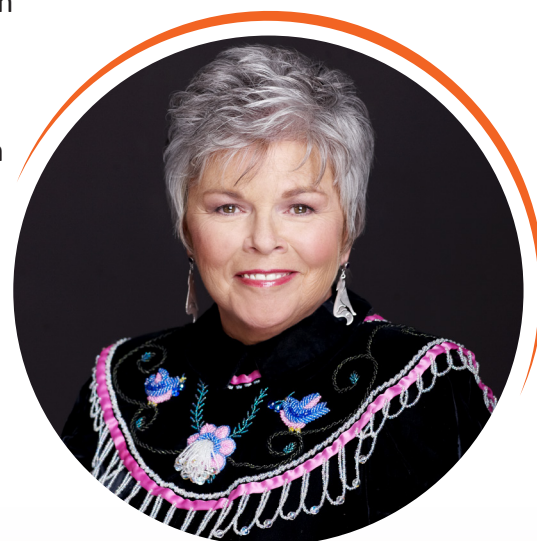
Thank you for helping make possible all the work that Indspire does. You are making a difference in the lives of Indigenous students – in their schools and their communities – right across Canada.

The 150th anniversary of Canada's Confederation is a time when we can take on the learnings from the past in a way that will allow us to acknowledge our shared history, but also move forward. This is a time to celebrate because of our continued willingness to share, and be part of building this nation – and create a better future in the years that lie ahead. I believe Indigenous education will be a powerful force – indeed, the most important force – to propel Canada across the threshold into a new era of reconciliation.

I hope you will find inspiration from the stories included in these pages, and know how important you are to our movement towards reconciliation and hope for the next 50 years and beyond.

Thank you, Merci,  
Nia:wen. Miiꞑwetch

**Roberta Jamieson**  
President & CEO  
Indspire



Listen to  
**Roberta Jamieson's**  
speech on

CBC  Radio-Canada

**Ideas**

with Paul Kennedy

Search in your browser for "Canada's original promise: Still waiting to be realized" (Friday, June 30, 2017), or visit [cbc.ca/radio/ideas](http://cbc.ca/radio/ideas), and load past episodes until the Friday, June 30, 2017 episode appears



## Donors Impressed by Indspire's Inclusion and Recipients' Achievements Want to Encourage More to Get Involved

**"To be part of this is to be part of the future."**

Cathy and John Kelly, donors of Indspire's *Building Brighter Futures* scholarship program

Cathy and John Kelly of Peterborough, Ontario are committed scholarship supporters of Indspire, who say their support was a gradual process of "becoming aware."

They first found the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN) newscasts, and were struck by "the fresh perspective on topics we hadn't considered before. Then, we found one of the *Indspire Awards* broadcasts." Cathy says, "The show was a real eye-opener – there were so many young people who were absolutely brilliant communicators. I started to Google Indspire to learn more about them and what they were doing."

John adds, "It seemed to be something that we'd like to be involved with. One thing led to another and we contacted Indspire directly and discovered the *Building Brighter Futures* scholarship program."

Cathy and John were very impressed by how inclusive *Building Brighter Futures* was – encompassing Inuit, Métis, and First Nations students. As well, they were impressed that financial aid supported students who wished to go further in the arts, sciences, technical training, trades or apprenticeships; providing pathways for diverse students. John adds, "We also really like that Indspire was not attached to one specific institution – that allows students to choose whatever institution in Canada best suits their needs."

**"We really want to encourage others to become involved with Indspire. Like us, you'll soon see that this program is having incredible student success. You should take the time to learn more!"**

The Kellys continue to follow the *Indspire Awards* broadcast each year. They are quick to point out that they've come to respect the achievements of the students and the professionalism of everyone involved. As Cathy says: "You feel you are part of something greater, even in a little way. With Indspire, you belong to something worthwhile."

Now both retired, Cathy began her career as a secondary school teacher in Canada, later moving to Geneva when John started a job with the United Nations, where they lived for 25 years. During this time, Cathy worked with NGOs in Switzerland on a series of development and social justice projects.

**"Education has been extremely important for us personally and we have benefited from the advantages of an education in our own lives. Education is everything, it provides access to what is essential. Indspire helps to fill this need for Indigenous students and this should become known to even more Canadians at-large."**

Cathy sums up how easy it was for them to become involved: "Indspire was a clear match with our values; it's a natural response. We saw a great need and we were able to help. And that's what we do. It simply is."

