



2015-2016 Board of administration Annual report

The Senneterre Native Friendship Centre (SNFC) has had a big year during his 38 years. Many loved ones have left us, such as some elders that have followed us for many decades and that we will certainly miss. It was also a year to get familiar with the new programs of Native Affairs and North Canada, in this case the Community Capacity Support (DCC) and the one from Urban Partnerships (PU). These new programs are extremely demanding because we must produce results in the community and also within the organisation. It is asked to organisations, every year to produce little miracles.

The 2015-2016 year was a year marked with trainings and acquisition of professional skills that were planned in the DCC and PU programs. The employees have been trained in Word Processing such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Publisher. There have been other trainings with Janet Mark of the UQAT, in regards with Tourism, culture and history of First Nations, exploration in Tourism and API workshops with Julianne Bérubé. The learning for learning course will give tools such as problem resolutions, time and resource organisation, communication, memory, etc. Also with the UQAT, there were trainings on customer service, group animation and team work.

There was another objective in the DCC; it was to realize a study on housing needs. Most of the Natives live in poor conditions. The apartments are in poor condition and often the landlord doesn't care to fix them, especially in winter. People get sick because it is not well isolated. The study was done within 59 family units, in which 70% are leasers, and 30% are owners.

In regards with the youth employment objective, they have visited some Native organisations such as Val-d'Or Urban Strategy and the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre. The youth have seen a presentation on the most seeked jobs in the area. They have seen the different trainings offered in the area. Some other interesting activities took place with the youth animator, while the youth have participated to cultural activities at the Shabogamak Chalet with Elders, such as how to survive in the forest and skin tanning. The youth really like going to the chalet to do cultural activities. The youth that don't go to school are welcome during Elders days that take place at the chalet twice a week.

In relation with our Tourism project, we continue to get known and we still participate with regional activities about Tourism. In June, the kokoums blanket was exposed at the Rouyn-Noranda Exposition Centre and the Centre has participated to the Culturat exposition. At the Shabogamak, we received the visit from school children and they have made talking sticks and in the tipi we have exchanged about the walking out ceremony. Another participation on Tourism, we had one of our employees participate in the Anicinabe Circle to exchange information about Tourism development in Abitibi-Témiscamingue and to know about other Anicinabe communities.

During weekends, the young girls of our community were working with the youth animator on their “regalia” dress in order to prepare for the annual Senneterre Daycare fashion show. We have worked with them last year and it was really appreciated. The Daycare event is a funding activity. The girls have done this year, a dance show with their “regalia” dress. With the help of the kokoums and the animator, their “regalia” dress was ready in time for the show. It’s our girls that have opened the show and the people from town have appreciated the show. Bravo to those that have helped out for that event.

During the year, we have participated to a dinner debate on “School Life” vs “Parents Mission”. This dinner debate was to better know the schools, either by communication, by the available help services, homeworks, etc. The purpose of this meeting was to see if the parents knew well the different school services and their implication. They appreciate the homework service at the SNFC.

We also participate in the NINAN project which’s purpose is to offer better services to the Senneterre young children and their family. With the partners in place such as the Centre intégré de santé et des services sociaux de l’Abitibi-Témiscamingue, the School Board and the Bout’Chou et Casse-Cou Daycare, we will work to develop strategies to promote school achievement, enriched our partnerships and valorize all the different cultures we find in Senneterre.

This year again, we have benefited from the generosity of Centraide, which gives us money for groceries for our primary and high school diners. Even with a 20% cut, we have still made 2801 meals so far. Also, with the help of the food bank, we were able to offer snacks. The Centre de bénévolat have given us lots of snacks.

The “Nouveaux Horizons” and “Nanagetshâw nish” projects for our elders have allowed having many different activities at the Shabogamak Chalet. There were traditional exchanges between the youth and Elders. The youth have acquired knowledge on traditional tricks such as what kind of wood to use for snowshoes with our Elder Sauterre. They also had the chance to listen to Elders stories.

The 2015-2016 year will stay in our memories such as those three Urban Partnership projects that we had. One was on Social Economy, the other one for Youth and the last project was Innovation.

The Social Economy project was named “Shabogamak Wapiké” and his objective was to prepare the Shabogamak site for a Tourism vocation and to develop the land in building structures, and prepare the employees by giving them professional training on the Tourism reality.

The Youth project was titled “La fierté bien de chez nous”, and proposed activities to the Senneterre Native Youth to acquire skills and a forum took place where they could meet Native role models from Senneterre. They also had the chance to meet with potential employers and history workshops on the Natives of the area.

The Innovation project took place around the Bout’Chou et Casse-Cou Daycare and his objective was to break down cultural barriers against Natives. Native workshops took place in the two Daycares for children and the educators in place. This project will serve as a model for other communities that want to promote better intercultural relations with First Nations.

Many actions, new controversies and new goals come up around the Native Friendship Centres all around Canada. We have all been shocked with the Val-d’Or social crisis that took place last fall in regards of bad treatments inflicted to Native Women by the Sureté du Québec agents. Many agents from the Montreal Police Service came to the SNFC to get information within our resources and our people, to see if there were similar cases in our community.

The 2016 year remains crucial for the construction of our new Shabogamak chalet. Native Infrastructure Fund (FIA) of the Native Secretary Affairs reserves us 50% of the cost, always under condition that the SNFC finds the other 50%, that would cover the total construction costs. We have to rapidly identify other income sources of funding se we can complete this beautiful project and the RCAAQ has engaged to give us a hand to achieve it.

We want to sincerely thank our employees and the Board members that work had to help their community members and to make the barriers easier to overcome day after day.