

## Presentation Descriptions (In-Person)

### 7 Lessons for Success in Education and Beyond

Presented by Chett Monague

This presentation shares a personal and community-rooted journey of education, resilience, and growth. Drawing from lived experience, the speaker reflects on a non-linear path through post-secondary education that led to becoming the first Doctor of Chiropractic born and raised in their home community. Through humour, storytelling, and cultural reflection, the presentation introduces a practical “theory for success” built on seven key lessons: setting goals, asking for help, staying consistent, surrounding yourself with good people, embracing culture, releasing perfectionism, and remaining open to unexpected opportunities. The talk highlights how Indigenous culture and community serve as powerful sources of strength, guidance, and healing, and how these teachings can be applied in everyday life especially for students and those navigating major life transitions. Ultimately, this presentation is a message of hope and encouragement. It reminds the audience that success does not require perfection or a straight path, but rather persistence, support, cultural grounding, and openness to growth. Attendees are invited to reflect on their own journeys and leave with practical insights they can apply to education, career, and personal development.

### A Career is Like a River

Presented by Jodie Lawrence and Elise Anderson

A career is like a river: Imagine the endless possibilities of a fantastic adventure! Have you ever wondered if you truly belonged in a space, or questioned whether your dreams were “too big” or not meant for you? You’re not alone. Many youths experience self-doubt as they move through school, work, and new environments often feeling pressure to fit in while staying true to who they are. In this session, Jodie and Elise share their own career journeys and invite you to think of your career as a river one that flows, shifts direction, and grows stronger over time. Not every step is planned, and that’s okay. Along the way, we’ll talk openly about imposter syndrome, why it shows up, and how it can make even capable people question themselves. Through storytelling, reflection, and practical tools, this session will explore how to build confidence, trust your strengths, and honour your identity as you move forward. You’ll leave

with encouragement, strategies, and a reminder that your voice, experiences, and perspective are valuable exactly as you are, wherever your journey takes you.

## **Armed Forces Canada**

Presented by Sheldon Quinn

The Canadian Armed Forces offers Indigenous high school students a chance to explore careers that go far beyond what most people picture from movies and recruitment posters. This session gives an overview of the many paths available, including roles in technology, health care, engineering, aviation, logistics, and leadership, while explaining what training, education, and service can look like. It is a practical way to learn how discipline, teamwork, and problem-solving can open doors to meaningful opportunities across Canada and beyond. You will also hear how the Armed Forces can connect personal strengths and interests to real career options, whether you are hands-on, people-focused, or quietly brilliant under pressure. Think of it as career exploration with structure, purpose, and just enough polish to make “future planning” feel a little less painful.

## **Awakening the Star Light Within: Cognitive Awareness & Conflict Resolution**

Presented by Sherdia Crane

Awakening the Star Light Within: Cognitive Awareness & Maintaining Good Mental Health Tools for better Conflict Resolution. Presenter: Sherida Crane from the Siksika Blackfoot Nation & Canadian ancestry Conflict begins within our thoughts. Learning to recognise our inner negative self talk we experience less conflict with others, and glow with insight, integrity and joy.

## **BHP in Canada: The Future of Mining**

Presented by Pamela Beaudin

Come learn about who BHP is and how the future of mining is being created here in Canada. Explore the wide variety of career paths that lead into BHP and see where your future could lead you.

## **Breaking Cycles Without Breaking Yourself**

Presented by Natasha Wood

This presentation is for the student who had to grow up too fast — the one who learned responsibility before rest. As the oldest sibling and grandchild in my family, I stepped into adult roles early due to the impacts of intergenerational trauma and substance use around me. I became the helper, the mediator, and the one who tried to hold everything together. For a long time, I believed strength meant enduring. In this session, I share what it looks like to grow beyond survival while still loving your family deeply. I speak honestly about navigating education, gaining new supports, and learning that it is okay to want more for yourself — even if you are still in the middle of becoming. Students will leave with reassurance, language to understand survival roles, and practical steps toward building stability through education and personal growth. Strength built in survival is real — but it does not have to define your entire future.

## **Build Your Circle Before You Build Your Career**

Presented by Colby Delorme

Indigenous students are often told to focus on grades, resumes, and career plans. But success is not a solo journey. In this TED-style talk, Métis leader and national mentor Colby Delorme shares why building your circle, mentors, peers, and community, is the most powerful career strategy you can develop before and during post-secondary education. Drawing on research on Indigenous post-secondary students across Canada and his experience mentoring youth nationwide, Colby explores how belonging, personal responsibility, and community are not just cultural strengths; they are leadership advantages. Students will leave with practical, actionable steps they can take immediately: how to find mentors, build supportive networks, and ask for help with confidence. This session is both inspiring and practical, empowering Indigenous high school students to see that their values, identity, and community connections are not obstacles to success; they are the foundation of it. This TED-style presentation is grounded in national research on Indigenous post-secondary students and informed by my work as Founder and Chair of Influence Mentoring Society, a national organization supporting Indigenous students through two-way mentorship. I have extensive experience speaking to Indigenous youth audiences, including mentoring and moderating youth panels at ACTUA's Forward Summit

conferences across Canada. My approach blends personal storytelling, evidence-based insights, and practical tools students can immediately apply.

## **Building Brighter Futures, Get That Bag from Indspire**

Presented by Tahlia Bomberry

Join scholarship officer Tahlia to discover how Indspire can assist First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students heading into post-secondary. Learn about getting financial support for the next step in your education journey. Whether you are planning for university, college, a trades program, or an apprenticeship, this session will show how Indspire’s bursaries and scholarships can help make those goals feel a lot more possible. Skilled careers, especially in the trades will continue to grow in demand and pay well. You will also learn how the application process and policies work, how to apply, and why waiting until the last minute is a bit like starting a road trip after the gas light comes on. Think of it as your chance to learn how to get support, plan smart, and secure some funding for the future you are building.

## **Building Your Brand - Bringing Your Personal Brand to Life**

Presented by Lindsay Hubert

In today’s fast-paced world, your personal brand is one of your most powerful assets - shaping how others perceive you, how you show up in your work, and the opportunities that come your way. This session will guide participants through the foundations of building an authentic, memorable, and impactful personal brand.

