

OSHKI-PIMACHE-O-WIN
Education and Training Institute

Annual Report 2001-2002



Our Logo

Long ago, the world was nothing but water. There were only birds and animal swimmers. One day, a woman fell from the sky and landed on a giant turtle. The woman had nowhere to go, and so she had to stay on the turtle. She asked the animals if they could dive down to the bottom of the water and get a piece of the earth for her. She said she would take the piece of earth and create land on which everyone could live.

The loon was the first to try. The loon was under the water for a long time. When the loon returned to the surface, he had nothing. Next, the beaver tried, but he also returned with nothing. Then the muskrat wanted to try. All of the other animals laughed at him because of his small size. They believed he would also fail. The woman, however, said he could try.

The muskrat dove straight down into the water. He stayed under the water longer than any of the other animals. Because he dove so deep, the water became dark that he did not know which way was up. Above the water, the other animals waited. Finally the muskrat slowly surfaced, barely alive. In his little paw he held some earth. The woman took the earth from his paw and placed it on the turtle's back. This is how the land was created.

The turtle and the tree represent the story of how land was created. The tree in the turtle represents the beauty and life that the land has given us. The turtle represents the potential of an individual to take something simple, like a little clump of dirt, and turn it into something beautiful and wonderful. Oshki-Pimache-O-Win means "a new beginning" and our turtle represents the beginning of a new life for those who are pursuing an education to make their lives better.

(The Oshki-Pimache-O-Win logo was designed by Alvin R.S. Fiddler of Sioux Lookout, Ontario. The logo is based on a story he heard as a boy growing up in Sandy Lake.)

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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Oshki board I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the executive director and the staff of the institute for their professionalism in making the transition to an independent organization. We all appreciate the many hurdles that we had to overcome and move the institute forward. The Nishnawbe-Aski administration played a lead role in this transition, and their cooperation was exemplary.

Now that we have established our institute at its own location we must begin the process of dialogue with people at the community level. Oshki needs the support of the communities and we must focus what their educational and training needs will be over both the short and long terms. There are recommendations from many areas; however we would be wise to look at those made in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples as a base for the development and implementation of programs that will benefit the First Nation communities. We must also ensure that the communities are heard and respected in this process.

Our mission is clear and our vision will guide Oshki toward making education and training the focus that will allow First Nations people to move toward a future that is no longer limited by a lack of education or training. This is the challenge that we shall meet.

John White, Chair



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win translates or means 'new beginnings' in our Native languages. The past year has indeed witnessed numerous 'new beginnings' in the establishment of Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute. Oshki-Pimache-O-Win is a not-for-profit federal corporation. We moved into our new offices last October 2001. We applied for and received our charitable status. We have been successful in accessing funding to carry on some innovative and exciting projects. We have certainly gained valuable experience in managing and administering the daily operations of the Institute.

To the people of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), this institute has been mandated by your leadership. According to the incorporation papers and the by-law, the membership of the corporation is community-based. Each NAN First Nation can appoint one representative as a corporate member. Out of the corporate membership, a seven member Governing Council, similar to a Board of Governors, will be elected. As well, there will be one Youth representative and an Elder appointed to the Governing Council. The NAN Deputy Grand Chief with the education portfolio is an ex-officio member.

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win is our institution. Our input and participation are crucial to guide and to further the mission statement, the principles, and the guidelines of the institute. We have to believe in our capabilities to accomplish what we have begun. We have to believe in the institutions we have created. We have to believe in ourselves to make our visions become reality.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the work and guidance that the founding members of the corporation have provided during their term. I also want to acknowledge and to commend the staff for their diligent efforts and their sincere commitments to the over-all success of our operations to date.

Meegwetch.



Ruth Baxter, Executive Director



MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

With this, our first Annual Report, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win marks a major milestone in its development. The vision of a "NAN Institute" had its birth a quarter of a century ago in the minds and hearts of the Chiefs of the newly formed Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Today, it is a vibrant post-secondary institute actively involved in the development and delivery of education and training programs.

