Indspire

Annual Report 25 26



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Passing the Torch & Lighting a New Path

This past year marked a significant chapter in Indspire's history: the transition of leadership from Dr. Mike DeGagné to Jocelyn Formsma as President & CEO.

Mike's tenure left a lasting mark on the organization. Under his leadership, Indspire strengthened its programs, deepened its partnerships, and grew its impact for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students across Turtle Island. His steady guidance and genuine care for the communities Indspire serves helped position the organization for continued growth, and his contributions are deeply appreciated.

As Indspire said farewell to Mike, it eagerly welcomed Jocelyn Formsma. Jocelyn brings more than two decades of experience advocating for Indigenous rights, justice, and self-determination, along with a proven track record of building strong relationships at local, national, and international levels. Her passion for developing young leaders and advancing bold systemic change aligns closely with Indspire's mission and values.

Throughout the transition, the Board and staff worked closely to ensure continuity and stability across programs and partnerships. Indspire enters this new chapter well-positioned, carried forward by the strength of its foundation and the energy, ideas, and vision that Jocelyn brings to the work ahead.

Message from the President and CEO



Photo: Tiffany Thomas of Taylre Media

Jocelyn Formsma

When I stepped into the role of President & CEO in January, I inherited an organization already reaching new heights. Before I arrived, Indspire was celebrating milestones built by a community of staff, partners, and supporters, and I carry an appreciation of them forward with gratitude and a strong sense of responsibility.

This past year, Indspire provided over 9,600 bursaries and scholarships, totalling more than $33 million, disbursed to Indigenous students: the most in our organization's history. This is what investment in education and recognition of excellence looks like in practice, and it is work I am proud to inherit and continue.

I don't intend to simply sustain that momentum. In the months ahead, we will introduce Indspire's new Strategic Plan, guided by a new North Star, lighting the paths where Indigenous potential becomes possibility, excellence, and achievement. It is a plan built to carry leadership and achievement forward for the Indigenous learners we serve, now and for generations to come.

Where we have been is remarkable. Where we stand today is a new high. Where we are going, together, is uncharted, and I'm honoured to build that path forward.

Message from the Chair of the Board



Donald E. Worme, K.C., I.P.C.

On behalf of Indspire's Board of Directors, it is my privilege to reflect on another year of meaningful progress in advancing Indigenous education across Turtle Island.

This past year marked an important moment of smooth transition, as we thanked Mike DeGagné for his years of dedicated leadership and welcomed Jocelyn Formsma as our new President & CEO. The Board undertook a thorough national search to ensure a smooth transition, and we are confident that Jocelyn's experience, vision, and deep commitment to Indigenous rights and self-determination will position Indspire well for the future.

Throughout the year, the Board continued to provide governance oversight, guiding strategic direction while our staff carried out the day-to-day work that makes our mission possible. We are proud of the record-breaking participation at the National Gathering and Soaring, the unprecedented generosity of Mastercard Foundation, and the achievements celebrated through the Indspire Awards.

On behalf of the Board, I extend our sincere gratitude to our donors, partners, staff, and volunteers whose dedication continues to make this work possible. We look forward to the year ahead with confidence and optimism.

Impact & Outreach



This past year redefined our expectations by establishing an entirely new benchmark for impact: reaching more students, convening more community members, publishing more research, and mobilizing more resources than ever before. This expanded reach was directly fueled by an unprecedented wave of generosity, making this our most successful fundraising year to date.

Because of this historic support, we achieved breakthroughs across our core pillars:

- **A Historic Year for Building Brighter Futures:** Our flagship bursary program reached new heights, delivering its highest-ever funding total and supporting a record number of students on their educational journeys.
- **Unprecedented Event Engagement:** Our primary outreach events, Soaring and National Gathering, saw record-breaking attendance and engagement, allowing us to deepen our community connections across local, provincial, and national levels.
- **Record-Breaking Research Output:** We elevated our commitment to knowledge mobilization by producing our highest number of research reports to date, driving critical insights and shaping the conversation to inform systemic change.
- **Unparalleled Fundraising Success:** None of this expanded impact would be possible without the historic financial support we received this year, empowering us to scale our work and drive lasting change.

Impact
at a glance

Total Funds Raised:

$59,156,080

A 19.54% increase from the previous fiscal year

Supporters:

21,096

Total number of individuals, organizations, corporations, and foundations who drive our mission forward.

Research Reports Published:

11

Delivered major reports that amplify Indigenous student voices to map the national education and labour market landscape.

Building Brighter Futures (BBF) Total Investment in Students:

$33,024,246

Awarded in direct student financial support through our Building Brighter Futures program.

Total Students Supported:

9,665

Total students supported through our Building Brighter Futures program.

