

ANNUAL REPORT



SEVEN GENERATIONS EDUCATION INSTITUTE



2023

Message from our CEO

Boozhoo Gakina Awiiya,

Ogimaabines Indigo, Goojijiing Nindoonji, Bizhiw Indoodem. As the year ends, I want to thank everyone for your dedication, hard work, and unwavering commitment to our mission. With immense pride and admiration, I reflect upon the accomplishments we have achieved together this past year.

The diligent efforts of our exceptional team at SGEI have profoundly humbled me. From our teachers who passionately educated and inspired our future generations, to our support staff who work hard to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for our staff and students, and to our Board of Directors who provide their knowledge and guidance to maintain our mission, every single member of SGEI has played an invaluable role in the success of this year.

Despite the obstacles, we focused on delivering the highest quality education to our students by way of our culture and Anishinaabemowin, adapting and innovating to meet their evolving needs. The enduring commitment SGEI has for its students has shaped their lives and set a shining example for the entire educational community.

Chi-miigwech, again for your dedication, passion, and commitment. It is an honour to be a part of SGEI and share in our accomplishments. I am inspired by the journey that awaits us as we continue to shape the future of education together.

Geyaabi giminochigeyok



Brent Tookenay,
CEO



Board members



Mitaanjigamiing First Nation

Naomi Field
Chairperson, Executive Member



Couchiching First Nation

Peggy Loyie
Vice Chair, Executive Member



Rainy River First Nations

Robert Bombay
Secretary/Treasurer



Big Grassy First Nation

Fred Archie
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Big Island First Nation

Robert Handorgan
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Lac La Croix First Nation

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Board Member



Mikinaak Onigaming

Shawn Kelly
Board Member



Naicatchewenin First Nation

Raechel Snowball
Board Member



Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation

Clayton Windigo
Board Member



Seine River First Nation

Roger Spencer
Board Member





Leadership and growth

Seven Generations Education Institute will be recognized as a leader in Indigenous education and research with credentials in all program areas.

SGEI Sponsors the Anishinaabeg Women's Empowerment Gala

In an effort to support initiatives that focus on contributing to societal change, SGEI proudly sponsored the first-ever annual Anishinaabeg Women's Empowerment (AWE) Gala. On February 25, 2023, SGEI contributed the use of its Fort Frances campus as an in-kind donation for the gala, organized by the AWE Collective – a handful of women creating a safe space to celebrate and recognize the achievements of Anishinaabekweg. The seven awards presented to local Anishinaabekweg were rooted in the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

Supporting Local Employers

Training for Employment

Over the past year, the Training for Employment team worked with 45 different employers, including Manitou Forest Products, La Place Rendez-Vous, Heron Landing Golf Course, Kitchen Creek Golf Course, and Okema Enterprise Ltd. To provide training participants with Quality Employment Opportunities (QEO) as part of the YESS program. Through these partnerships, the Training team was able to subsidize wages at \$15.00-\$15.50 an hour for eight weeks for each employee hired.

Secondary School Expansion to Rocky Bay First Nation

Secondary School

Beginning May 2023, SGEI has partnered with Rocky Bay First Nation to provide in-person adult secondary education for Rocky Bay community members.

Makerspace Grand Opening

SGEI's Fort Frances campus held a grand opening for its Makerspace in which members of the public toured the space and learned about the technology and services available. The Makerspace will serve as a collaborative space for people of all ages to create. SGEI developed a new webpage and set up a display at the Fort Frances Public Library's Trunk-or-Treat event to advertise the space.

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited People (MMIWG2S+)

On May 5, SGEI staff were invited to reflect on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited People (MMIWG2S+) with various activities. Jessica Wilson from Binesiwag Center for Wellness attended the Fort Frances campus to present and share her thought-provoking story about human trafficking.

Naicatchewenin WLES Training Partnership

Training for Employment

The Training for Employment team out of SGEI's Fort Frances campus partnered with Naicatchewenin First Nation for a six-week Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES) training program for eight in-community participants, four of whom went on to complete Quality Employment Opportunities (QEO).

