

# Seven Grandfathers

Love

**Humility**

Respect

**Bravery**

**Wisdom**

Honesty

**Truth**



Northern Ontario  
School of Medicine  
École de médecine  
du Nord de l'Ontario

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**ABORIGINAL  
AFFAIRS UNIT**

## Aboriginal Affairs Unit

**The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) is committed to meeting the needs of the people of Northern Ontario. At the earliest stages of development, NOSM engaged the Aboriginal communities of Northern Ontario as part of its mandate to be accountable to the cultural diversity of the region it serves.**

NOSM's Aboriginal Affairs Unit works to identify and implement new initiatives in support of the School's commitment to Aboriginal communities. These initiatives include advising the School's senior leadership, committees and working groups; ensuring meaningful collaboration with Aboriginal communities; assisting in the recruitment of Aboriginal students; and, recruiting Aboriginal host communities for medical learners.

In 2003, Aboriginal people from a variety of backgrounds attended a workshop to provide input into the development of NOSM. Participants of the "Follow Your Dreams" workshop identified that Aboriginal people were looking for NOSM to be an "Aboriginal friendly" medical school which would encourage and nurture Aboriginal students through medical school; acknowledge and respect diversity present in Aboriginal history, traditions and cultures; access the expertise and resources in Aboriginal communities; establish partnerships with Aboriginal communities; and, incorporate into the curriculum the challenges and specific health priorities of the Aboriginal communities.

Community consultation efforts continue to include activities such as the CBM 106 (Intergrated Community Experience) - Aboriginal Community Placement Report (2005) and the Mii Kwen Daan workshop (2006), as well as community or group/organization-specific consultations.





## Admissions

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine Aboriginal Affairs Unit actively seeks out and encourages Aboriginal applicants. Aboriginal students may choose either the General Admissions stream or the Aboriginal Admissions stream when applying. Aboriginal applicants choosing either stream will be required to fill in the online application form through OMSAS (Ontario Medical School Application Service).

Applications received through the Aboriginal Admissions stream require three additional pieces of documentation:

- A letter declaring Aboriginal ancestry and giving specific information about First Nation, treaty, community, or organizational affiliation.
- A letter of recommendation for the applicant from one or more of the following: the applicant's First Nation, Band Council, Tribal Council, or Treaty or other community organization.
- Proof of Aboriginal ancestry, including Métis (as recognized in the Constitution Act, 1982).

For specific information on Admissions requirements and eligibility, please visit us online at: [www.nosm.ca](http://www.nosm.ca)

**The Aboriginal Admissions Subcommittee is a Subcommittee of the Admissions Committee. This subcommittee advises the Admissions Committee on culturally safe and appropriate admissions policies and procedures for Aboriginal candidates and assists with the review of the candidates applying to the dedicated Aboriginal stream.**

## Integrated Community Experience

The Integrated Community Experience (ICE) provides first-year medical learners with direct exposure to various unique Aboriginal communities in Northern Ontario. By living and learning in the community for a four week period, students are exposed to the diverse realities of life and health-care delivery in Aboriginal communities. Immersion in these remote and rural Aboriginal communities broadens students' cultural awareness and strengthens their communications skills. These are integral skills for effective medical practice in Northern Ontario.



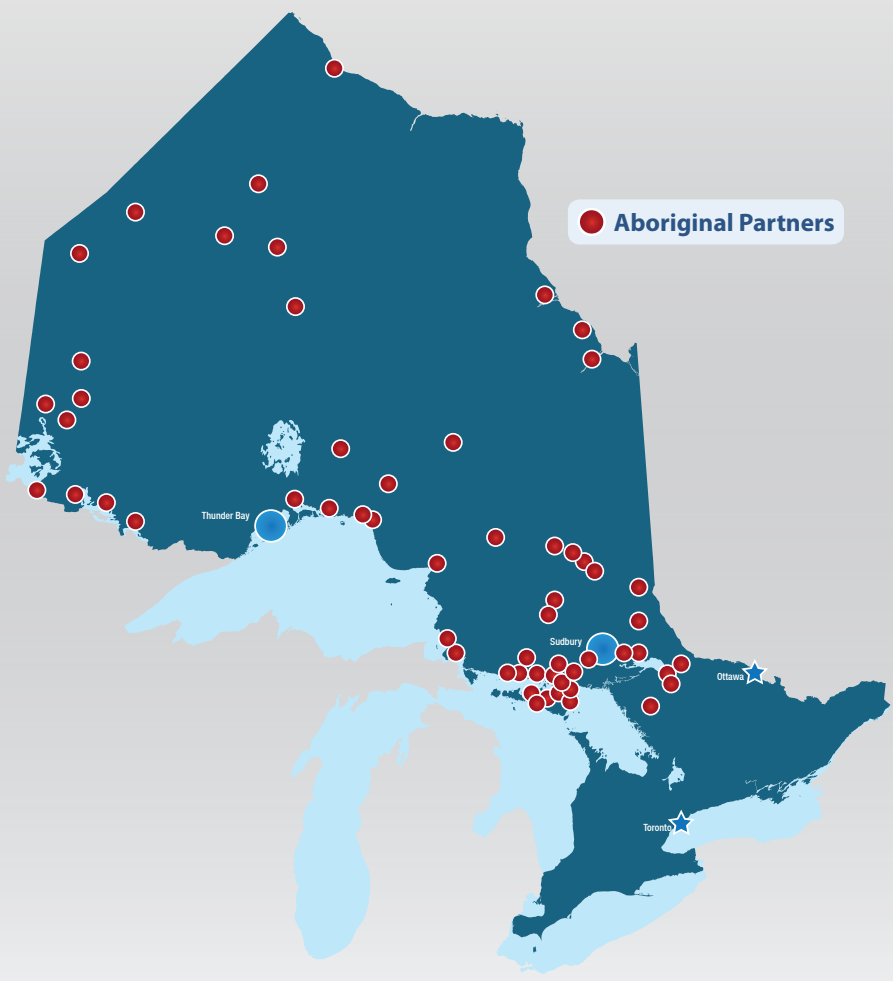
"We spent a lot of time with the Elders. What amazed me the most was how plugged in (the Elder) was with her community. She knew exactly what was happening in the community."