Communities Reached Digitally:

127,394

Total Engagements (likes, comments, shares across all Indspire social channels)

92,945

Total Followers (across all Indspire social channels)



> “Indspire’s greatest strength is that it is trusted by Indigenous students, families, and communities in a way few national organizations are.”

Leading with Curiosity



At Indspire, leading with curiosity is integral to the entire organization. Strategic decisions are grounded in research and informed by empirical evidence.

Recognizing that data alone does not create change, Indspire's commitment to continuous learning extends to translating complex findings into accessible, actionable resources designed to drive meaningful impact and change.

Research and Impact Reports:

11 Reports

This year, the Research and Impact (R&I) department led with curiosity by asking better questions, listening more closely, and amplifying Indigenous voices that can be translated into practical knowledge to make change. The research team prioritized its curiosity to two critical portfolios: Mental Wellness and the Education and Labour Market.

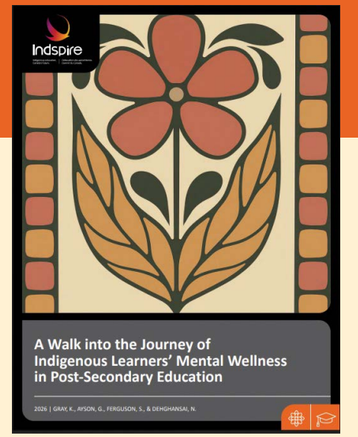


Recognizing mental wellness as a strong predictor of student success, the team identified the core drivers of the post-secondary experience and measured the tangible impact of wellness support systems on academic outcomes. Concurrently, the second portfolio mapped the complete student journey, analyzing education pathways, graduation rates, career transitions, success indicators, and delivered a comprehensive assessment of the broader Indigenous education and labour market landscape.





As part of its core mandate, the Research and Impact department led a comprehensive evaluation of Indspire's premier events. The team focused on capturing actionable data from the events to identify operational strengths and pinpoint areas for strategic refinement. By establishing this continuous feedback loop, the organization ensures that future events are constantly optimized to deliver maximum value and responsiveness to the community. Leaning into curiosity, the leadership team also conducted a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process to inform its new strategic plan. By engaging with current and past recipients, donors and partners, board members, and the staff, the leadership took into account the vision and sentiment of all who want the best for Indspire to understand the direction of the next five years.





Engagements Across Turtle Island



Indspire deepened its connection to its communities by actively engaging in a wide range of events that centred Indigenous voices, knowledge, and experiences.

From high-profile national gatherings to community-based initiatives, the organization created and participated in meaningful spaces for dialogue, learning, and relationship-building.



President's Reception

The President's Reception, held on February 11, 2026, at Indspire's Toronto office, marked the beginning of a new chapter for the organization while honouring the legacy that made this moment possible. Bringing together a distinguished group of 97 guests, the evening created space for reflection, meaningful conversation, and authentic connection among partners, supporters, and community members.

The evening offered President & CEO Jocelyn Formsma her first opportunity to introduce herself to stakeholders and share her vision for Indspire's future, one grounded in a profound commitment to Indigenous education, self-determination, and student success. Guests also took time to celebrate the foundation built under previous leadership, honouring the relationships and achievements that continue to shape Indspire's trajectory.

Grounded in a spirit of reciprocity, the reception fostered relationship-building and strengthened a shared sense of purpose, bridging Indspire's history with the energy of what lies ahead. The gathering served as a moment to simultaneously reflect on Indspire's accomplishments to date while looking ahead with optimism and intention, affirming a shared path forward that is centred on empowering Indigenous students, honouring community, and lighting the way for generations to come.

Community Engagement

This past year, Indspire engaged communities across Turtle Island by participating in 42 events from coast to coast to coast. These gatherings strengthened relationships and elevated the lived experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students and educators from remote, isolated, and urban centres alike. Highlights included impactful, culturally grounded presentations by Indspire's Community and Outreach Coordinator at the Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA) and the Ontario Modern Languages Teachers Association conferences, and the Ontario Modern Languages Teachers Association, drawing on shared knowledge from Māori, Cree, and Six Nations communities.

The Building Brighter Futures (BBF) team expanded this national presence, connecting with over 11,000 attendees across 20 virtual and in-person events. By presenting at venues ranging from the Greater Edmonton Teachers' Convention (GETCA) and Indigenous Services Canada to Inuksuk High School and the Six Nations of the Grand River Pow Wow, the team actively promoted scholarships and fostered vital connections with students, educators, and donors.





National Gathering

One of the two premier events that has demonstrated its breadth of influence since its inception in 2013, this year's 2025 National Gathering for Indigenous Education wove stories of hope and action across Turtle Island. With 1813 attendees, including educators, students, exhibitors and sponsors, and presenters from nearly every province and territory, all driven by one shared heartbeat, advancing reconciliation through Indigenous education.