## **Career Exploration in Financial Services**

Presented by Jaimie Lickers

At CIBC, a career in financial services is a bit like being part detective, part coach, and part problem-solver with a really good playlist. One day you might help someone save for their first car, the next you could be learning how businesses grow, markets move, and smart money decisions get made. It is not just about numbers, either. It is about people, big goals, and figuring out how to turn “maybe someday” into “let’s make a plan.” For high school students, career exploration in this field is a chance to discover jobs in banking, investing, technology,

marketing, and customer service, all under one roof. Think of it as a place where curiosity, confidence, and a sharp mind can go to work long before you ever own a briefcase.

## **Careers in the Sky – Indigenous Flight Paths**

Presented by Jo-Anne Tabobandung & Zoe Webb

Ever looked up at the sky and wondered if a career as a pilot could be possible for you? Join two Indigenous women aviation leaders, Jo-Anne- Dean of Aviation, at FNTI, and Zoe, offshore transport helicopter Captain at Cougar Helicopters — as they share their real, honest journeys into aviation. Hear how they got started, what pilot training is actually like, and what it takes to turn an interest in flying into a career. Discover the difference between flying airplanes and helicopters, the challenges pilots face, and the rewards that come with responsibility, skill, and confidence. Learn why Indigenous representation in aviation matters and how seeing people like yourself succeed changes what feels possible. If you're curious about flying, enjoy hands-on challenges, or want a career that pushes you to grow, this session is for you. Listen to real stories, ask real questions, and see how your path to a career in Aviation can begin.

## **Careers that Grow With You**

Presented by Michaela Palacios & Jordan Ned

This session will highlight experiences working at Teck, along with a brief overview of Teck Resources and its operations. It will also include personal reflections on balancing motherhood with career goals and education, sharing how priorities can evolve over time. Indigenous perspectives will be woven throughout, offering insight into how cultural identity can shape career journeys. Overall, the discussion will emphasize that career and education paths are not always linear and can grow and change with experience and opportunity.

## **Charting Your Career Path in AI and the Digital Economy**

Presented by Lynnsey Chartrand & Rune Harkgerink

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) reshapes the global economy, Indigenous voices are the missing link to ensuring this technology serves our communities, our lands, and our sovereignty. This session invites students to step into the high-demand world of AI—not just as users, but as the next generation of creators and architects. We will move beyond the hype to map out concrete

career pathways in the AI sector, breaking down high-impact roles from AI Ethics and Data Sovereignty to Robotics and Data Science. Students will be introduced to the Indigenous Pathfinders in AI program—a fully funded summer program at Mila in Montreal that creates a bridge for Indigenous talent into the AI space. To show what is possible, we include Buffalo in Motion, the 2025 Pathfinders winning team project. You'll see firsthand how Rune Hartgerink and Matthew Sanspareil merged traditional knowledge with machine learning to revolutionize buffalo restoration and food sovereignty.

## Demystifying Creativity

Presented by Brandon Mitchell

Creativity is a skill that can be nurtured and built over time. At a certain age, youth feel discouraged in expressing themselves creatively. Other outlets such as playing sports or advancing academically take priority and the arts get pushed further behind the further they advance in their academic journey. I was raised with the idea of going away for school and bring back what you learned. I did not understand how that could apply to my interests in animation and comic books... and how to make a living off of it. Inspiration comes in many forms; family, educators, students... My journey started in High School with an educator that believed in me and finding the right school to expand my creative passion. I found out there was school that taught you how to draw and animate. In 1998 my post-secondary journey began. In December 2000, upon graduating with a diploma in animation and design I was thrust into the world of teaching in my community of Listuguj, Quebec. I wanted to give the youth something I didn't receive, drawing fundamentals. It was my opportunity to bring back what I had learned. I spent 2 years teaching grades 1-8 how to draw and making it accessible to them. I wasn't prepared for the journey my students would take me on. They inspired me to continue my creative journey. They inspired me to dive into creating my own graphic novel. There were very few indigenous owned graphic novels in 2002. But they inspired me to take a chance on myself. This is where I blended my creativity with becoming an entrepreneur and launching Birch Bark Comics. Allow me to share my journey as an indigenous artist and creative entrepreneur. I will go back to what inspired me in my youth, the impacted great teachers have had on my journey and the importance of maintaining good relations.

## **Design: Shaping Your Future & The World You Want to Live In**

Presented by Pauline Thimm & Jamie Miller

Everything around you was designed by someone. The chair you are sitting on. The room you are in. The neighbourhood outside. Before any of this existed, it lived in someone's mind. Someone imagined it - then a team worked together to turn that idea into something real.

## **Diary of a Professional Student – 25 Years and Counting**

Presented by Madelaine McCracken

What does it actually look like to go through school your whole life, and is that the only way to succeed? In this talk, Madelaine McCracken, Indspire's Métis Youth Award winner for 2025 and final year PhD candidate shares her journey of starting school at age four and moving all the way to graduate studies without taking a break. But this isn't just about achievements, it's about the real experiences along the way: feeling unsure, facing challenges, figuring things out, and not always having a clear path, all while becoming proud of your own culture and identity. Through stories, this conversation explores what helped along the way, including support from others, staying connected to identity and community, and learning to keep going even when things felt (and still continue to feel - let's be honest) difficult. It also breaks down what a PhD actually is and what that life looks like day-to-day. This talk is about reminding students and youth of all ages that there's no one "right" path. Whether you already have big goals or are still figuring things out, your journey is valid, and your identity, your community, and your voice are strengths you can carry with you wherever you go.

## **Education and Career Pathways in STEM and Trades**

Presented by Sherry Sinclair & Sammie Hanson

Co-presented by Coeur Mining (formerly New Gold) and Thompson Rivers University, this presentation explores pathways for Indigenous students pursuing STEM and trades studies, and how these educational programs can lead to a variety of careers in the mining industry. The presentation will highlight the ongoing collaboration between Thompson Rivers University and Coeur Mining, as well as academic and workplace supports available for Indigenous students on-campus and on-site.

## **Exploring Career Pathways: Stories, Choices, and Possibilities**

Presented by Jordan Brant & Beverly Warnar

Career paths are rarely straight lines. This session invites students to explore the many ways education and careers can unfold over time, shaped by interests, experiences, opportunities, and change. Through shared stories and reflections, presenters highlight how career journeys often include unexpected turns, pauses, and new beginnings. Students are encouraged to view this stage of life as a time to explore, try new things, and learn what feels meaningful to them—without pressure to have everything figured out. The session reinforces that it’s okay to change direction, take different paths, or start again, and that growth often comes from exploration. By hearing real-world experiences, students will be reminded that their journeys are their own and that there are many ways to move forward toward their goals.