**Thanks to donors like Cathy and John Kelly, in 2016-17, Indspire awarded over \$11.6 million through 3,764 scholarships and bursaries to Indigenous students across Canada.**

## Educator Helps Close the Gap and Inspires High School Graduation Coaches in Northern Ontario

**“My passion is working frontline with Indigenous students.”**

Kieran McMonagle, *Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Award* and Indspire scholarship award recipient, and *Peer Support: Educator Mentorship* program participant



**T**alking to Dryden, Ontario-based Métis, Kieran McMonagle, reveals the strong passion she has for healthy learning environments and for the success of young students.

It all started during her first experience with Indspire and with bursary support from the *Building Brighter Futures* program. She was a single parent, and at the time felt that further education for her was not feasible or attainable.

**“I believe in continuous learning, but I was not able to access it. Receiving financial support from Indspire was truly life changing for me, and for my family.”**

With Indspire’s support, she is currently completing her Aboriginal Education Support Worker diploma, toward earning her Bachelor of Education in an Aboriginal Teacher Education program. Kieran’s ultimate goal is to expand her professional skills and complete an M.A. in Indigenous Education – and she’s well on track to make this dream a reality.

Indspire has also touched her life through an ongoing peer mentorship. Kieran’s mentor is Pam Sparklingeyes, the Program Manager of Aboriginal Learning Services at the Edmonton Catholic School Board. This mentorship is making all the difference in Kieran’s life. “Without it, I didn’t really know where I was going. It’s connected me with an incredible champion and opened me to a bigger network of support.” She adds: “The ongoing conversation and the opportunity to learn from the experiences of others has been 100% valuable to me in every way, including increasing my personal and professional level of confidence.”

This confidence has led to inspiring achievements. Her ongoing involvement with Indspire and Indigenous education resulted in Kieran becoming the first First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) Graduation Coach in the Province of Ontario, and starting an initiative to support Indigenous student cohorts from grades nine to 12. In the first year of running the program, the impact was astounding.

**“We closed the gap between First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-FNMI credit accumulation within one year of working with kids, and that’s a strong predictor of Grade 12 graduation.”**

The results have been so successful there are now graduation coaches in several schools in her district of Keewatin-Patricia, and in various other school boards in Ontario. In the process, Kieran says, “I’ve become a link between staff and community members at both elementary and secondary levels.” As a further impact of this work she adds, “I’ve seen a shift in the culture. Teachers are coming forward, identifying solutions, reaching out. School is becoming more like a big family, a second home of safety and comfort for students.”

In the process of her remarkable journey, Kieran has been recognized by her peers for professional achievements with a *Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Award* from Indspire.

**“Indspire is much bigger than a program or project, it is an approach, a way of being. We must invest in education now, and work toward ensuring equity of opportunity and outcome. These kids are our future. Now is our opportunity to support them.”**





## Scholarship Recipient Lands Dream Job After Public Speaking Appearance Through Indspire

**“You never know what great life-changing experiences might happen if you take the chance!”**

Katie Scott was an Indspire Regional Student Rep when she was invited to speak to donors about her experiences – which led to an internship opportunity

There aren't many jobs where you can say 'Hi' to Shania Twain as she walks through your office, or get to interview Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson. But for the extraordinary Katie Scott, that's just another day at work as National Online Entertainment and Lifestyle Reporter at the Toronto headquarters of Global News, a part of the Corus Entertainment Company.

After graduating from high school, Katie, a Métis from Ontario, had her sights set on attending university. But with her twin sister also wanting to attend university, Katie's parents could only help so much. Katie heard about Indspire's *Building Brighter Futures* program and decided to give it a try.

At that time, the program had an essay requirement as part of the application process.

This four-page essay asked her to address how she had been involved in the Indigenous community over the years, and how she planned to stay involved and contribute in the future. Katie says, "That essay helped me identify what I really loved to do and helped me to focus my career direction. I knew then that I wanted to pursue more formal training in writing and communications."

The support of Indspire's *Building Brighter Futures* program helped Katie get started at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, where she completed a B.A. in Communications and Media Studies; and later helped again at Durham College in Oshawa, Ontario, where she received her diploma for Broadcasting for Contemporary Media.

**“[With financial support from Indspire] I was ecstatic – this meant that I could really focus on doing my best at school and not struggle looking for jobs as well. The need for this kind of aid is really urgent for students. Some people don't always qualify for other funding and they can get so discouraged.”**

While at Durham College, Katie stayed involved with Indspire, serving as a Regional Student Rep for the program, helping to spread the word about the success of Indspire, and seeing first-hand the positive impact of support from the program on other hard-working and dedicated university and college students.