YESS and AZH Partnership

Training for Employment

The Training for Employment team, under the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Program (YESS), worked to support the Azhemiinigoziwin (AZH) program's nine 15–30-year-old students as they engaged in cultural revitalization, learning and skill development opportunities at the Fort Frances campus.

Staff Book Club

Post-Secondary

The post-secondary staff book club, hosted by SGEI Anishinaabe Gikendaasowin Professor and Curriculum Developer Jana-Rae Yerxa, met weekly throughout the school year to create space and normalize courageous conversations regarding settler colonialism, decolonization and Indigenous resurgence. The book club serves as an ongoing opportunity for the post-secondary team to build relationships, raise consciousness and increase one's comfort level with engagement, self-reflection and capacity to participate in unsettling conversations. This past year's books included *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice, *Embers* by Richard Wagamese and *Rehearsals for Living* by Robyn Maynard and Leanne Simpson.

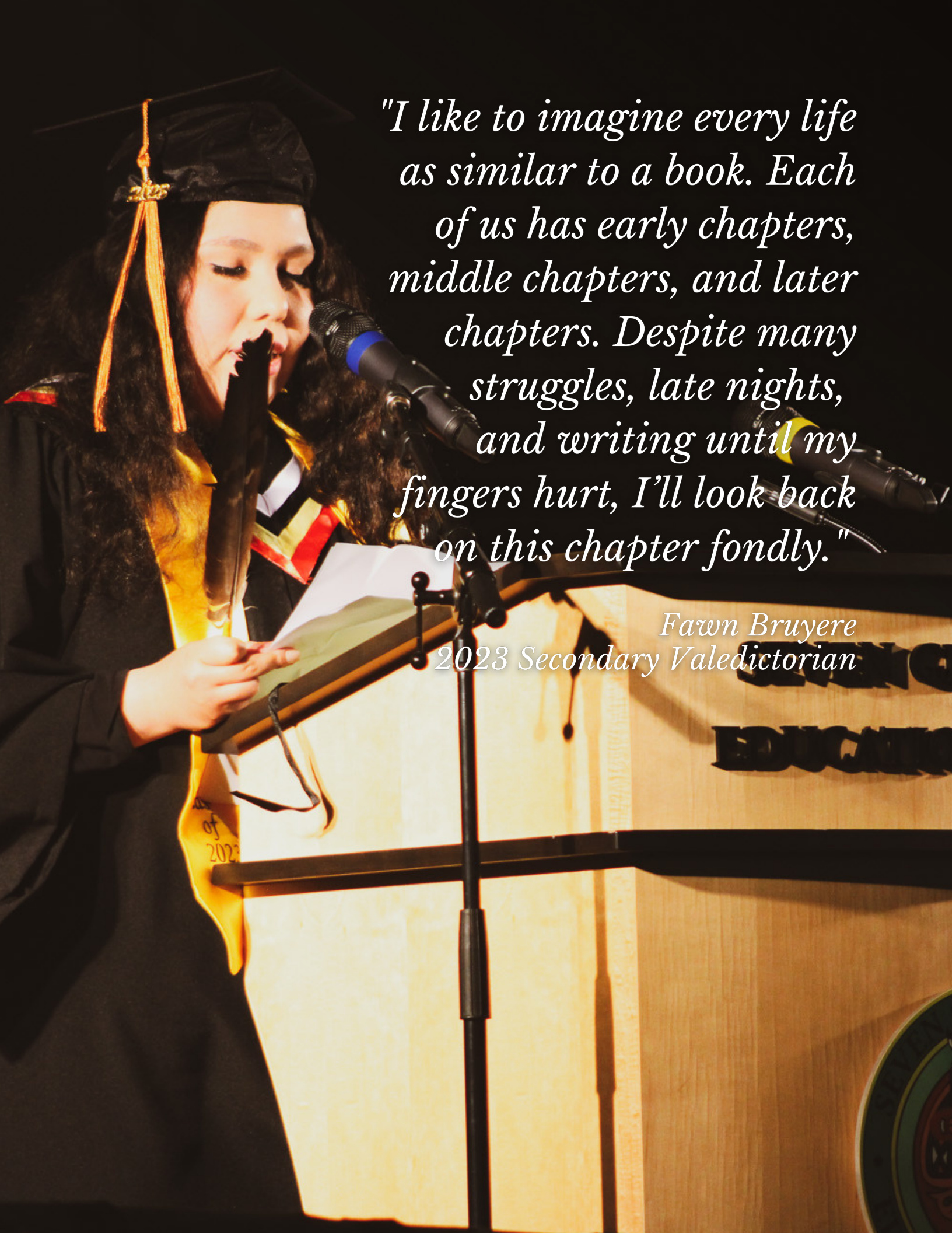
Summer Creativity Camps

SGEI held its first Makerspace Creativity Camps for kids, teens and adults during summer 2022. Each weeklong camp engaged participants in cultural, creative and technological activities, including birch bark basket making, woodland art, various sewing projects, 3D printing, creating dream catchers, and more.

Microsoft Certifications for Staff and Students

SGEI's IT Department has supported students and staff in completing various Microsoft Certifications using the Jasperactive program. Participants can learn at their own pace and test their knowledge to become Microsoft certified.





*"I like to imagine every life
as similar to a book. Each
of us has early chapters,
middle chapters, and later
chapters. Despite many
struggles, late nights,
and writing until my
fingers hurt, I'll look back
on this chapter fondly."*

*Fawn Bruyere
2023 Secondary Valedictorian*



Language and culture

Seven Generations Education Institute will be grounded in Mino-Bimaadiziwin, Anishinaabe teachings and world views, and be a recognized centre for language and cultural learning and research.

Speaker Series

Post-Secondary

SGEI's Speaker Series provides accessible online learning opportunities for our communities (SGEI staff, students, our First Nations) to engage with Indigenous thought-leaders from across Turtle Island that promote critically conscious dialogue on various issues affecting our lives as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

This year's speakers included Dr. Evan Adams on mental health, addictions and trauma during the pandemic, Gary Smith, Jamie Mandamin, Randy White, Jan Greenfeather