*-Aboriginal NOSM medical learner*

"We got to see the reality, for good and bad. We know some of the issues."

*-Aboriginal NOSM medical learner*

● **Aboriginal Partners**



## Research

**Northern Ontario School of Medicine medical learners have many opportunities to engage in research endeavours, and since March 2006, thirty research grants have been presented for learners to study a wide range of health issues.**

The key theme of NOSM research is tackling questions related to improving the health of the people of Northern Ontario. For example, rates of diabetes, heart disease and some cancers are much higher in the North than in the rest of the country. In addition, many Northerners live in communities that are often more than six hours away from primary services, some even further.

Tracy Michano-Stewart, charter class graduate, discusses her second Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario Summer Medical Research Award project, which looks into obesity, diabetes and hypertension among Northern Ontario's Aboriginal children:

"If there's a trend we can identify, maybe there's a recommendation we can make that will improve the health care and health status of Aboriginal children. Doing the research in Pic River contributes to my community by providing them with a usable set of data and some experience with the research process. It increases my exposure to research and lets me investigate some important health-care issues within Northern Ontario."

## Financial Aid and Support

As part of ongoing recruitment and outreach initiatives, the Aboriginal Affairs Unit participates in the annual Canadian Aboriginal Festival. With approximately 70,000 participants, including over 7,000 students from 120 schools, this is the largest multi-discipline Aboriginal arts festival in North America, making it the perfect opportunity for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine to reach out to potential students. In addition, the Unit makes countless visits throughout each year to schools, career fairs and communities across Northern Ontario. Aboriginal students are encouraged to make the most of the resources available to acquire funding in the form of bursaries and scholarships:

### **Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Aboriginal Bursary System**

*Offered through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) the Aboriginal Bursary System is available to provide Aboriginal students with a valuable tool to facilitate the pursuit of post-secondary studies.*

### **Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA)**

*An online resource for locating Aboriginal scholarship and bursary opportunities, the AMMSA boasts a wealth of links to a large number of organizations offering bursaries and scholarships.*

### **The Canadian Medical Foundation**

*Designed to help students combat the ever-increasing costs of a medical education and avoid the heavy debt loads often associated with post-secondary education.*

### **Metis Nation of Ontario**

*The Métis Student Bursary Program was established in 1998 to assist Métis students in their pursuit of post-secondary education. With a total endowment of \$4.2 million across Ontario, there are 32 colleges and universities currently participating in the Métis Student Bursary Program (MSBP) within Ontario.*

### **National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation**

*The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF) is a nationally registered non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds to deliver programs that provide the tools necessary for Aboriginal youth to achieve brighter futures.*

### **Family Foundation Bursary**

*Bursary support for all Aboriginal learners.*



## Aboriginal Support Workers

In an effort to ensure that Aboriginal learners receive unqualified support in all areas of medical education, the Aboriginal Affairs Unit has recruited two Aboriginal Support Workers. These workers will enhance communication channels by liaising with the School's Learner Affairs and Aboriginal Affairs units, and Aboriginal Elders and communities in order to enrich the quality of the educational experience. Their role as academic and cultural advisors supports NOSM's efforts to be an "Aboriginal friendly" school by providing an educational framework respectful of Aboriginal history, culture and tradition.