The three days of learning and collaboration took place in Winnipeg, which is situated on Treaty 1 Territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Dënesųłiné, Nehethowuk (Cree) Nations, and Homeland of the Red River Métis. A key Indspire event, the National Gathering annually creates a vital space for educators to build enduring networks and reinforce reconciliation as a shared, collaborative journey.

Educators, leaders, students, and partners filled the room for 42 dynamic presentations and unforgettable keynote speakers. The voices of Edith Loring-Kuhanga, Duncan McCue, and Phyllis Webstad sparked vital conversations about healing, truth, and building trust between communities and classrooms, reminding all who attended of the importance of reconciliation work in education. This year's gathering also saw record attendance to dynamic workshops fostering new ideas and community building for attendees.

+1,813
attendees

42
presentations and workshops

103
exhibitors

95%
of attendees said they would be applying what they learned from National Gathering to their work or education.

86%
of educators agreed that all educators and educational support staff across Canada should attend Indspire's National Gathering.

75%
of attendees said that National Gathering fared better in comparison to other Indigenous education events they have attended.



Inspiring Future Leaders



Empowering the next generation of Indigenous leadership requires more than just inspiration; it demands the development of clear, sustainable pathways to success. This year, Indspire continued to focus on delivering appropriate programs, fostering and expanding partnerships, and delivering resources and support to equip students and young professionals with the tools they need to lead.

> “Indspire’s investment in my education feels like an affirmation of my purpose to support Indigenous youth and families through healing-centered, culturally grounded approaches. It has helped me access the tools and knowledge I need to amplify the voices of my community, preserve traditional teachings, and challenge colonial structures in meaningful ways. This support isn’t just financial, it’s a powerful reminder that my dreams and contributions matter. It motivates me to keep going, not only for myself, but for future generations.”

Donor Spotlight

Joe Wilson



A commitment to brighter futures, month after month

As a dedicated Change Maker, Joe Wilson's monthly support is helping advance Indigenous education and create brighter futures for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students across Canada. A former schoolteacher, Joe is deeply committed to helping youth pursue their educational goals. His generosity reflects a strong personal belief in equity, opportunity, and the importance of ensuring Indigenous learners have the support they need to succeed.

> **"As a retired teacher, I am deeply committed to helping youth. Indigenous youth have undeserved barriers to overcome, so let's respect true equity and do what's possible to ensure they have a fair chance to succeed."**

For Joe, giving monthly is a meaningful way to stay true to that commitment and help sustain Indspire's work year-round.
We are deeply grateful for Joe's continued generosity and for the compassion and conviction that inspires his support.

Soaring 2025

The 2025 Soaring: Indigenous Youth Empowerment Gathering brought together Indigenous high school students, educators, and partners from across Turtle Island for two days of connection, learning, and exploration. Held at the Vancouver Convention Centre, situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, the event welcomed more than 2,000 attendees both in person and online via a hybrid format. The event gave students direct access to leading industry and post-secondary representatives, empowering them to map out academic and career pathways. Through workshops and active networking opportunities, students gained insights and confidence required to navigate new opportunities within their educational pathway. As one of Indspire's cornerstone initiatives, Soaring has been empowering Indigenous students since 2013, actively equipping the next generation of Indigenous leaders with the tools they need to achieve their goals.



2,000+ attendees

80+ career fair booths

50+ post-secondary partners

64 presentations

1,518 students
617 virtual, 901 in-person

510 chaperones
239 virtual, 271 in-person

Soaring Experience (Student Ratings):

99% excellent, very good, good

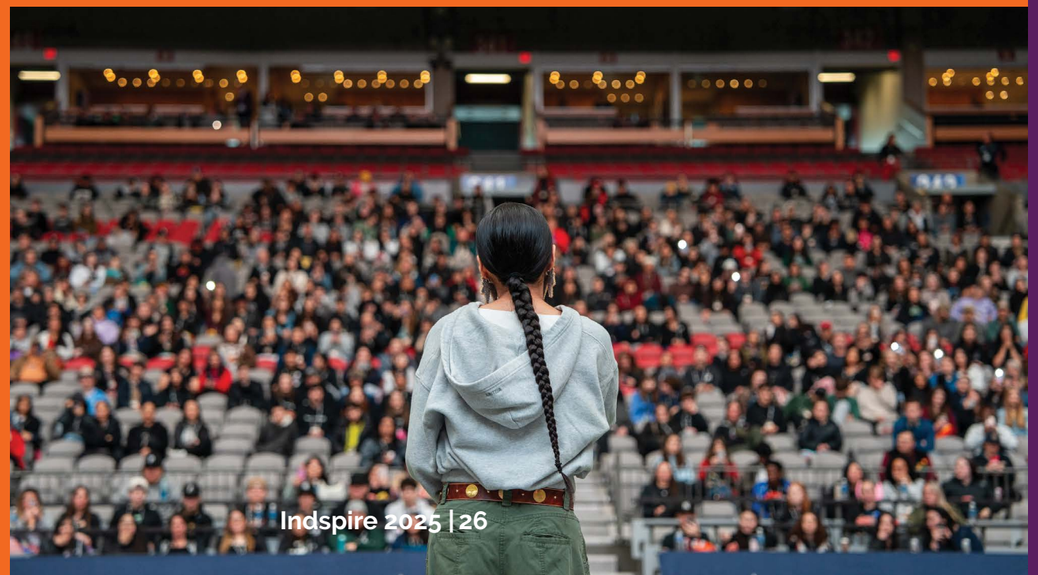
90% were inspired by Soaring to pursue new post-secondary goals.