## **From Clues to Connections: Métis Perspectives in Forensic Pathology**

Presented by Rebekah Jacques

Forensic pathology is the science of uncovering the causes and circumstances of death, often playing a critical role in justice and public health. In this presentation students will learn how forensic pathologists analyze evidence, interpret findings, and contribute to resolving mysteries that can also respect cultural values. The session highlights the unique opportunities for Indigenous youth in science and justice careers, emphasizing pathways to mentorship, education, and leadership in fields that combine rigorous scientific inquiry with social responsibility. By weaving Métis perspectives into the science of investigation, this session encourages students to see the connections between their cultural heritage, curiosity, and potential future roles in medicine.

## **From Dreams to Reality: Indigenous Leadership in Law**

Presented by Desneige Frandsen

Indigenous voices are essential in the legal system. This interactive session explores how Indigenous youth can enter, influence, and transform legal spaces. Through storytelling, guided discussion, and audience engagement activities, Desneige Frandsen will share her personal journey into law as an Indigenous professional, including the barriers, mentors, doubts, and defining moments that shaped her path to becoming a lawyer and national program leader.

Participants will gain insight into what law school is really like and what different legal professionals do day-to-day, including lawyers, judges, Crown prosecutors, defence counsel, legal advocates, and policy professionals, as well as the education pathways required for each role. Grounded in honesty, encouragement, and practical tools, this session creates space for youth to ask questions, reflect on their own goals, and begin mapping out potential pathways into law and justice careers. Participants will leave with concrete next steps, funding and mentorship strategies, and a clear roadmap, along with the confidence to see themselves reflected in, and leading within, the legal profession. This presentation is supported by Desneige Frandsen's work as Senior Program Manager at Level Justice, where she leads the national Indigenous Youth Outreach Program (IYOP) and Cultural Humility & Empathy Training (CHET) initiatives. Desneige is also the founder of Frandsen-Pauzé Law, an Ontario-based legal practice providing estates, contracts and Indigenous legal services. This dual perspective, as both a practicing lawyer and national youth legal education leader, grounds the presentation in lived experience, professional insight, and community-based mentorship. To show presentation style for high school-aged groups, I have included some of the IYOP materials for our "Orange" program.

## **From Surviving to Thriving - Cultivating Success From Within**

Presented by Rachael Hunt

High school students are often taught what success should look like — good grades, post-secondary programs, and future careers — but rarely how to build the internal capacity required to sustain success through stress, change, and transition. In this presentation, Rachael Hunt explores what it means to move from surviving to thriving. Drawing from neuroscience, psychology, and lived experience, she introduces a holistic framework for success rooted in self-awareness, nervous system regulation, subconscious beliefs, identity, and connection. Students will learn how stress and survival patterns impact confidence, focus, and decision-making, why external achievement alone is not enough, and how cultivating internal safety and self-trust supports academic success, leadership, and well-being. This talk invites students to redefine success on their own terms and equips them with foundational tools to navigate post-secondary life with greater clarity, resilience, and confidence

## **Future Ready: Digital Skills, Scholarships and AI**

Presented by Morgan (Kalk) Wilson & Ebony Taylor

Your future is not a straight line. It is a constellation waiting to be mapped. In this hands on workshop, students will explore Connected North's free Future Pathways Navigator, featuring 700 plus Indigenous role models, thousands of scholarships, resume tools, and employer insights. Try the new AI tutor and scholarship assistant, chart your next steps on your phone or laptop, and enter to win a laptop of your own.

## **Go Away! Skills you can learn while working and travelling abroad**

Presented by Melanie Gratton & Liz Hong-Farrell

Have you ever thought about going abroad to gain valuable skills, experience a different culture or share your own knowledge of your culture with the world? Have you ever wanted to learn about other Indigenous communities around the world? You can do this with International Experience Canada!

## **Greenhouse Gas Warriors – Your Path to Becoming an Environmental Scientist**

Presented by Wacey Crier

Step into the world of environmental science and discover how you can become a Greenhouse Gas Warrior. This session shows you how to study the greenhouse gas impact of materials, buildings, and everyday products. Not great at school? Don't worry, Wacey wasn't either. He found his own path through hard work, culture, and entrepreneurship, eventually building a career in sustainable science. You'll learn what it takes to build a strong foundation in science, get into university, and choose programs that lead to real climate impact. We'll explore how a master's degree prepares you to measure change, and how a doctorate pushes beyond what we currently know. We'll talk about different learning styles, university pathways, and why Canada needs more Indigenous scientists. Your journey can start from exactly where you are today, with the gifts you already carry.

## **Grounded in Culture, Guided by Values: Finding Your Career Path**

Presented by Gary Maracle & Kristina Bombay

The presentation follows Ontario Provincial Police Indigenous Policing Bureau Chief Superintendent Maracle's life journey from childhood to leadership in policing. It demonstrates how personal choices and cultural teachings can guide your path. He shares how family, sports, education, mentors, and Haudenosaunee values like Peace, Power, and Righteousness helped shape his character, work ethic, and resilience. Students learn how understanding who you are, where you come from, and what you stand for can help you overcome challenges and make strong decisions about your future. Through real-life stories from policing and community leadership, Chief Superintendent Maracle highlights the importance of integrity, hard work, courage, and responsibility. The session encourages youth to identify their values early, seek mentors, think big, and honour the strength and sacrifices of those who came before them.

## **Have Fun, Register, Vote and Work in a Federal Election**

Presented by Alexandra De Pape

Elections Canada is here to show that democracy is not just something adults talk about on the news. It is a chance for Indigenous high school students to learn how to register, vote, and even work at a federal election, all without needing a law degree or a sudden passion for spreadsheets. This session gives an overview of how the process works, what your role can be, and why your voice matters more than people sometimes let on. Whether you are curious about casting a ballot, helping run an election, or just want to understand how decisions get made, this is a practical and engaging place to start. Think of it as your backstage pass to Canadian democracy, minus the velvet rope and with far more important consequences.

## **Housing the Energies in Poetry**

Presented by Raymond Sewell

A thought provoking "How to" presentation about capturing the energies you feel in composing poetry. Teaching youth to follow their artistic instinct. Sharing my experience as someone who facilitates capturing expression and producing cultural heritage.