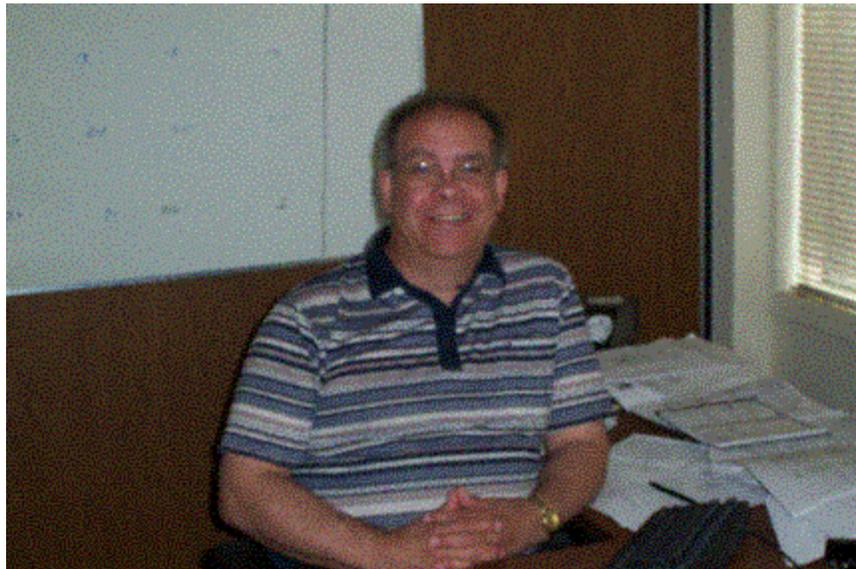
My involvement with the Institute began just over three years ago when I assisted with one of four research projects related to the development of a post-secondary institution for Nishnawbe Aski Nation. In my research, we reviewed many documents supporting the concept of First Nation controlled post-secondary institutions which came from a variety of sources. Other projects examined the existing post-secondary opportunities for NAN First Nation community members, the demographics of NAN First Nations, and the organizational structures of existing First Nation controlled post-secondary institutions.

When I began as Coordinator of Oshki-Pimache-O-Win in August of 1999, these research projects were consolidated to provide solid support for the groundwork which had already been done. By the end of that year, the Institute was beginning to develop a distance education course (the Aboriginal Statistics Course) and preparing to offer its first program, the Certificate in Aboriginal Employment Development, in partnership with another member of the Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (AIC), Six Nations Polytechnical Institute. Issues of governance, funding and accreditation consumed a great deal of my time as Coordinator, leading to the hiring in early 2000 of a Program Administrator to look after the development and delivery of programs. Later that year, two new positions were created: a full-time Secretary and an Executive Director. Mary-Jane Fiddler-Young and Ruth Baxter, our current Secretary and Executive Director, were recruited to fill these two new positions.

Presently Oshki-Pimache-O-Win has seven full-time employees, with three new positions which will be filled in the near future. The Institute is governed by a Governing Council with membership from across the NAN territory. As you will see in this report, there are many initiatives that are currently being developed by the Institute in several different areas. The continued support and commitment of NAN communities and their members will be critical to the Institute's future development as an organization, and to the creation of meaningful, accessible post-secondary opportunities for the people of Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

Stephen Chase

Stephen Chase, Coordinator



OVERVIEW

In 1996, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Chiefs' *Resolution 96/64* mandated the establishment of Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute, an independent institute to serve the current and future post-secondary education and training needs of the NAN membership. Specifically, the Chiefs directed that funding be sought from provincial and federal governments to create an institute comparable to those in the present post-secondary educational system. This direction is consistent with the findings of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Education Survey (1995), the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), which confirmed the need for and the wisdom of establishing Native educational institutes, and the government of Ontario, which has recently introduced legislation to address the need for more choice, greater accessibility and increased responsiveness to community needs in post-secondary education.

The NAN Chiefs directed the Institute to become an independent organization with its own legal identity and governing body. Through NAN Chiefs' *Resolution 01/22*, an independent Governing Council was approved for the Institute and in April 2001 federal incorporation was obtained. The Institute has also received charitable status which will enhance its fund-raising capabilities.

The Governing Council of the Institute has adopted the following mission statement, principles, and guidelines.

MISSION STATEMENT

To be the leader in providing excellence in post-secondary education by meeting the educational and cultural needs of the members and communities of Nishnawbe Aski Nation through a holistic approach to life long learning.