Building Brighter Futures

Created in 1996 as Indspire's flagship program, the Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries & Scholarships (BBF) program continues to serve as a critical catalyst for Indigenous student success. This year, the program achieved unprecedented scale, delivering a record-breaking $33,024,246 in funding through 9,665 bursaries nationwide. Based on the research done this year on the 2024-2025 recipients who completed the survey, 99% of employed graduates found employment within five months of graduating, and 98% of BBF participants strongly agreed or agreed that the BBF financial support enabled them to focus on their studies and/or facilitated the completion of their academic program. By systematically removing financial barriers to post-secondary education, the BBF program empowers Indigenous learners to focus more on their academic and professional development. This strategic investment not only transforms individual trajectories and empowers future leaders, but also actively strengthens the broader Indigenous labour market and economy.

+$33 million
in funding delivered

9,665
Bursaries nationwide





Donor Spotlight

Deloitte.

Empowering the next generation of Indigenous leaders

Since 2017, Deloitte Canada has been a valued supporter in advancing Indigenous education, leadership, and economic opportunity by committing over $1 million in support of Indspire's work.

From scholarships and bursaries through Building Brighter Futures to sponsorship of the Indspire Awards, supporting Feast in the Forest and, most recently, their role as Presenting Corporate Sponsor of Soaring: Indigenous Youth Empowerment Gathering, Deloitte's support has helped create meaningful pathways for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students across Canada. This collaboration reflects Deloitte's commitment to reconciliation in action through investment in education, mentorship, and the development of future Indigenous leaders and professionals.

Indspire is proud to celebrate Deloitte Canada's enduring commitment to Indspire and to a more inclusive future for all Canadians.

"We believe that investing in Indigenous education is an investment in Canada's future. Our collaboration with Indspire helps strengthen opportunities for Indigenous youth to pursue their goals, develop leadership skills, and contribute to thriving communities."

Donor Spotlight

James Kennedy and June Pick



Honouring a legacy through education and reconciliation

In 2021, James Kennedy and his mother, June Pick, established the **John Bernard Kennedy Bursary** in memory of their brother and son, creating a lasting legacy rooted in education, environmental stewardship, and community.

Through their generous endowed gift, the bursary has already **supported more than 30 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students**, helping them pursue post-secondary education and move forward with their goals.

Reflecting on their decision to partner with Indspire, James shared: "My mom and I established an endowment to honour the memory of my brother, John Kennedy, and to carry forward the values that defined his life. We have always aligned with nature and environmental issues, and we see Indigenous leadership in this area, recognizing this as a complex matter. As we searched for something that truly reflected John's values and spirit, Indspire felt like a natural fit. Our hope is to help as many people as we can, and to open dialogue, in meaningful ways, with Indigenous communities.

"This is one way we practice reconciliation. It may be a small step—opening and growing a bursary for Indigenous learners—but it's a step and an example."

Through this meaningful act of giving, James and June are creating opportunity, honouring John's legacy, and supporting the next generation of Indigenous learners.

> **"Our hope is to help as many people as we can, and to open dialogue, in meaningful ways, with Indigenous communities."**



Workshops

Climbing the Mountain Reconciliation Workshop

The Climbing the Mountain Reconciliation Workshop, led by Dr. Niigaan Sinclair, invited the National Gathering's 1,500 attendees and sponsors to participate in an in-depth exploration of reconciliation in action. The session deepened understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action and inspired educators to apply these learnings within their communities, with 88% of educators reporting that they found this workshop valuable.

1,500

attendees and sponsors participated in an in-depth exploration of reconciliation in action.

NG Young Indigenous Leaders Panel

Moderated by Michaella Montana, the Young Indigenous Leaders Panel at the National Gathering placed student experiences at the centre of the educational discourse. Featuring insights from Indspire Youth Laureate panellists Chief Tréchelle Bunn, Madelaine McCracken, and Shayla Oulette-Stonechild, the session assessed institutional progress and identified persistent systemic gaps. By examining how post-secondary frameworks can better support Indigenous learners today, the dialogue generated actionable reconciliation strategies designed to empower the next generation of education leaders.