## **Indigenous Youth Journeys in STEAM**

Presented by Michelle McFarlane & Sarah Gauthier

When young people enter new learning spaces, they often gain clarity, confidence, and direction. In this workshop, two Indigenous alumni—one in high school and one in post-secondary—will share their journey with Shad and how hands-on learning, mentorship, and new experiences shaped their STEAM journeys and opened new possibilities for themselves and their communities. Shad Canada is a month-long STEAM and entrepreneurship program for Grade 10 and 11 students that helps youth discover their gifts and explore post-secondary options. Through hands-on labs, workshops, lectures, and a real-world design challenge, students strengthen their problem-solving skills, build supportive connections, and gain the confidence to imagine new possibilities for themselves and their communities. Many describe the experience as transformational, opening doors they hadn't known were possible.

## **Inspiring Career Journey**

Presented by Jessica Paul & Mel Fowle

Culture is My Superpower: Inspiring Career Journey is a spotlight presentation that shares personal career stories from PwC leaders Jessica Paul and Mel Fowle, highlighting how culture, authenticity, and lived experience shape professional success. Through reflections on education, career milestones, reconciliation journeys, and life at PwC, the session emphasizes the power of Indigenous identity, Two-Eyed Seeing, mentorship, and community. Designed to inspire students and early-career professionals, the presentation explores opportunities at PwC, practical career advice, and the importance of staying connected to culture while navigating corporate spaces. The session concludes with actionable takeaways and an interactive Q&A.

## **Inuit/Northern Youth Workshop**

Presented by Arsaniq Deer, Braden Kadlun & Simik Komaksiutsiksak. Moderated by Tracie Léost.

A panel discussing the reality and amazing world of the true north.

## **Iskoces Tipiskak A Spark in the Dark**

Presented by John Langan

John shares stories about coming from the bottom in life, and teaches others around him the skills that helped him envision his goals in life and putting written words into action. Longer Workshop unlocking secrets to life that enable success in life. Attendees will learn and receive: Medicine Wheel Teachings, Writing the Vision, Identifying your Supporting Circle, Utilizing First Nation ceremony in your life, Asking the Creator/Universe for your purpose and gift in life, Utilizing your imagination to unlock your potential, [www.asparkinthedark.com](http://www.asparkinthedark.com)

## **Kids Help Phone: Supporting Indigenous Youth 24/7**

Presented by Shaylin Allison & Deanna Dunham

Indigenous young people across Canada continue to face unique challenges in mental health, wellness, and access to culturally safe support. In this presentation, Shaylin Allison, Indigenous Engagement Coordinator at Kids Help Phone (KHP), will present how First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth can access support from KHP, Canada's only 24/7, coast-to-coast-to-coast e-mental health service, as well as introduce new innovative mental wellness tools launching in 2026. This session will highlight how easy it is for youth to access KHP's Indigenous Initiatives programming – designed specifically for Indigenous youth by Indigenous youth, with cultural care and input from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community partners. Participants will learn about KHP's 24/7 supports including texting, online messaging, and calling, participate in a hands-on mental wellness activity, learn more about Indigenous-led programs such as Brighter Days, Weaving Threads, and New Trails, and share some exciting new projects we are releasing in 2026, including an Indigenous KHP app accessible offline and a series filmed in virtual reality featuring Elder and peer-to-peer teachings. Our offerings are designed to meet young people wherever they are: in community, online, or on the land. This presentation will offer students practical insights into navigating mental health, building support systems, and accessing culturally safe services as they navigate high school and future transitions. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how KHP's mental health tools can uplift Indigenous youth and help them thrive. Participants will receive a resource packet and small gift (ex. KHP sunglasses).

## **Land-Based Post-Secondary Pathways**

Presented by Maclane Cardinal

This presentation will explore recent land-based initiatives that pair Indigenous students with post-secondary and community partners. Following a successful implementation of Canada's first ever Advanced Placement Land-Based Seminar course, students will soon have the opportunity to experience authentic land-based education on a regular basis, while simultaneously being connected with community and post-secondary partners. This program offers students the opportunity to begin pursuing their future career in high school, achieve university credits, partner with Indigenous scholars from across Canada, and get paid for summer internship work. As this program gets rolled out across the country, Maclane will explore the philosophy and justification for the program, the logistics, and the areas for potential future study and development. School districts will also be given the opportunity to form partnerships to offer this course in the future. This program is for students in grades 10-12 and is funded for up to two years of participation.

## **Mi'kmaq Land-Based Education; Visions Through Art**

Presented by George Woodhouse & Sarah Prosper

Through values of respect and reciprocity to the teachers of this land, our non-human relatives and kin. This presentation honours the many layers of history and confronts the world view with the respective that the land is the speaker, and we have many tools to access and listen with. Feel inspired by arts, creation, and land-based education as we dive into topics around social-cultural norms, changes, and actions to set us up for success into the future.

## **Never Have I Ever...**

Presented by Veronica McCrae

Never Have I Ever Test drove a Lamborghini in Italy, Competed in MasterChef, Swam in a shark cage in Bora Bora, Convinced someone to lend me millions. From less than to more than enough, Veronica McCrae has proven that your starting point in life is not the end point. Although life may throw curveballs along the way, there are many opportunities to make good decisions to a good path. At 15 years old, Veronica was homeless and living with drug addicts and prostitutes. With death knocking at her door, her teenage pregnancy saved her life and was

the inspiration needed to create a better life. Education was the best exit from a bad situation and as an Indspire alumni who achieved a business degree, the first in her family, she is now the proud owner of Canada's largest retailer of Indigenous goods. Come and hear her story to wonder what is possible!

## **North To No Limits**

Presented by Agar Sparling Haineault

Speaking from an all too familiar perspective, this session is designed to help Indigenous youth rethink the limits placed on their future by circumstance, and expectation. Drawing from my journey as a Dene youth raised at the dead end of Highway 155, La Loche, SK. To building a professional music career based in Montreal, this talk connects lived experience with research-informed insights on resilience, identity, and skill development. I explore how creativity, truth-telling, and transferable skills such as discipline, communication, and self-belief can open pathways to opportunities that may feel out of reach. Rather than positioning success as an exception, this presentation reframes Indigenous achievement as evidence of capability when youth are encouraged to see beyond imposed narratives. Students will learn how lived experience can become a strength, how unconventional paths can still lead to sustainable careers, and how ambition itself can be a tool for breaking limits.