As a result of this work and her personal experiences, she was invited to speak on how financial aid creates opportunities to a meeting of 30 Indspire corporate donors. With an inspiring twist of fate, someone in the audience was so impressed with Katie's story, she was offered a student internship position with Global News, that very day!

After completing her internship and her degree, Katie was offered a full-time position at Global Toronto, where she works today. Phil Raby, professor and program coordinator of Durham College's Broadcasting Radio and Contemporary Media Program, has been quoted as saying, "Passionate and driven students like Katie, who make the most of that training, wind-up with a diverse set of skills and knowledge that make them very desirable prospects for a wide variety of forward-thinking employers."

As Katie adds enthusiastically, "Everyone should apply to Indspire. You never know what great life-changing experiences might happen if you take the chance!"

## Indspire Youth Laureate Inspires Students as Part of Cross-Canada Tour

**“Education for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is the key to breaking down stereotypes and moving the needle on change in Canada. Removing the financial barriers to education is the first step in making that change a reality.”**



Josh Butcher, 2017 Indspire Award Youth Laureate, and Adrianna Simon, student attendee, at the Saskatoon stop of the Cross-Canada Tour

It wasn't until he entered university that Josh Butcher really reflected on his own experiences as a Métis person in Canada.

“As a kid, I recall hearing many racist stereotypes about Indigenous people,” recounts Butcher. “Kids have enough things to worry about in terms of being accepted and not becoming a target for bullies. When Indigenous youth hear negative comments about their culture, a growing sense of shame can form in the background.”

Josh is thankful that from an early age he was able to overcome the hurtful comments. Instead they fueled him to prove the bullies wrong, and he became inspired to teach other Indigenous youth to do the same.

Many Indigenous youth are faced with bullying – but organizations like Indspire are working hard to breakdown stereotypes and inspire Indigenous youth to achieve their highest potential.

### A Search for Self-identity

From a young age, Josh Butcher knew he had a lot to offer his community. An avid volunteer, exceptional athlete, bright student and advocate for both children with disabilities and LGBTQ2 athletes, Josh grew up helping others.

That mentality followed him throughout his young life and has led him to the University of Saskatchewan, where he now studies medicine.

As a participant in the 2017 *Indspire Cross-Canada Youth Laureate Tour*, Josh speaks to Indigenous students with the goal of inspiring them to embrace their culture and believe that they can achieve anything if they work hard.

“At first, I didn't think I had anything to offer these students,” Josh explains. “While doing some self-reflection, I realized that I had a lot of questions about who I am and where I come from. I reached out to my dad to ask him questions about our Métis heritage.”

Like Josh, his dad had decided at a young age that concealing his Métis heritage was the best way to avoid bullying and social isolation. Feeling like he didn't belong in the nearby Indigenous community, or the adjacent predominantly white community, his dad spent most of his time at home on the family's farm in rural Alberta.

**“My dad's childhood stories, as well as the stories from the rest of my family, helped me realize that I have something to offer these students. I can be a role model and encourage them to be proud of their Indigenous heritage. No one should ever feel the need to hide who they are, because we are all capable of greatness.”**

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Adrianna Simon is just one of the hundreds of students who had the opportunity to hear Josh speak at the Saskatoon leg of the Tour.

*"Listening to Josh speak was incredibly motivating. What really struck me was his determination to ensure that we are not only embracing our Indigenous culture, but also making our communities and families proud by working hard and realizing our dreams."*

Adrianna adds, "My dream is to become a cardiologist to help my community. Josh told me that no matter how other people treat me, I have the ability to achieve my goals if I work hard and never give up. I will always remember those words!"

*Written by: Leanne LeBlanc*

## 2017 Indspire Cross-Canada Youth Laureate Tour



**Josh Butcher,**  
2017 Indspire Award  
Youth Laureate

The Tour, sponsored by TransCanada and Shaw Communications, is visiting seven cities across Canada this year in celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation.

The Tour brings Indspire Awards laureates to dialogue with local Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, educators, parents, and the

community to share the importance of a solid education and how Indspire supports students' dreams for a brighter future.

### ***Fall Tour Dates and Locations:***

**October 18, 2017**

University of Calgary | Calgary, AB

**October 19, 2017**

Simon Fraser University | Vancouver, BC

**November 29, 2017**

Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth | Montréal, QC

## Myth-Busting

**There's a myth among many Canadians that Indigenous students are guaranteed government funding for all of their education.**

- According to the Canadian Federation of Students, from 2006 to 2011, more than 18,000 Aboriginal people were denied funding, representing approximately half of those who qualified.
- Funding shortfalls often see priority given to shorter college programs over professional or graduate programs.