PRINCIPLES

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| ⇒ Trust | ⇒ Character |
| ⇒ Vision | ⇒ Responsibility |
| ⇒ Accountability | ⇒ Empowerment |
| ⇒ Respect | ⇒ Compassion |
| ⇒ Honesty | ⇒ Excellence |
| ⇒ Understanding | ⇒ Cultural Strength |
| ⇒ Integrity | ⇒ Valuing Wisdom |
| ⇒ Commitment | ⇒ Respect for Natural Laws |

GUIDELINES

- Student achievement will be based on output measures of demonstrated acquisition of skills and abilities based on standards equivalent to or exceeding those found in mainstream institutes.
- All actions of and by the Institute, including administration and program delivery, will be carried out in an environmentally responsible manner demonstrating our respect for Mother Earth.
- We will value and respect the input of students, staff and communities and use that input to improve our ability to meet the needs of our learners.
- We will incorporate and integrate our culture and our languages throughout the programs and services we offer.
- Our institute will respect and value differences among our staff, our learners and our partners.
- The planning and delivery of our programs and services will be student focused designed to facilitate excellence in learning for every learner.
- We will offer programs and services for learners of all ages and educational backgrounds with the objective of enhancing personal growth and wellness.
- We will be proactive in program design and delivery and will make opportunities to create changes that will enhance this guideline.
- We will act in a manner that respects our students, our staff and our partners and which ensures a win-win outcome.
- Empowerment of our students, our staff and our communities is to be an outcome of our programs and services.

CURRENT STATUS

The Institute began offering its first program (Certificate in Aboriginal Employment Development in partnership with Six Nations Polytechnic Institute) in April 2000. Since then, a number of short workshops have been developed and delivered. For 2001-2002, these include:

- Digital Collections

In 2001, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute was approved as a contractor for Canada's Digital Collections. The Canada's Digital Collections program gives youth aged 15 to 30 the opportunity to gain valuable on-the-job experience and skills producing web sites about Canada for display on the World Wide Web. The program also enables Canadian cultural institutions and other organizations to improve access to their collections and promotes creative new business ventures across the country. Our website "The Signing of Treaty Nine" is a virtual journey tracing the route of the commissioners in 1905 and 1906 as they travelled to thirteen communities for the signing of Treaty Nine. The locations on the journey are linked to archival and present day materials showing the communities—then and now. In addition, each point on the journey will be linked to print and audio versions of the travel journal of the trip. 'The Signing of Treaty Nine' can be accessed at <http://collections.ic.gc.ca/treatynine/>.

- Native Languages

Ojibway Language courses were offered in Thunder Bay in 2001 and 2002. Nineteen students completed the courses that were offered and we expect to continue to offer this program. We are exploring other ways of achieving our objectives of promoting and preserving Aboriginal languages. One alternative is to develop an interactive CD for use in independent and distance learning. Another possibility is to adapt the training to specific industrial sectors, such as Ojibway for Health Care Workers and Ojibway for Hospitality Industry Workers. Funding sources are being explored for these options.

- Professional Business Communications Certificate

- Nishnawbe Aski Nation— Celebrating Our Heritage

Several courses were offered in this series: Introduction to Woodland Art, Dreamcatchers, and Storytelling. Dreamcatchers was subsequently delivered to the Metis Nation of Ontario. Introduction to Woodland Art, taught by Roy Kakegamic, was delivered in the Spring of 2002 and is scheduled to be run again in the fall.

- Effective Team Member Certificate

CURRENT STATUS (CONT'D)

- Sexual Abuse and Restorative Justice Train-the-Trainers Program

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win worked along side of Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Nishnawbe Aski Legal Services to deliver the first intake of this program. There were 9 graduates who have been providing training to NAN communities. Following extensive program revisions, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win is now prepared to run a pilot program. There is a high demand and interest in participating in this pilot project and efforts are underway to identify funding and offer this newly developed program in the near future

- Proposal Writing and Fundraising for First Nation Organizations

Addiction Counsellor Training

In response to a community request, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win carried out a 4 day training session on Treatment Planning and Relapse Prevention. An assessment of the training needs was also conducted during the community visit.