## **Our Futures, Our Pathways: Inclusive Pathways to Medical Professions at Dalhousie University**

Presented by Kimberly Lickers

Have you ever imagined yourself as a doctor, dentist, optometrist, pharmacist, nurse, or medical researcher? Indigenous students across the country are pursuing these paths, not only as careers, but as ways to care for their families, communities, and Nations. At Dalhousie University, the Inclusive Pathways to Medical Professions Indigenous Cohort in Medical Sciences was created to support Indigenous students in ways that honour culture, responsibility, and belonging. This cohort is more than an academic program, it is a family where students support one another, stay connected to who they are, and build confidence as they prepare for health careers. In this session, you will hear about the experiences of Indigenous students and their cohort advisor, Kim Lickers, and how culturally grounded supports help students succeed in university while staying rooted in their identities. Indigenous communities continue to call for

more Indigenous healthcare professionals. When patients see healthcare providers who understand their cultures, languages, and lived experiences, trust grows and care improves. Indigenous physicians, dentists, optometrists, nurses, and researchers are helping to create healthier futures and more culturally safe healthcare systems. If you are curious about a future in health care — or wondering if you belong in these field, this session will show you that your identity, your community, and your ways of knowing are strengths and discover how Indigenous students are finding their paths, supporting one another, and becoming the next generation of health leaders.

## **Paving a Pathway for Indigenous Physics in Academia**

Presented by Natasha Donahue

I'm an Indigenous physicist. That's what I call myself, but what does that mean? I have spent my whole life trying to answer that question (even when I didn't know that's what I was doing). I'm learning more about how Indigenous science works now as a Master of Science student with Athabasca University, through land-based learning in communities across Canada. But this kind of project hasn't always been possible, and it was a long road for me to get here today. I went from dropping out of high school to this career, helping to pave the way for Indigenous physics and other sciences, advocating for our voices--our philosophies--to be respected and understood. I'd love to tell you about my journey and share some of the valuable lessons I have learned, as well as what I have seen is possible. I have made several conference presentations in the past, including for the Indspire National Gathering for Educators over the past 3 years. I work with the Galileo Project, a Harvard University initiative observing atmospheric anomalies, and am starting a research foundation in Canada under the advisement of the Office of the Chief Science Advisor of Canada. I hope to show youth that if they want to achieve something or see something created, they can do it themselves, even if people try to push back or tell them it's not possible.

## **Public Service as a Pathway: Empowering Indigenous Communities Across Canada**

Presented by Kathryn Vanderby & Lacey VanEvery

This presentation will provide students an in-depth look into careers in the federal Public Service with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Attendees will hear real-life stories and insights

into the unique contributions of employees like nurses, Field Security Officers, and Environmental Public Health Officers who make a difference in Indigenous communities. Our facilitators and panel will discuss career advancement as an Indigenous employee in the federal government, sharing pathways to join the public service and tips for high school students interested in government careers. We can provide many links to supports and services for Indigenous Students.

## **Rising Anyway**

Presented by Diego Lopez

This presentation tells a powerful, real-life story of resilience, identity, and purpose. It follows Diego Lopez's journey from escaping conflict in Nicaragua to building a life of service in Canada through policing and his work with CSIS. It highlights the challenges of starting over, proving your worth, and stepping into roles that demand courage and leadership. At its core, the presentation is deeply human. It shares the emotional reality of raising a child with Type 1 Diabetes, showing the discipline, fear, strength, and love required every single day. It does not hide the struggle, but it reframes it as a source of growth. What makes the presentation unique is the balance. It blends public service, personal hardship, creativity through magic and hypnosis, and fatherhood into one story that shows you do not have to choose just one path. The message is clear and direct. Adversity is not the end of your story. It is your training ground. It leaves the audience, especially young people, with a sense of belief that no matter where they start or what they face, they can rise, adapt, and build something meaningful.

## **Rooted and Rising: Indigenous Resistance and Resilience on Your Career Journey**

Presented by Summer Bird & Byron Jackson

This workshop empowers Indigenous youth to embrace their cultural identity while navigating education and career paths. Participants will explore how resistance and resilience are not just part of their heritage, but powerful tools for success in today's world that don't need to be relinquished in favor of a successful career. We'll discuss why it's impossible for you to fail; simply existing, showing up, and taking space is the victory. Together, we'll highlight how Indigenous values and leadership are shaping workplaces and educational spaces, and how youth can confidently step into these roles without compromising who they are. Joining the

workforce or pursuing education doesn't mean leaving your culture behind. It means bringing your full self into every space and continuing the legacy of Indigenous leadership, resistance, and resilience.

## **Show Me The Money!**

Presented by Victoria LaBillois

This session will provide students time to reflect on their relationship with money. Participants will leave with an understanding of:

1. How childhood experiences with money impact spending/saving decisions today.
2. The 8th wonder of the world - compound interest.
3. Passive versus active income.

Money Smarts: My Financial Journey is an engaging game designed for Indigenous youth aged 12 and older. The game introduces players to essential financial literacy concepts through realistic scenarios, encouraging them to develop practical skills for managing their own financial futures. Instead of focusing solely on individual wealth, the game emphasizes:

- Collective success: Encouraging teamwork and shared goals.
- Mutual assistance: Promoting value exchange, reciprocity, and community well-being.
- Cultural relevance: Featuring artwork by Indigenous artists, making the game relatable and reflective of Indigenous identity.

## **Soaring Together: Indigenous Youth Leading the Way to Mino-Pimâtisiwin**

Presented by Zetta Anderson

Are you ready to turn your lived experience into leadership? Join us for an interactive session exploring the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program (IYMP) a national movement where high school students aren't just participants, they are the bosses. In this workshop, we dive into the heart of Mino-Pimâtisiwin (the "Good Life") and the Circle of Courage. You'll discover how IYMP empowers you to take the lead in your community by mentoring younger students through sports, traditional games, and healthy food. We'll talk about how being a "Young Leader" isn't just about volunteering; it's about reclaiming your culture, building a killer resume, and earning

high school credits or stipends while making a real difference. What's in it for you? Find Your Voice: Learn how to design programs that actually reflect your traditions and interests. Build Your Bundle: Gain leadership skills that post-secondary schools and employers are looking for. Connect: Hear from other Indigenous youth who are leading the way and strengthening their communities from the inside out. Come see how you can soar by lifting others up. Your journey to the "Good Life" starts with the lead you take today.