NG Technology in Education Panel: STEM & AI

The panel assessed the intersections of digital ethics, AI sovereignty, and cybersecurity, alongside practical approaches to classroom experimentation. The discussion established clear frameworks for deploying technology to advance learning in ways that remain respectful, reciprocal, and fundamentally community-driven. This vital dialogue was supported by Imperial, serving as the National Gathering's inaugural Technology in Education Sponsor.

Mila: Indigenous Pathfinders in AI

Indspire expanded its strategic impact by co-delivering the Mila: Indigenous Pathfinders in AI program alongside key industry partners Mila (Quebec Artificial Intelligence Institute), DIGITAL, and The Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR).

Building on a successful inaugural year with a 100% completion rate, the 2025 program scaled significantly with the second cohort doubling to 20 participants. The hybrid curriculum includes digital onboarding, immersive on-site training at Mila in Montreal and comprehensive wrap-around support by Indspire to create a barrier-free, optimal learning environment.

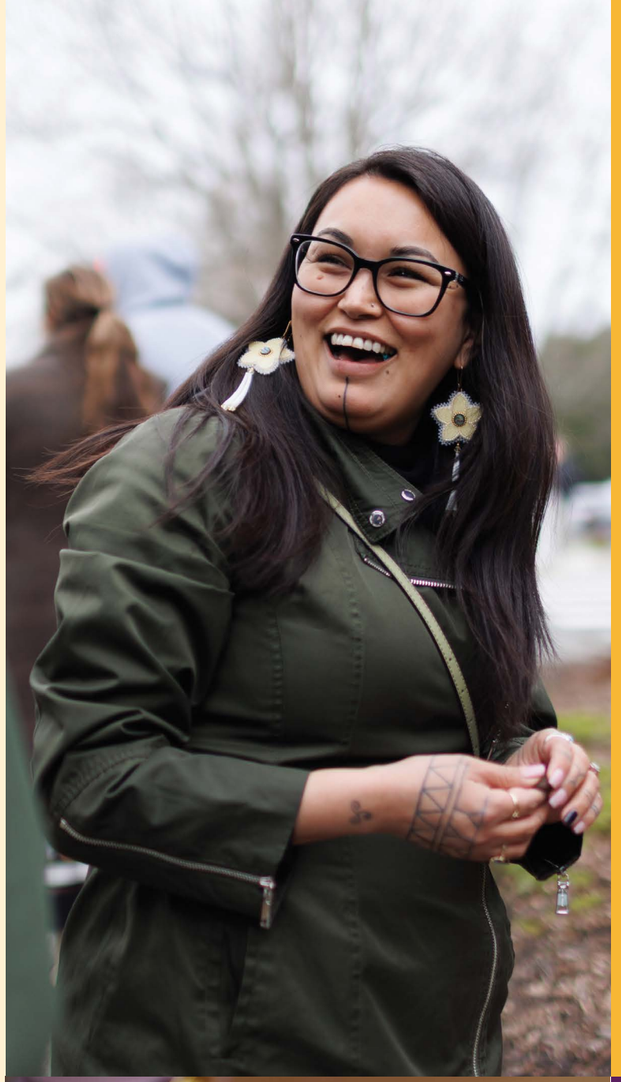
Student Wellness Advisory Group

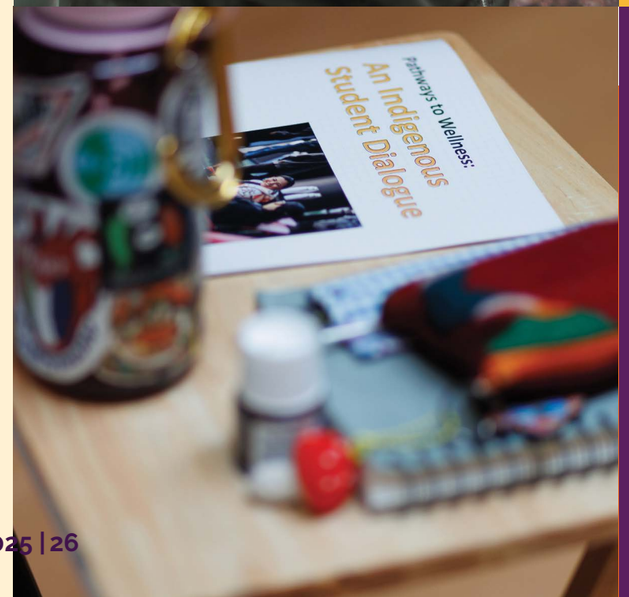
Supported by the Slaight Family Foundation, the Student Wellness Advisory Group (SWAG) united 10 Indigenous post-secondary students, two Elders/Knowledge Keepers, and five partner organizations (Kids Help Phone, Jack.org, We Matter, MHCC, and CAMH). Operating through a hybrid model of virtual meetings and an in-person session in Gatineau, Quebec, the initiative centered student perspectives in mental health planning. By establishing a collaborative forum grounded in the lived experiences of students, SWAG successfully identified systemic barriers and formulated concrete, community-driven solutions for Indigenous student wellness. Insights from the internal evaluation shaped the next steps as to how we can create spaces to support learners.

