



## **2016-2017 Board of administration Annual report**

This annual report covers the period as of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to march 2017. Our Native friendship centre is entering it's 39<sup>th</sup> year of existence with new projects and programs within the friendship centre's movement. Here is the list of programs administered during the year 2016-2017:

1. Community Capacity Support (CCS)
2. Aboriginal Initiatives Fund II
3. Medical transportation
4. Mamu attusetau
5. Nanagetshaw nishtu
6. Homework program
7. Urban strategy
8. New horizons for senior's programs
9. P.A.A.S
10. Community Infrastructure

The Community Capacity Support program is a federal program which has been replaced by our friendship program we had in the past. This program is a base community program which we use for salaries, administration costs, public services and building maintenance. The action plan for this program included efforts to promote first nations people's in urban cities and towns and to reinforce opportunities for employment and training for the youth. Also, this program aims to reduce systemic discrimination in the communities and improve living conditions for natives in public housing in Senneterre.

This year we put a lot of effort to sensitize the town council towards getting to know who are the natives living in Senneterre and our mayor Jean Maurice Matte supported our centre throughout the year with different projects. Another important event the centre invited the town council to share a meal with our board members which they accepted with no hesitations. We had discussions on by-law no. 3 which has not been abolished. Other important event was our president Valentin Mequish and Louis Bordeleau, project manager from our centre attended in LaTuque a special meeting with the mayors from Quebec. These meetings have a purpose to improve the quality of life for Natives living in the urban cities and towns of Quebec. We also participated like every year for the Senneterre citizen Day which Tracy and Jessica presented the different services our center offers and documents on the friendships centre's throughout Quebec.

In the summer of 2016 we hired two summer students to give them the opportunity to learn different skills and working experiences and with the program "Mes forces, mes compétences" the youth were able to obtain working experience. Our partners Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi came to visit our centre with the Urban strategy collaboration. Our mayor accepted this invitation and we had interesting discussions.

Our social economy program within our organisation has the Cree nation government funding, Secrétariat aux Affaires Autochtones and Centraide which helps us out with different social activities. With these programs we are able to offer noon hour soup, community kitchen, emergency food bank and helps with the equipment that we need. We can also pay our resources people and do renovations when needed. The centre helps out with transportation for events such as pow wows for the youth and exchanges with the daycare "Bou'chou et Casse-Cou" for their annual model fundraise for those interested in attending.

In 1987 we signed our first contribution with health Canada for our medical transportation program within our centre. We have requested in the past for a new medical van but they still refuse so we have to be patient. However, this year we will give another try to get a new van which is getting very rusty. Our government is slow at giving natives adequate health services which is much needed.

Our new program "Mamu attusetau" which means "Let's work together" in the Innu language started in November 2016 at our Friendship Centre and we were able to hire a Mobilization Officer. This program is in collaboration with the regroupement (RCAAQ) and we will find this program in all the friendship centres of Quebec. The main objective of Mamu attusetau is to make it easier for first nations peoples' to have access to health and social services in urban towns and cities. Our mobilization officer attends local board meetings with representation of front line workers to find solutions for our community.

For two years we have received funding for our elders from the Cree Nation government. The project is called Nanagetshaw Nistu and the kokoums can get together at the chalet shabogamak do work on their arts and crafts. They have become outstanding on their quilting and is very popular within the region and on Facebook. Our Mayor's wife won one of the quilts last year and this year someone from Latuque who used to live in Senneterre. The project New Horizons for Seniors contributed in funding the materials necessary for their beautiful artwork.

Our Homework program has little funding from the Ministry of education but we continue to offer this service for our students. Even though we know that we will have a deficit we will continue the after school program. This year we had the opportunity to have a student who studies in specialized education which the young students appreciated with the help of a secondary student. The regroupement (RCAAQ) is working hard to have adequate funding for friendship centres' for this program.

During the year we had a young person hired from the urban strategy program and she had the opportunity to learn certain abilities and experience of service delivery within our Friendship centre. She attended the General Assembly of the friendship centres of Quebec

with two other members in June 2016 where she met other youth and members of the Friendship centre movement.

Our Friendship centre helped out last June with the NIB trust funds for residential survivors and it was a big rush. Our workers did overtime and the center even had people from other communities trying to get help with their forms.

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.