King and Danika Crow on the art of the powwow, Dr. Gina Starblanket on Treaty as political consciousness, Dr. Heidi Stark on Anishinaabe sexual assault law, Dr. Anton Truer on education in the age of racial reckoning, Tara Houska on land defence and land back, Pueblo Resurgents on developing abundance-based systems, and Kent Monkman on exploring colonization, sexuality, loss and resilience through art.

Indigenous Songs and Stories Online Course

Anishinaabemodaa

SGEI and Sault College have partnered to create an online course which centers Anishinaabe Gikendaasowin – Anishinaabe Knowledge – by centering Anishinaabe songs and stories to assist learners in their journey to understand fundamental concepts concerning language revitalization and resurgence. Offered as part of various educational programs or as a continuing education opportunity, Indigenous Songs and Stories allows learners to explore the history of Anishinaabemowin (the Ojibwe language) and form a beginner's comprehension of introductory language skills in Anishinaabemowin.

Learners will explore their role in maintaining the Anishinaabe stories and songs shared throughout the course. Learners will also build the capacity to engage with knowledge keepers and elders to support the ongoing resurgence of Anishinaabemowin within their respective fields.

Anishinaabemodaa.app

Anishinaabemodaa

With funding from the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Mastercard Foundation, Anishinaabemodaa developed an online learning platform integrating flashcards for vocabulary, text-to-speech for auditory learners and avatars for visual learning. More than 6,000 people and 16 school boards use this system in schools and communities to learn Anishinaabemowin.

Mentor Learner Program

Anishinaabemodaa

Anishinaabemodaa's Anishinaabemowin Content Developers—Jeremy Andy, Jessica Atatise, and Brittnee Hunter—have been facilitating classes for the Mentor Learner Program. The 12 high school students in the program participate in 15 hours per week of instruction during the evenings and weekends to learn Anishinaabemowin.

Azhemiinigoziwin Program

Secondary School

SGEI completed another round of the Azhemiinigoziwin (AZH) women's empowerment program at its Fort Frances campus. From September 2022 to March 2023 in Fort Frances and March to May 2023 in Sioux Lookout, Anishinaabekweg completed lessons in Anishinaabemowin, confidence and self-esteem building,

cooking, financial literacy, land-based learning, and education to suit their specific needs. AZH participants also engaged in cultural activities, including beading, ribbon skirt making, ricing paddle making, and more to strengthen and revitalize their connection to their Anishinaabe culture.