Pathways to Wellness

The Pathways to Wellness: An Indigenous Student Dialogue convened 60 post-secondary students to advance critical strategies for mental health and academic success. The initiative featured two intensive three-day gatherings, hosted in partnership with the University of Victoria's First Peoples House and Concordia University in Montréal.

These dialogues created a safe, inclusive space for students to share lived experiences and connect with Indspire Laureates. Through keynotes and breakout sessions, participants identified institutional barriers, emphasized the vital role of community networks, and defined culturally relevant approaches to holistic wellness. The insights captured have been synthesized into internal reports to advocate, guide and inform the needs of Indigenous student well-being needs.





Future Educators Gathering

Achieving record-level participation, the Future Educators Gathering convened 166 Indigenous B.Ed. students from across eight provinces and two territories on November 19, 2025, in Winnipeg. Designed as a shared space, the event enabled participants to build long-lasting professional networks and explore practical, culturally grounded methodologies for K-12 student engagement. Championed by the Rideau Hall Foundation as its Teacher Education Supporter, the Gathering featured critical insights from prominent voices, including Angela Sterritt, Dr. David Robinson, Dr. Patricia Makokis, Shayla Oulette-Stonechild, and the Aki Centre Panel. By actively equipping the next generation of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis educators, this initiative directly strengthens representation in classrooms nationwide. The organizational impact of this programming was definitive:

99%

of attendees reported gaining actionable advice to advance their educational goals

94%

affirmed the event fostered a strong sense of professional purpose and belonging.



> "When I think about Indspire what comes to mind for me is hope. I'm a mature student who has had a lot of trauma. I have 3 children, 2 with special needs, and Indspire gives me hope that I will be able to build a better future for myself and my family."

Celebrating Indigenous Excellence



At Indspire, celebrating Indigenous excellence serves a critical dual mandate: it provides an unparalleled national platform to recognize extraordinary achievements while simultaneously acting as a powerful medium to inspire the next generation. By elevating the achievements of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis changemakers, Indspire ensures that their profound, cross-sector contributions are rightfully honoured. Ultimately, showcasing these accomplishments does more than just validate past success; it transforms today's excellence into a clear blueprint that motivates and empowers future Indigenous leaders.

> "Personally, it reminds me of the financial and emotional support that has helped me continue my studies with confidence and pride as a Pasqua First Nation student, knowing that my success contributes to a greater vision of growth and reconciliation."



Indspire Awards

The 2025 Indspire Awards convened Indigenous leaders, partners, and community members in Vancouver to honour the exceptional achievements of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis changemakers.

The two-day event commenced with the Laureate Reception and Pinning Ceremony at the Stanley Park Pavilion, providing an intimate forum to formally welcome and recognize the newest cohort of Laureates alongside their peers.

The following evening, the signature Indspire Awards Dinner and Ceremony hosted over 1,000 distinguished guests at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The gala highlighted the profound, cross-sector contributions of each Laureate, amplifying their national impact. The prestigious event was further elevated by a performance from internationally acclaimed artist and two-time Polaris Music Prize winner, Jeremy Dutcher, whose ongoing advocacy in language revitalization perfectly aligned with the evening's themes. The 2025 Awards served as a powerful testament to the strength and excellence of Indigenous leadership, establishing enduring benchmarks of success for future generations.

"Thank you once again for your kindness, encouragement, and belief in my potential. As my Sundance Chief would say, in a good way, a kind way, a loving way and a thankful way."

Over the last year Indspire has had many incredible champions ranging from donors to students and Laureates. Indspire continues to celebrate the continued commitment of these champions. Their dedication and support has a direct impact on their communities, Indigenous youth, the leadership team and staff of Indspire.



Donor Spotlight

Mastercard Foundation

A transformative partnership investing in Indigenous futures



Indspire is proud to recognize our transformative partnership with Mastercard Foundation, whose $10 million investment is helping strengthen pathways for Indigenous learners, educators, and communities across Canada.

Made as part of the Foundation's broader commitment marking the 10th anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, this significant gift is helping strengthen Indspire's ability to advance Indigenous education, leadership, and community empowerment.