## **Strength Within: Building Confidence and Self-Esteem for Indigenous Learners**

Presented by K'odi Taylor

K'odi Taylor will share his struggles with confidence and self-esteem that caused him to drop out of school despite being bright. He will share his struggles with mental health and the turning point, the realizations he made, and the process he took to go from having low self-esteem and low confidence to his confidence and self-esteem being one of his strongest attributes. He will talk about how this newfound confidence in his abilities helped him manage his mental health and grow his company from nothing to over \$100,000 in revenue in one year, by himself. Students will leave with a step-by-step plan on how they can follow a similar path.

## **Teaching Starts Where You Are**

Presented by Kateri Smith & Alex Isaac

What if success doesn't run on a single timeline? And what if the barriers in your way aren't stopping you—but shaping you? In this talk, two Indigenous learners share how detours, obstacles, and taking different paths led them to places they never imagined, including the classroom. Grounded in lived experiences shaped by work, family, community responsibility, and returning to school later in life, they remind youth that success looks different for everyone, and your journey is your own. Dreams evolve, direction takes time, and growth rarely follows a straight line. Whether you're just starting out or starting over, you are not behind—you are exactly where you need to be to begin.

## **The Medicine of Lateral Kindness**

Presented by Stephanie Martin

Harmful behaviours like gossip, exclusion, and put-downs show up in real ways and can weaken confidence, friendships, and community connection. This session will give you a better understanding of where these patterns come from, how they affect relationships, and why they're more common than we think. We'll connect the dots between history, identity, and the patterns we see in our schools and friend groups.

## **Turning Barriers into Bridges: An Indigenous Journey in Learning and Leadership**

Presented by Dr. Jamaica Cass

In this talk, Dr. Jamaica Cass shares a story of resilience, identity, and possibility—grounded in her lived experience as a proud Mohawk woman and as the first Indigenous woman in Canada to earn both an MD and a PhD. Drawing on her journey through education, science, and medicine, she reflects on navigating systems not designed for Indigenous peoples, and how culture, community, and self-belief can become sources of strength rather than barriers. This session is an invitation for Indigenous youth to see themselves as leaders, knowledge holders, and future changemakers—whether in health, education, science, trades, or any path they choose. Dr. Cass speaks candidly about setbacks, self-doubt, and the importance of mentorship, while highlighting the power of Indigenous ways of knowing in shaping meaningful and successful lives. Participants will leave with practical insights on goal-setting, confidence-building, and staying grounded in identity while pursuing big dreams. Above all, this talk affirms a simple but powerful message: your story matters, your presence is needed, and your future is full of possibility.

## **Two-Eyed Seeing as a Leadership Framework: Lessons on Personal and Professional Wellbeing**

Presented by Alejandra Metallic-Janvier

This presentation shares personal reflections on leadership development through the lens of Two-Eyed Seeing, a guiding principle that encourages us to honour the strengths of both

Indigenous and Western ways of knowing. Through storytelling and lived experience, the speaker explores how personal wellbeing, identity, and relationships shape the way we lead in our communities and professional spaces. Drawing on experiences working with Indigenous youth and community initiatives, the presentation explores lessons learned about capacity, resilience, and navigating responsibilities in both personal and professional life. It also highlights how understanding our stress responses and emotional wellbeing, informed by insights from neuroscience, can strengthen our leadership presence and ability to support others. By weaving together personal stories and reflections, this session invites participants to consider how their own experiences, relationships, and values shape their leadership journeys. The goal is to inspire attendees to reflect on their own wellbeing as a core part of leadership and to recognize that leadership development is a lifelong process rooted in community, learning, and balance.

## **Your Career Journey, Your Future Goals – Career Exploration in Post Secondary**

Presented by Amanda Andrews & Aaron Sinclair

Your future is not a single decision; it is a journey you build one experience at a time. This workshop invites students to explore how strengths, identities, and lived experiences connect to a meaningful career journey. Post-secondary education is one important step toward achieving future career goals. We will discuss how transferable skills can translate into future opportunities and the importance of career exploration, recognizing that interests can evolve and shape our journey forward. The session will highlight the value of getting involved in opportunities during post-secondary education, what those opportunities can look like, and how they contribute to knowing yourself, building connections, and clarifying your future goals. We will conclude the session by exploring wrap-around Indigenous student supports that foster belonging, well-being, and academic success. You will leave this session understanding that your career journey is yours to shape as you move toward your goals.

## **Your Choice, Your Path, Your Future – Indigenous Institutes Walking Forward Together**

Presented by Marsha Josephs & Arihwisaks Colin Benedict

The Indigenous Institutes Consortium represents seven Indigenous Institutes in Ontario. Through this presentation you will explore a path where you learn from Indigenous faculty and Elders. You are surrounded by community while you pursue higher education within a supportive learning environment. Explore an educational journey where you can be yourself, achieve your dreams, and build community.

## **Your Voice Matters**

Presented by Jason Buccheri & Andrew Mastroianni

What if your ideas weren't just heard in your classroom, but across your community... or even the world? In this session, Education Matters host Jason Buccheri and producer Andrew Mastroianni will show you how podcasting can become more than a hobby, it can be a platform, a personal brand, and even the foundation of a business. You'll learn how great podcasters use storytelling to shape identity, build influence, and create opportunity. From interviewing local leaders and documenting your community's history, to exploring culture, language, sports, music, or issues that matter to your generation—this session will help you turn your curiosity into something real. You'll learn about asking powerful questions, what actually makes people want to listen, and see how AI tools can help you launch faster and smarter. Most importantly, you'll discover how your voice (your perspective, your background, your story) can become an asset in an entrepreneurial world that rewards authenticity and creativity. Whether you want to start a podcast, grow a YouTube channel, launch a business, or simply stand out in university or job applications, this session will show you how to move from consumer to creator, and how to build something that's truly your own.

## Presentation Descriptions (Virtual)

### **A Personality for Project Management**

Presented by Leah Lagacy

Learn about how you can feel energized and rewarded working in project management based on your personality.