Anishinaabemowin Revitalization Program

Anishinaabemodaa

Anishinaabemodaa's Anishinaabemowin Instructor, Robert Horton, and Anishinaabemowin Content Developer, Jeremy Andy, are instructing the Anishinaabemowin Language Revitalization Program in which 11 community members across SGEI's ten governing First Nations communities attend 30 hours of Anishinaabemowin instruction per week. Students are expected to complete the three-year program in December 2023.

Summer Learning Program

Anishinaabemodaa

Four interns worked with Anishinaabemodaa throughout the summer to provide language programming to First Nations communities. Programs focused on language use during lacrosse, leather work, and learning games. Participating youth engaged with fluent speakers and language learners during full-day workshops. The team also tabled at local powwows and events and created resources for future use in programming.





Learner support and access

Seven Generations Education Institute is committed to the success and well-being of all learners through holistic supports and expanded access for learning opportunities through community outreach, services closer to home, and technology.

Technical Training for Our Local Communities

Training for Employment

The Training for Employment team supported various communities, including Fort Frances, Red Lake and Ignace, as well as First Nations communities, including Grassy Narrows, Big Grassy, and Whitefish Bay, with various technical training programs, including Chainsaw Safety, Standard First Aid/CPR-Level C, Driving Instruction and Traffic Control.

AR/VR Platform to Support Learners and Enhance Course Content

Secondary & Post-Secondary

In April 2023, SGEI hired a Digital Content Creator to provide ongoing support and expertise in implementing the AR/VR Platform Eon XR. With the implementation of EON XR, SGEI's IT Department will support staff in understanding the possibilities and limitations of the platform, the best use of the platform in the education field, and the eventual implementation into course curriculum to enhance Secondary and Post-Secondary content.

New Secondary School Programming

Secondary School

Among the new courses offered by SGEI's Secondary School include the dual credit GEO080 – Foods of the Americas provided in partnership with the Rainy River District School Board, the United Native Friendship Centre, and Confederation College, an ENG4C night course, NBE3C Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices, and HSP3C Introduction to Anthropology, Psychology and Sociology PLAR course.

Driving Instruction for Delivery Drivers

Training for Employment

The Training for Employment team out of SGEI's Kenora campus supported local employers, Fed-Ex and Purolator, with driving instruction and evaluations for their existing staff.

New ERP Software Creating Efficiencies

Post-Secondary

SGEI's Post-Secondary team has been working to implement a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software to integrate with its current learning management platform to create efficiencies for both staff and students. The department aims to begin using the software for Fall 2023 intake.

Anishinaabemowin Ando-gikendamowin 2023

Anishinaabemodaa

The Anishinaabemodaa team annually hosts a one-day Anishinaabemowin Ando-gikendamowin gathering for language educators. The purpose and intent of this gathering have been to share our passion for learning and teaching our languages by speaking about our experiences and ways of understanding. This year we hosted a speaker series with speakers and knowledge keepers sharing via Zoom once per month. To date, we have hosted six incredible live sessions recorded and shared online with the public.

Bail Residency Program

Secondary School

In partnership with the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG), KPDSB and SGEI support an Adult Education classroom with a full-time teacher within the new Justice Centre pilot in Kenora. Registration and credit completion is ongoing with this program throughout the school year.

Employment Training Skills for Success

Training for Employment

The Training for Employment team successfully ran an in-person eight-week cohort of Employment Training Skills for Success, with three of the seven participants completing their Quality Employment Opportunities (QEO) and later accepting employment offers following training.

Aginjibagwesi Storywalk

Anishinaabemodaa

The Anishinaabemodaa team has developed the Aginjibagwesi O'dibaajimo Mazina'igan Storywalk, where local classrooms engage in an outdoor walking tour. The Aginjibagwesi O'dibaajimo Mazina'igan (Goldfinch Teachings Book) was deconstructed and placed with QR codes along a walking path, allowing educators to scan to listen to Ogimaawigwanebiik Nancy Jones, fluent speaker and knowledge keeper, read the book in Anishinaabemowin.