> **"This donation strengthens Indspire's ability to support students on their educational journeys and displays a commitment to Reconciliation."**

Reflecting on the impact of this partnership, Donald Worme, Chair of Indspire's Board of Directors, shared: "The generosity of the Mastercard Foundation is an act of trust in Indigenous youth. As Canada's youngest and fastest-growing demographic, Indigenous students embody innovation, perseverance, and cultural pride. This donation strengthens Indspire's ability to support students on their educational journeys and displays a commitment to Reconciliation."

More than a gift, this partnership represents reconciliation in action and a profound investment in the future of Indigenous education and leadership.

We are deeply grateful for Mastercard Foundation's visionary leadership and commitment to lasting change.

Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Awards

The 2025 Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Awards celebrated outstanding educators for their leadership, innovation, and dedication to advancing Indigenous education. This year's prestigious Awards were presented to the following recipients, highlighting the critical role of systemic collaboration in driving educational excellence.

Education Team



Bryan Bellefeuille
Indigenous Educator Award



Maclane Cardinal
Indigenous Educator Award



Tanya McCallum-Sylvestre
Indigenous Educator Award



Eric Grimstead
Partner in Indigenous Education Award

Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba
Organization Award

Champions of Indspire: The Laureates

The highest honour bestowed by Indigenous communities upon Indigenous achievers, the Indspire Awards have celebrated over 400 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis recipients over 30+ years. In 2025, 12 individuals were recognized across the following categories: Youth, Arts, Business & Commerce, Culture, Heritage & Spirituality, Education, Health, Public Service, Sports, Law & Justice, Lifetime Achievement.





Chief Tréchelle Bunn
Youth Recipient
Birdtail Sioux Dakota Nation, MB



Arsaniq Deer
Youth Recipient
Quaqtaq, QC



Madelaine McCracken
Youth Recipient
Otipemisiwak Métis Government, AB



Edith Loring-Kuhanga
Education
Gitwangak Band, BC



Dr. Shannon McDonald
Health
Manitoba Métis Federation, MB



Diane Redsky
Public Service
Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, ON



Michelle Good
Arts
Red Pheasant Cree Nation, SK



Colby Delorme
Business & Commerce
Otipemisiwak Métis Government, AB



Brian MacDonald
Culture, Heritage & Spirituality
Onion Lake Cree Nation, SK



Ivy Richardson
Sports
Gusgimukw and Nuxalk Nations, BC



Bertha Rabesca Zoe
Law & Justice
Tłı̨chǫ Nation, NT



Harvey McCue (Waubageshig)
Lifetime Achievement
Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, ON

Inside Indspire



Board of Directors

Indspire is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that provides oversight of our finances, programs, and strategic direction, ensuring the organization operates in accordance with its mission, values, and the standards expected of a national charity.

Board members bring a wealth of experience in law, education, business, and community leadership from across the country, and their guidance ensures that management's day-to-day work remains aligned with Indspire's long-term vision.

Governance duties include overseeing Indspire's programs and activities, approving strategic direction, and ensuring accountability to the communities, partners, and donors we serve. This year, the Board's stewardship was especially significant as it guided a smooth leadership transition and helped shape the priorities of Indspire's new 2026–2031 Strategic Plan.

We are grateful for the time, expertise, and passion our Board members contribute on a volunteer basis, and for the steady leadership they provided throughout this pivotal year.

Board of Directors



Donald E. Worme, K.C., IPC
Chair
Kawacatoose First Nation, Saskatchewan



Jean Teillet, IPC, OMN, MSC, (BFA, LLB, LLM)
Vice Chair
Métis, Manitoba



Dr. Jo-Ann Archibald
Stó:lō Nation, British Columbia



James Dekker
Pine Creek First Nation
Vancouver, British Columbia



Jean La Rose
Abenakis First Nation of Odanak



Yvan Guy Larocque
Métis, Manitoba



Peter J. Lukasiewicz
Toronto, Ontario



Reanna Merasty (McKay)
Barren Lands First Nation, Manitoba



Gordon Peeling
Ottawa, Ontario



Madeleine Redfern
Iqaluit, Nunavut



Alana Robert
Métis, Manitoba



William Shead
Peguis First Nation, Manitoba



Paul Tsaparis
Toronto, Ontario

Government of Canada

Partnering for Indigenous Excellence
The remarkable achievements of the 2025-26 fiscal year were made possible in part through the commitment of our public sector partners. This year, Indspire is honoured to acknowledge investments of more than $21 million from the Government of Canada and various provincial governments. These funds represent more than just financial support; they are an endorsement of our mission to close the educational gap and a testament to the collective will to see Indigenous learners thrive in every corner of the country.

Empowering Students from Coast to Coast to Coast
Much of this funding has been directly channeled into the **Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries and Scholarships program**, providing essential support to thousands of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis learners. By alleviating the financial burdens of tuition, housing, and living expenses, these contributions ensure that Indigenous youth can focus on their studies. From remote northern communities to urban centres, this support is fostering a new generation of doctors, educators, lawyers, and accountants, who will lead their communities toward a prosperous and self-determined future.

