

# Looking Out For Each Other

A Project Update – July 2017

## HEARING THE WORDS AND VOICES OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Local Wolastoq artist Susan Sacobie created a piece of art to represent the new Looking Out For Each Other (LOFEO) project. She says *“This painting is for the missing and murdered Maliseet & Mi’kmaq women that were almost forgotten. The five women in this piece represent knowledge, faith, wisdom, justice and peace. They are wearing our traditional peaked hats decorated with the double curve motifs. The wampum belt on the bottom is our promise to each woman that their lives will be remembered, celebrated, honoured.*

*The wampum belt is also a promise to each Native woman that we have to rebuild our matriarchal standing within each of our families & communities. We must humble ourselves and learn and teach one another about who we are, where we come from and to not be silent and share our individual stories so we can empower our sisters, stay connected and strong and in turn we keep our families and communities strong. Their connecting shields are protecting us and reminding each of us that it is an obligation and a privilege to guard one another because we are all connected. As mothers and daughters, the living as well as the women who crossed the rainbow bridge we have to tell ourselves and each other our lives matter, we are important and we have to love and respect each other unconditionally and stand together.”*



The image and artist statement guide our research and community action project titled *“Looking Out For Each Other” Assisting Aboriginal families and communities when an Aboriginal woman goes missing.*

The project seeks to improve outcomes in Indigenous missing persons cases in Eastern Canada in the near future. This project builds on relationships between researchers, urban Aboriginal organizations, governmental partners and professional service providers to improve our understanding of Indigenous missing person cases in Eastern Canada and to enhance our collective ability to provide services to families and friends of missing persons in appropriate, effective and culturally safe ways.

The project empowers families and friends of missing persons to take effective action. It gives Aboriginal organizations an opportunity to make a significant contribution to better outcomes in these troubling cases. The knowledge that will be created and shared throughout the project will have immediate impacts that will contribute to safer, healthier and better supported Aboriginal communities throughout Eastern Canada.

## “YES, WE CAN LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER” A CAPACITY STUDY

In partnership with Dr. Jula Hughes of the Faculty of Law at UNB and funding support from the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network, a research team that includes NBAPC director Dr. Elizabeth Blaney, research assistant Remy Ventura (law, UNB) and academic coordinator Janelle Marchand, has been visiting with Atlantic Indigenous partner organizations to determine their capacity to deliver assistance and services to the families and friends of missing Indigenous persons. Provincial and Territorial Organizations and Friendship Centres have expressed how their mandate relates to the LOFEO project as well as related their experience and expertise in assisting their members and clients in missing person cases.

We were truly inspired to hear the extensive and varied expertise of our partner organizations and to learn about their incredible resourcefulness in assisting families and friends. Organizations also took the opportunity to think through and define their relationship with the project moving forward. For instance, many partners indicated a willingness to host healing circles or gatherings to ensure broad community input into the project. We discussed how each organization envisions their contributions to the research and ongoing service delivery, be it as knowledge keepers, referral services or first responders. Partners also expressed eagerness to collaborate in future stages of the project as it expands. We have finalized a first draft of the capacity study and after circulating the draft to our partners, we expect to share it with all of you and to post it on the uakn.org website.

The project Advisory Circle is currently in the process of organizing an Academic Circle meeting which will be held in Fredericton on August 23 and 24. The Academic Circle will take its direction from the capacity study to map out the required research for the next two years. We will then circulate the research plan to our Advisory Circle for approval.

## St. Thomas University Graduate in charge of coordinating the Academic Circle



We are delighted to report that St. Thomas graduate Janelle Marchand has been appointed as Academic Research Coordinator for the LOFEO project. A member of the Eastern Woodland Métis Nation of Nova Scotia, Marchand hopes to apply her Liberal Arts degree in Psychology to gain new insights into research involving Indigenous populations. “My work as an undergraduate student involved a lot of quantitative statistical analyses. Basically, a lot of numbers” Marchand says. “I find that Indigenous Research is very unique in the sense that it turns numbers into real stories about the people in our communities. It makes my work much more personal and meaningful and I really enjoy that aspect” Marchand adds.

Marchand is in charge of coordinating the work of academic scholar partners who are engaged in the LOFEO project. “It’s exciting to work closely with leading scholars in the field. I’m very excited to support them with their research”.

Marchand aspires to one day further her research in a Master’s program in Indigenous Relations. She would like to work in policy development and dreams to work with the United Nations.

## THE NATIONAL #MMIW INQUIRY AND OUR PROJECT

The National Inquiry has announced hearing dates for the summer and fall. It can be found [here](#). The only Atlantic region location is Halifax where a Community Visit is scheduled for the week of August 14<sup>th</sup> and the Community Hearing for the week of October 30<sup>th</sup>. The other project relevant location is Montreal where an expert hearing on Human Rights, International Law & UNDRIP will take place during the week of October 2<sup>nd</sup>. If any

project partners expect to participate in these, we would love to hear about it and also receive copies of any written documentation you may be providing to the Inquiry.

If you are interested in any other places, please note that the schedule has been updated for three locations: Thunder Bay, Ontario Community Visits will now take place the week of September 11 and the Community Hearings will now take place the

week of December 4, 2017. The Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Community Hearings will now take place the week of November 20, 2017. Community hearings will now take place in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut the week of December 11, 2017.

Many of you will know that the Inquiry has had some difficulties getting going and so we are particularly glad that our work is going ahead whatever delays may be part of the inquiry process.

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## PARTNER VISITS



Pam Glode-Desrochers the Executive Director of the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre In Halifax, Nova Scotia meeting with the LOFEO team.



NBAPC Chief Wendy Wetteland, Director Elizabeth Blaney Academic Research Coordinator Janelle Marchand and Research Assistant Remy Ventura in front of Susan Sacobie LOFEO art piece.



“Yes, We Can Look Out for Each Other” research team meeting with Chief Lisa Cooper from the Native Council of Prince Edward Island



Hand crafted Memorial quilt at Libra House Emergency Centre For Women In Happy Valley Goose Bay, Labrador

## Partnering Organizations

Burchells LLP  
Congress of Aboriginal Peoples  
Fredericton Legal Advice Clinic  
Gignoo Transition House  
Memorial University  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
Native Council of Nova Scotia  
Native Council of Prince Edward Island  
New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council  
St. John's Native Friendship Centre  
St. Thomas University  
Under One Sky Friendship Centre  
University of New Brunswick  
Université du Québec à Montréal  
Women's Equality Branch, Government of New Brunswick  
Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat, Government of New Brunswick  
Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police  
Fredericton City Police  
Status of Women Canada



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