The Aginjibagwesi Storywalk was presented to ten schools, 14 classrooms, and more than 120 students. Afterwards, asemaa (tobacco) ties were made with classrooms in a good way to honour the language and Aginjibagwesi. Classroom teachers were left with copies of the book, crafts, and follow-up activities. Due to the popularity of the activity, the Aginjibagwesi Storywalk and the Makwa Storywalk have been brought to several community events over the last year.



Summer School Programming

Secondary School

SGEI Secondary School supported future SGEI post-secondary students by offering summer school programming for those missing prerequisites to enter a college or university program.

Canoeing Fundamentals

First Nation Student Success Program

A First Nation Student Success Program (FNSSP) staff member completed the Ontario Recreational Canoeing and Kayaking Association (ORCKA) and First Aid training. In Spring 2023, FNSSP offered canoeing fundamentals lessons to FNSSP schools.

An Update for Anishinaabemodaa.ca

Anishinaabemodaa

This year, Anishinaabemodaa was able to redesign its website to become more accessible and offer a more comprehensive range of resources. The Anishinaabemodaa team released seven new children's books and read-with-me videos, revamped multiple language kits, created an extensive repository of new language learning materials, and developed a space where learners and instructors alike could share their methods, resources, and work with Anishinaabemodaa and the public. The updated website created a place for the Koko Jones Show to be featured, including the four new episodes the team collaborated on with elders, speakers, and technical support staff to bring to life.





Financial Stability

Seven Generations Education Institute will have stable and sufficient funding to support and sustain core institutional functions, growth, and increased access for learners as a credential granting education institution.

SafeStart New Driver Training Program

Driving School

From July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, SGEI's MTO-approved Driving School trained 102 students in Beginner Driver Education (BDE) courses, with approximately 90% achieving their G2 licence. SGEI has hired one full-time instructor at its Fort Frances campus with plans to hire additional driving staff in Fort Frances and Kenora.

Expansion of OSAP Micro-Credentials

Training for Employment

Training for Employment continues to grow micro-credential opportunities through OSAP, including Residential Trades, Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills, Education Assistant, Culinary Foundations, Small Engine Repair and Employment Readiness. Students in micro-credential programs will obtain industry-recognized certifications and be able to apply for grants and loans to cover the cost of their training.

Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS)

Training for Employment

Throughout the 2022-2023 fiscal year ending March 31, Training for Employment had 262 individuals participate in the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) program. There were 69 Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills participants. Of the 262 YESS participants, 117 were female, 131 were Indigenous, 108 secured employment following training, and 60 returned to school.



Class of 2023

*Gigii-chiikeniminim
gizhiikimeg! Congratulations to
all our Secondary, Post-
Secondary, Azhemiinigoziwin,
and Adult Education graduates
of the Class of 2023. Your hard
work, dedication, and
perseverance have paid off, and
this milestone marks the
beginning of an exciting new
chapter in your lives.*

Secondary, Post-Secondary and AZH Graduation Ceremony

On June 8, 2023, at the Fort Frances Memorial Sports Centre, SGEI honoured its secondary, post-secondary and Azhemiinigoziwin graduating classes of 2023.

This year's theme was "Onto your next chapter."

Graduates enjoyed take-home charcuterie boxes and decorated cookies to enjoy with their loved ones. This year's keynote speaker, Lawyer and Partner at JFK Law LLP, Sara Mainville, delivered an inspiring and powerful message for graduates, staff, dignitaries and guests.

Adult Education Graduation Ceremony

On June 13, 2023, SGEI and the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board (KPDSB) held their annual Adult Education graduation ceremony at SGEI's Kenora Campus. The ceremony consisted of speakers and valedictorians, a sit-down dinner and photos.



"You are role models for your communities, and you are showing the youth that you can do anything you put your mind to. You're paving the way for future generations. Your journey begins here, so walk with your head held high and remember this day, always."

*Natalie Skead-Zaporzan
2023 Post-Secondary Valedictorian*