By investing in education and training, our government partners are actively participating in the systemic change required to honour the unique talents and perspectives of Indigenous peoples. We extend our deepest gratitude to the Government of Canada and participating provincial governments for their continued trust and shared vision. Together, we are not only funding education—we are building a more equitable and inclusive Canada for generations to come.

Staff Spotlight:

Brandon Meawasige



As Chief Operating Officer at Indspire, Brandon Meawasige brings visionary leadership, innovation, and a deep commitment to advancing Indigenous education and prosperity. A member of Serpent River First Nation, Brandon has played a transformative role in shaping Indspire's organizational voice, public presence, and event experience since joining the organization in 2020.

With more than a decade of experience in marketing, communications, media, and innovation, Brandon has led significant organizational growth and helped reimagine how Indspire connects with Indigenous students, communities, partners, and supporters across Canada. His leadership reflects both creativity and strategic foresight, qualities that continue to strengthen Indspire's impact nationally.

Brandon recently completed a Master of Design in Strategic Foresight and Innovation at OCAD University. Through his research, Brandon explored how Indigenous education and training programs can evolve beyond traditional measures of success, such as graduation rates, to focus more intentionally on employment readiness, sustained career achievement, and long-term community prosperity. Drawing on Indigenous-led research, labour market trends, and strategic foresight methodologies, his work proposes innovative approaches to designing education pathways that better connect Indigenous learners to meaningful careers and emerging economic opportunities.

Importantly, Brandon's research is not only academic. It is practical and forward-looking. By developing new models and frameworks for Indigenous-centered program design, his work helps shape how Indspire can continue building stronger bridges between education and employment for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth.

As a young Indigenous leader and former recipient of Indspire's Building Brighter Futures bursary program, Brandon embodies the impact of investing in Indigenous education. His leadership, lived experience, and forward-thinking vision continue to help shape a stronger future for Indigenous students, communities, and the next generation of leaders.

Staff Spotlight:

Emily Quesnelle



What aspect of your work are you most passionate about?

What I'm most passionate about is the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with partners who want to support Indigenous education and excellence. I feel fortunate to work at the intersection of community and corporate partnerships, helping organizations translate their commitments to reconciliation into something tangible. It's meaningful to be part of these conversations and to see Indspire's relationship with donors and partners grow over time, deepening in understanding and impact.

Why do you love working at Indspire?

Working at Indspire allows me to contribute to Indigenous education and achievement in a way that feels both meaningful and purposeful. I get to support initiatives that create real opportunities for students while collaborating with organizations that are working to better understand their role in reconciliation. I feel fortunate to be part of these conversations and to help connect those commitments to opportunities for Indigenous students.

What's a recent accomplishment or project that felt especially meaningful?

Indspire's gatherings are always a highlight for me – something I feel proud of and grateful to be a part of. Much of my work focuses on building relationships with corporate partners whose support helps make Indspire's events possible, and to see our gatherings come together is a meaningful reminder of why our work matters. It's rewarding to be part of building and stewarding relationships that help create opportunities, celebrate Indigenous excellence, and strengthen communities.

Appendices



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- Gyeho T.
- Jocelyn F.
- Mike D.

COO Office

- Agnes C.
- Ashley W.
- Brandon M.
- Gavin S.
- Vincent V.

BBF

- Kristine P.
- Marissa J.
- Miranda M.
- Nikki C.
- Patty D.
- Shea H.
- Sue B.
- Tahlia B.
- Taylor B.
- Trista B.
- Valerie H.

Communications & Marketing

- Alannah J.
- Ana L.
- Chyana S.
- Emily G.
- Helen S.
- Kelly C.
- Madison J.
- Mallory R.
- Mariah M.
- Paige H.
- Tracy B.

continued

Employees



Development

- Amarachi O.
- Angel M.
- Ashley B.
- Carley G.
- Christina P.
- Dana R.
- Danielle R.
- Denise L.
- Emily K.
- Emily Q.
- Fiona G.
- Holly M.
- Jane L.
- Kate E.
- Kavita K.
- Ludie D.
- Matthew T.
- Michelle B.
- Natalie S.
- Ryan T.
- Scott F.
- Sydney S.
- Tammy M.
- Tania V.
- Tracie L.
- Zack L.

Human Resources

- Daniel Z.
- Stephanie M.

Indigenous & Government Relations

- Mike H.
- Yancy C.

Research & Impact

- Colleen S.
- Gladys A.
- Megan E.
- Monica K.
- Nima D.
- Stephanie C-R.

Finanace

- Arlene T.
- Corry W.
- Crystal G.
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- Tabitha K.
- Tom D.

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Learn more about the Seven Generations Legacy Circle at
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