- Aboriginal Statistics Course

In partnership with Statistics Canada and Trican Multimedia Solutions, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win is adapting Statistics Canada's Aboriginal Statistics Training Course for distance delivery to remote communities. The course was initially developed by Statistics Canada in the wake of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) to promote the successful implementation of Aboriginal self-government by developing human resource capacity in the area of statistical analysis. The course enables workers at the community level to develop the skills required to collect, analyze and present information. With the course being available in a distance education format, students will not be required to leave their communities to access this training. A prototype has been developed and the pilot delivery of the course is expected to begin in January of 2003.

- Aboriginal Community Services Worker Program (with Confederation College)

The Aboriginal Community Services Worker is in the middle of the third intake of students with 35 graduates from this accredited program to date. Funding has been received from the Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy to work toward the proposed transfer of this program to Oshki-Pimache-O-Win. Also, funds received will be utilized to develop a model for future partnerships with postsecondary institutes on newly developing projects.

DEVELOPING PROGRAMS

- Kids Have Stress Too!

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute is currently seeking financial assistance to revise and print the training manual for the "Kids Have Stress, Too!" (KHST!) parenting program. These revisions will be done in cooperation with the program developers, the Psychology Foundation of Canada.

"Kids Have Stress, Too!" is designed to help parents better understand their children's reactions to stress, and to teach their children effective ways to manage stress. Although this is considered an excellent program, it requires some revision to make it more applicable to the lifestyle of individuals from remote northern communities. It also requires linguistic revision to make it more appropriate for use within the NAN territory, where in many cases English is the second language.

- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Effects (FAS/E) have life-long consequences for affected individuals in many areas including academic achievement, employability and involvement with the criminal justice system. The incidence of FAS/E may be significantly higher in some Aboriginal communities than in the general population. In response to these issues Health Canada has initiated programs and increased funding to deal with FAS/E. A portion of this funding has been designated specifically for First Nations.

Consistent with Health Canada's objective, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win proposes to secure funding to work toward reducing the effects of alcohol abuse during pregnancy on children, their families and communities in First Nations within Ontario.

The goal of this project is to develop a training package for advocates who will work with families in First Nation communities in Ontario to prevent the birth of children with FAS/E. The model utilized would be a revised version of the Parent-Child Assistance Program (P-CAP) developed by Therese Grant at the University of Washington in Seattle. The P-CAP was designed in an effort to prevent FAS/E births through early identification of at risk moms and intervention strategies to help them stay clean and sober.

The goal will be achieved by:

- becoming proficient in the delivery of the existing training package
- researching the activities of other groups within Canada
- meeting with stakeholders who will provide their input into what is available and what changes need to be made to ensure suitability to meet the unique needs of Ontario First Nations.

- Kwo-Yek Anokiwin Project

There is an identified need to build management and administrative capacity in the First Nations of NAN and to provide on-going opportunities to maintain and fine-tune the skills acquired. The Kwo-Yek Anokiwin (Good Work) Project has been developed to address this need.

The Kwo-Yek Anokiwin Project will be a professional development program for First Nations leaders and staff that will provide on-going training in management and administration, including: human resources management, financial management, written and verbal communications; administrative and customer service skills, and team membership and leadership.

Developing Programs (cont'd)

We intend to address the unique needs of the remote isolated communities of NAN by developing a program that can be delivered on-line. The curriculum may be comprised of one or more of the following: a web-based self-study component, on-line group work and collaboration with other learners, and e-mail support. The learning activities would be concrete and have relevance to the individuals as well as the First Nation. By the end of the program, the First Nation will not only have more highly skilled staff but will also have systems, policies and procedures in place. An important component of this program would be the mentorship or coaching provided by a program coordinator. The coordinator would provide in-community consultation and guidance as the learners practise their new skills in real-life concrete work assignments that have value and applicability in the workplace.

As a first step in the development of the Kwo-Yek Anokiwin Project, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win applied for and received funding to hire a FedNor Youth Intern to carry out the research, community consultations and developmental work associated with the Kwo-Yek Anokiwin Project. Our Community Partnerships Developer (Youth Intern), Wesley O'Connor, is carrying out the survey and meeting with NAN First Nations and Tribal Councils to initiate their involvement in the process of developing a capacity-building program that can set a global standard for community-based training.

- Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Institute is committed to facilitating and supporting the people of Nishnawbe Aski Nation in their pursuit of life-long learning. We recognize the value of the experiential learning that takes place in the workplace, during leisure activities and volunteer work, as well as through formal and informal training. In order to assess and validate the learning that takes place outside of the formal educational system, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Institute is setting up a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Program (PLAR). We are members of the Canadian Association of Prior Learning Assessment and have attended their annual conferences. We expect to have a PLAR program in place by the end of the year.

- Forestry Training Centre

In 2001, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win received funding through FedNor to assist with the development of a business plan for a Forestry Training Centre. This business plan was completed in March 2002, and funding is being sought to proceed with the recommendations made in the business plan. This will include the hiring of a full-time coordinator to direct the development of the centre and its programs.

- Teacher Professional Development

The Ontario College of Teachers has implemented a Professional Learning Program which requires all teachers who are members of the College to participate in 14 professional learning activities or courses every five years. Oshki-Pimache-O-Win has been approved by the College as a provider of courses for all teachers in Ontario and will begin course development and delivery in the fall of 2002.

OTHER PROGRAMS

(Several programs are under development and/or have been submitted for funding)

- We will be offering a Project Management Program via on-line delivery in fall of 2002 and will be marketing the program in August.
- An Excel course will be available on line in the fall of 2002 and will be a pre-requisite for the Aboriginal Statistical Training Course pilot that will be offered in January 2003.
- We are currently developing an Aboriginal Life Skills Coach Training Program and expect to offer it in the fall of 2002.
- We are seeking funding for the second module of the Aboriginal Statistical Training Course entitled 'Surveys from Start to Finish'.
- We are submitting a funding proposal for the development of a multimedia career information package for The Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Industry.
- We have prepared a funding proposal for the development of an in-house videoconference centre and technical trainer/consultant and are currently seeking funding.
- We are submitting a funding proposal for the Joint Evaluation of the Northern Native Broadcast Access Program and the Northern Distribution Program.
- We are preparing a funding proposal for the Strategic Skills Investment Program to develop and deliver a multi-skilling pre-employment training for the Energy, Forestry, Tourism, and Mining industries.
- We are currently developing a Native Occupational Trainer/Native Occupational Worker program.
- A funding proposal has been submitted to the Ontario Women's Health Council in partnership with the Ontario Native Women's Association and the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research. If successful in our bid, we will be conducting an Assessment of Consumer Health Information for Aboriginal Women across Ontario.

CONCLUSION

It is an exciting time for Oshki-Pimache-O-Win. The climate in Ontario and in Canada has never been so positive for new and innovative post-secondary institutions. On a broader scale, the need for computer-mediated programs and courses and the interest in First Nations have combined to create a unique opportunity for the Institute to enter the field of distance education. Innovative programs and courses, beyond those currently offered through mainstream universities and colleges, will continue to be in demand as individual life-long learning becomes entrenched as a requirement for continued employment, personal development and economic growth.

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win will continue to further develop:

- **Governance and Identity:** a new governing body, and a new organization.
- **Funding and Resources** to ensure the Institute is proactive, meeting the current and projected needs of Nishnawbe Aski communities, community members and other learners.
- **Community Involvement and Commitment** to the vision of Oshki-Pimache-O-Win, its goals and objectives, and to the ideal of First Nations governance in education.

Education is the one key to the survival of any society. It is through education that a culture transmits its history, its languages, its traditions and spiritual beliefs. Through informal and formal education a culture reaffirms its values and passes them from generation to generation.

(NAN Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic)

The Founding Members (Governing Council) of the Institute are:

Matthew Angees
Dianne Tookenay
John White (Chair)
Stella Etherington
Rebecca Maki
Goyce Kakegamic (Deputy Grand Chief, NAN, ex-officio)

This is your Institution.

Please contact us to discuss your needs in post secondary programs and training and skills development. For more information, contact us at 1-807-346-2770, or toll free at 1-866-636-7454, or visit us on the web at: <http://www.oshki.ca/>

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From left to right: Jamie Bishop, Jackie Garwood, Stephan Chase, Ruth Baxter, Lynda Banning, Wesley O'Connor and Mary Jane Fiddler-Young