## Scholarship Recipient Follows Dream to Become an M.D.

*“You can start dreaming bigger.”*



Dr. Tamara Pokrupa-Nahanni, who notes how Indspire's financial support essay rekindled her desire to study medicine

**D**r. Tamara Pokrupa-Nahanni, of the Liidlii Kue First Nation in the Northwest Territories, first heard about Indspire when she was an undergraduate student at Ryerson University, and working on campus in the Aboriginal Student Services Peer Support Office.

She was struggling and needed financial support to continue her studies in New Media Studies at the School of Image Arts at Ryerson. Tamara applied to Indspire for help at a time when the application process also included an essay. She found this requirement very helpful as “it encouraged me to put my personal story in writing, and in my own words.” The essay helped to define her motivation for wanting to advance her academic studies as she described the defining moments in her life that led to university.

Tamara continues, “Receiving the money took so much stress off me at the time. I could just focus on my schoolwork, and I could buy the software and other technology materials that I needed for class.” She says, “Finally, I didn’t have to worry so much.”

Support, in part from Indspire, also helped her return home to the Northwest Territories, where she had a chance to study traditional medicine from a Dene healer in Fort Smith. With the financial aid to research her early interest in medicine, a life-long passion for healthcare was nurtured.

Today, Tamara has completed her M.D. training and is a Family Medicine Resident at the University of Ottawa, where she is preparing herself to establish her medical practice in a First Nations community in a northern, rural setting. During medical school, she remained connected to Indigenous health issues

through leadership positions as Co-Executive for the Aboriginal Health Interest Group, and Co-Executive Local Officer of Indigenous Health on behalf of the Ottawa Chapter of the Canadian Federation of Medical Students.

*“Indspire is the ‘go to’ for help with higher education – and is very special in being an Indigenous-led charity, and non-discriminatory in its support of eligible students.”*

Dr. Pokrupa-Nahanni has stayed active with Indspire, speaking to students and potential sponsors at the most recent *Soaring Youth Conference* on her experiences with school. She says, “I had such a great feeling at the *Soaring* conference, the *Indspire Awards* were so heartwarming and there was such a nice community of people that really just want to help, to guide you and to look out for you. And knowing this support is there makes all the difference to Indigenous youth.”

*“At the Indspire Awards, there were many supporters committed to building an exceptional educational legacy for the future and they were so open to talk about their vision. They really do care.”*

Tamara is clear that one important impact of the program is that “Indspire helps young people to think big, to think about working towards more learning and where that can take them. I’m just so thankful for Indspire’s contribution and thoughtfulness.”



## Thank You to Everyone Who Helped Surpass Our \$150,000 Goal!

A big thank you to everyone that contributed – and a special thank you to Bill and Penny Eakin for their generosity in matching all donations – in celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21) and the 150th anniversary of Canada's Confederation. \$152,796 was raised, matched by Bill and Penny, and will be matched again by the Government of Canada for a grand total of \$611,187 raised to support Indigenous students through Indspire's *Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships and Awards* program.



Indspire's research shows that 96% of the students that receive support through the program go on to graduate. By providing financial support to Indigenous students to complete their post-secondary education, donors are helping them become self-sufficient, enhance their ability to support their families, and give back to their communities.

For more information on helping students with a scholarship, bursary or award, please contact John Stanwyck, Director of Individual Giving: [jstanwyck@indspire.ca](mailto:jstanwyck@indspire.ca) or 416.987.0256.

**While Indspire receives requests from thousands of students each year, it meets only 11% of the need.**  
*Thank you for your continuing support in helping close the gap for Indigenous education.*

## Study Demonstrates that Lack of Financing is the Key Barrier to Indigenous Student Success

According to Statistics Canada, in 2011, 48% of Indigenous people had a post-secondary qualification compared to almost 65% of non-Indigenous students aged 25 to 64.

Yet, when students receive support from Indspire, thanks to our donors and generous supporters, there is proof that financial support reaps strong benefits. The results of a survey of students who received support from Indspire found that 96% of Indigenous students who receive funding from Indspire earn a post-secondary credential – 53% go on to pursue a second degree, Master's or PhD, while 42% go on to employment.

If you'd like to make a donation to help students, or would like further information, please visit: [indspire.ca/donate](http://indspire.ca/donate)

# 96%

of the students Indspire supports graduate

# 46%

of graduates achieved an undergraduate degree

# 61%

of employed graduates are serving Indigenous populations



Charitable Number:  
118834696RR0001

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