### **Balancing Your Medicine Wheel – Yoga and Wellness Tools for all Aspects of Self**

Presented by Shayna Thomas

In this presentation, students explore the Medicine Wheel as a powerful framework for navigating life at every stage. Balancing Your Medicine Wheel introduces the four interconnected aspects of self (physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual) and how each influences confidence, decision-making, and overall success.

### **Connections: 10 Tips to Strengthen Your Professional Network**

Presented by Ruth Shelton

This presentation covers 10 actionable tips to strengthen your professional network. Designed to boost confidence and reduce networking anxiety, the session focuses on authentic connection-building strategies that can support career exploration and long-term success.

### **Empowering Indigenous Youth – Career Pathways in the Accounting Profession**

Presented by Sheryle Evans

This session explores how the First Nations Financial Management Board (FMB) is empowering Indigenous youth to pursue meaningful careers in accounting and finance through its Pre-Approved Training Office (PATO). By addressing the significant underrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the CPA profession and the systemic barriers that contribute to it—including financial pressures, isolation, limited mentorship, and misalignment with traditional

education models—the presentation highlights how FMB’s culturally grounded training environment creates accessible, supportive pathways for Indigenous learners. Participants will learn how structured mentorship from Indigenous CPAs, relevant practical experience, and community focused work help build confidence, capacity, and long-term career success. The session also outlines the diverse internal and external career opportunities available to those who earn their CPA through FMB, showing how empowered Indigenous youth are shaping stronger Nations, advancing self-determination, and contributing to a more inclusive financial sector.

## **Entrepreneurship & Lifelong Journey**

Presented by Richard Wuttunee

Starting from a poor family and going to jail early on, I was able to pull out of that and achieve 3 journeyman tickets before 30 years old, start a 5 star plumbing business and win numerous business awards along the way, all while cleaning up my life from substance abuse and going with a clean mindset.

## **Every Career is a Climate Career**

Presented by Nicholas Buccheri

Forget everything you think you know about "green" jobs. Sustainability isn't just about planting trees or using paper straws; it's the ultimate business upgrade. We've spent decades acting like predators in a "messy" global economy, but the future belongs to the guardians.

## **Finding Strength After Leaving Home: Identity, Education, and Indigenous Resilience**

Presented by Carys Smith

This presentation shares lived experiences of growing up in a northern reserve and later navigating urban life and education to achieve personal goals, without having been fully taught the history of my own people or the impacts of growing up in a First Nations school. Through storytelling, I speak about what it is like for a young Indigenous student to leave home unprepared — not because of a lack of ability, but because the truth about Indigenous history,

identity, and reconciliation was learned later in life and continues to shape how I move through the world now.

## **From Student to Fellow: Growing Through Outreach and Cultural Learning**

Presented by Cheyenne Toms

This presentation will share my personal and academic journey, highlighting key experiences that have shaped my educational path, community involvement, and cultural learning. I will discuss how I began university in a different degree and learned that there is no single “right” path, emphasizing the importance of exploring interests and pursuing studies that align with personal passions and values. I will outline my involvement in student societies and volunteer initiatives, including the Indigenous Society and the X-Project Indigenous Outreach Program, and reflect on how these experiences helped me develop leadership skills, build meaningful connections, and step outside my comfort zone. I will also discuss my participation in an Indigenous cultural exchange in Belize and its impact on my understanding of Indigenous cultures and community engagement. Additionally, I will describe my fellowship experience, the outreach project I am implementing, and the professional development opportunities that have supported my growth. Finally, I will reflect on my ongoing cultural learning journey, including reconnecting with Indigenous knowledge and how university and community-based work continue to shape my identity and future goals.

## **Honouring the Buffalo: Restoring Land, Culture, and Food Sovereignty**

Presented by Meadow Leaming

The story of White Buffalo Calf Woman carries profound teachings for many Plains Nations about respect, responsibility, and the sacred relationship between people, the buffalo, and the land. For the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation youth and members, these teachings continue to guide community efforts to care for the buffalo and restore balance within their traditional territories. This presentation explores how the cultural teachings connected to White Buffalo Calf Woman inspire their ongoing commitment to buffalo stewardship, ecological restoration, and community well-being.

## **Hoop Teachings: Living Life in A Circle**

Presented by Jay Genaille

Jay paints a unique story through the art of this Traditional Hoop Dance presentation. Jay will engage with the audience through offering an introduction and short bio, then he will share some of the teachings around the hoop dance and provide a better understanding by explaining the meaning behind each formation, showcase a 15 minute performance in honour of our animal relatives of the Land, Elders, Ancestors, community, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Men and Women and the Children who never made it home. Finally, he will close with motivational, inspirational, and encouraging words, leaving time for Q&A. This service is approximately 20 minutes in total.

## **Lil'wat World View**

Presented by Rick Joe

This presentation is sharing my story as a survivor of Indian Day School to Teaching in public and First nations Band Operated schools. The journey of growing up on reserve to attending University to teaching about Hand Drums in the Classroom.

## **Once Upon a Reservation**

Presented by Dawn Fielding

I have been blessed with so many amazing gifts in my teaching career. I can share inspiring stories, hilarious interactions, heart-breaking lows, and most importantly...alternative ways of reaching the forgotten students (who can smell "BS" from a mile away). I received an award for my teaching/reaching techniques. I wish to share the incredible lessons on how to shine the light on the students who are left in the dark. I would love to share the stories of my experiences of teaching Special Education and Indigenous Education.

## **Perseverance and the Power of Sport**

Presented by Bobby Ross

In the hopes of inspiring Indigenous youth, I want to share my sports story from high school through to playing for Canada and professionally. When you look at my career statistics it can be

deceiving. On the surface it looks impressive but there were plenty of ups and downs, struggles and heartbreaks. I would discuss certain situations that were difficult as well as share some incredible moments and feelings of accomplishment. I would dive into fitness (physical & mental), commitment, respect for yourself and others and the power of sport. No matter what level you achieve you can make friends and connections that last a lifetime. Employers love rounded people and sport can help achieve this. Success seldom follows a linear path but through passion, perseverance and support of friends, family, coaches and teammates, anything is possible. I am very proud of my indigenous heritage and carried that with me onto the field as I do to this day. I will support this presentation with some slides and video clips from rugby.

## **Realize your potential. Make your impact. Your path to the CPA designation.**

Presented by Trae-Vond Wood

Discover the rewarding career path you can have from becoming a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA). Learn about Indigenous CPAs and Indigenous CPA students who have made an impact in their communities through their accounting skillsets.

## **Rooted Ambitions – Finding Our Way with Aunty Love at Our Backs**

Presented by Kimberley Fraser-Airhart

Growing up as an urban Indigenous youth in Canada can be a difficult and seemingly invisible journey. We navigate foggy, untold stories about our identity, many stories that are not the ones told by our own communities. In this session, I will share about the aunty love that guided my journey as a Métis person - growing up as a youth in the streets of a low-income city neighbourhood, navigating my way towards post-secondary, finding my way back to my community, multiple micro-businesses, to speaking Cree on the UNESCO stage advocating for youth voices internationally. This journey we navigate as young people takes wisdom, risk-taking, and a deep faith that we have aunts, uncles, and ancestors rooting for us. Each one of us has a dream that we carry deep in our hearts. This session will equip students with the courage to reach out to their community, an invitation to reflect on their identity, and to dream big as they pursue their next steps into the future.

## **Staying True to Your Roots**

Presented by Siera Hancharyk

In this presentation we will talk about navigating colonial spaces while staying true to where we come from. Owning our stories and honouring our ancestors and what that looks like through school, entrepreneurship and working in corporate sectors/non-profits.

## **Taking Care of You + Others: Stress and Resilience Strategies for Educators Supporting Youth**

Presented by Dene Guillas

“Taking Care of You + Others” is a strengths-based workshop designed for educators and youth-serving professionals supporting Indigenous young people. This session provides essential insights into stress and resilience while recognizing the unique realities, histories, and strengths within Indigenous communities. Participants will explore how stress impacts the body and brain, identify common stressors experienced by both youth and adults, and learn practical, culturally respectful strategies to support regulation and resilience in everyday settings. The workshop emphasizes the importance of adult well-being as foundational to youth well-being, reinforcing that resilience grows through relationships, safety, and connection. Participants will leave feeling more grounded, equipped with actionable tools, and better prepared to support Indigenous youth in ways that foster confidence, belonging, and long-term well-being.

## **The Real Story: How I Got Back to School and Kept Going**

Presented by Brett Landry

This TED style session shares a real and honest journey from dropping out of school, addiction, and academic probation to earning a business degree and working in Indigenous education. I speak openly about being placed in low level classes, upgrading, failing at university, and finding my way back through support systems, work experience, and balance guided by the medicine wheel.

## **Unleash the Master Within you: How to Success in School and Beyond**

Presented by Kala Kathirgamanathan

Every young person carries a spark of greatness within. In this empowering and engaging talk, Dr. Kala invites students to uncover their inner “master” – the part of them that leads with purpose, strength, and gratitude. Through stories and powerful practical lessons, students will learn how to discover their passions, reframe challenges into opportunities, and develop communication and leadership skills to carry through every stage of life. This session inspires youth to believe in themselves, embrace their identity, and confidently shape their own path to success in school and beyond.

## **Value Your Words**

Presented by Shawna J. Serniak

We speak thousands of words every day — but the most powerful ones are the words we say to ourselves. In Value Our Words, students will explore how self-talk shapes confidence, performance, relationships, and overall mental well-being. As teens navigating academic pressure, social comparison, future decisions, and identity, it’s easy to become your own harshest critic. Self-doubt, overthinking, and negative inner dialogue can quietly influence how you see yourself — and what you believe you’re capable of achieving. This engaging and relatable 20-minute presentation invites students to pause and reflect: What am I saying to myself daily? Why do I default to negative thinking? How are my words shaping my mindset and actions? Together, we unpack: Why the teenage brain naturally leans toward self-criticism. How comparison culture and pressure amplify negative self-talk. The impact of internal language on motivation, confidence, and mental health. Most importantly, students leave with simple, practical tools they can immediately implement: Reframing negative thoughts. Awareness techniques to interrupt self-doubt. The power of intentional “I am” statements. Replacing criticism with constructive inner coaching. This isn’t about toxic positivity. It’s about awareness, responsibility, and learning how to shift your internal dialogue in a way that builds resilience, confidence, and emotional strength. When students learn to value their words, they begin to value themselves. Because the voice you listen to the most... is your own.

## **What the Grad Coach Wants You to Know**

Presented by Matthew Kleywegt

I worked with Indigenous teens in off reserve High Schools for nine years. During that time I often felt like a liaison between two worlds. Luckily I'm good at that, I'm mixed, my Mom is Cree, my Dad is the son of Dutch Immigrants. They are different, I've been in this role for a long time. As a High School student there are some things you should be hearing from your school staff. I'm going to tell these things too you. If you're a member of school staff there are things you should know too. If you're a High School student, or a member of staff you might just benefit from hearing what I would tell the other side.

## **You are not meant to do this alone**

Presented by Christine Marie

This presentation explores 1 of 2 deeply connected themes: being seen without burning out and remembering you are not meant to do this alone. As an Indigenous woman, CEO, founder, and mother of two busy boys, I share real-life experiences from building a business since 2018 while protecting my mental health, energy and family life. With experience working alongside over 40 organizations, raising more than \$120,000 to give back to community, and growing to be an award-winning speaker, I speak openly about the invisible labour, expectations and pressure many Indigenous women carry especially in leadership and caregiving roles. Youth interested in the path of entrepreneurship will be well equipped by learning practical approaches to setting boundaries, saying no without guilt and redefining success in a way that feels sustainable and aligned. We will also explore the importance of community, asking for help and releasing the belief that strength means doing everything alone. This session blends storytelling, reflection and actionable tools, leaving participants feeling seen, prepared and supported. With renewed permission that it is ok to protect their time, energy and well-being.

## **You Still Belong: From Survival to Strength**

Presented by Samantha Buchsdruecker

At 14 years old, Samantha Buchsdruecker was homeless, struggling with addiction, and had dropped out of school. She believed she was already too far behind. Today, she is an Indigenous advocate, cultural safety educator, and entrepreneur working within healthcare systems across

British Columbia. In this honest and empowering TED-style talk, Samantha speaks directly to Indigenous high school students who may feel labeled, disconnected, or unsure of what comes next. She shares how survival does not make you broken and how your past does not decide your future. Through storytelling and reflection, she explores resilience, cultural reconnection, recovery, and entrepreneurship. Samantha challenges the myth of the “perfect path” and reminds youth that success does not require a straight line. This presentation leaves students with one powerful message: no matter where you are starting from you still belong.