## Aboriginal Elders

Elders are essential consultants around new developments at the School, whether it is a student recruitment effort or a research project to be conducted in an Aboriginal community. Involving Elders early on in project conception and design is one of the best ways the School can ensure Aboriginal concerns and sensitivities are incorporated in School activities at the outset. For NOSM Aboriginal students, the presence and work of Elders can be a key factor which contributes to learners success. Elders help learners harmonize the sometimes competing worlds of home life and school work. They may also assist Aboriginal learners in understanding their ancestry and maintaining a positive identity and self-image through greater knowledge and an appreciation of their roots. For staff and faculty, Elders provide an open-minded and accepting approach in their observation, reflection and advice. Informal and formal teachings are provided to raise awareness of Aboriginal history and worldview, and to help both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff and faculty increase their own cultural competency.

# Summer Science Camp

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) offers two Summer Science Camps, one at the West Campus located in Thunder Bay, Ontario and one at the East Campus, located in Sudbury, Ontario. The one-week Camps, held during the month of July, offer a variety of hands-on activities for high school students from Northern Ontario's rural, remote, Aboriginal and Francophone communities. The activities are geared to students who are interested in pursuing health careers and are designed to ensure there is a co-relation between health care, interventions, and basic sciences.

## **A variety of careers are explored including:**

- Family Physicians
- Specialty Physicians
- Physiotherapy
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Medical Laboratory Technicians
- Biomedical Research
- Physician Assistants

## **Areas of study included in the Camps are:**

- X Ray Rounds: Includes how to put on a splint.
- DNA Analysis: A peek into the techniques of Crime Scene Investigation (CSI).
- Herbal Remedies: An understanding of historic and modern medicines.
- Healing Ceremonies: Increase knowledge of Aboriginal healing methods.
- Microbiology: A look at the microscopic world around us.
- Physiology: Examining a preserved heart and understanding the heart's electrical conduction system.
- Health Careers: How to prepare now for careers in medicine, nursing and emergency care.

Attendees are given the opportunity to experience medical school first hand, meet health-care professionals face to face, and learn about health sciences all while making new friends and having fun.

# Aboriginal Reference Group

The Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) was established to provide advice to the Northern Ontario School of Medicine on research, administration and academic issues in the promotion of excellence in higher learning and accommodation of the Aboriginal world view.

The ARG serves as the primary resource for the Medical School in the fulfillment of its mandate concerning inclusive Aboriginal education and health research. The ARG is an essential link between the School and the Aboriginal community, serving to provide guidance and insight on the Aboriginal perspective to the School. This includes liaising and maintaining ongoing communications with the School's internal units, Aboriginal communities and their educational units; and, making recommendations to support our Aboriginal learners.

## **Community membership includes representation from the following organizations:**

*Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Union of Ontario Indians, Grand Council Treaty #3, Independent First Nations, Metis Nation of Ontario, Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, Ontario Native Women's Association, Laurentian university Associate Vice President, Indigenous Programs, Lakehead University Vice Provost, Aboriginal Initiatives, two Aboriginal NOSM students (one from each campus), one youth member and one Aboriginal Health Professional. In addition, Elders are included in all ARG meetings.*

## **NOSM memberships includes:**

*The Dean or his/her designate, Associate Dean, Community Engagement, Assistant Dean, Admissions, Admissions and Learner Recruitment, and one representative (non-voting) from each of the following NOSM constituencies: Board of Directors, Academic (Faculty) Council, Laurentian University Native Education Council, and Lakehead University Aboriginal Management Council.*

## Aboriginal Communities in Northern Ontario

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) represents 49 First Nation communities from Treaties #9 and #5 over an area of 210,000 square miles, with a total population of about 45,000 Ojibway, Cree and Ojicree. Nishnawbe Aski Nation has a main office in Thunder Bay and a branch office in Timmins.

The Union of Ontario Indians (Anishinabek Nation) represents 42 First Nation communities from Robinson Huron, Robinson Superior, Manitoulin Island Treaty and other areas in Southern Ontario over an area of 52,400 square miles, with a total population of about 42,000 Odawa, Ojibway, Pottawatomi, Delaware, Chippewa, Algonquin and Mississauga. The Union of Ontario Indians has a main office in Nipissing First Nation, and branch offices in Fort William First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation and Munsee-Delaware Nation.

Grand Council Treaty #3 represents 26 First Nation communities in Ontario and two in Manitoba over an area of 55,000 square miles, with a total population of about 25,000 Anishinaabe (Ojibway). Grand Council Treaty #3 has a main office in Kenora.

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), initially formed in 1994 and with approximately 49,000 members situated in nine regions and 32 communities across Ontario, provides member representation at the provincial, national and international levels. The Métis are recognized in Canada's Constitution Act, 1982, as an Aboriginal people. The MNO has a main office in Ottawa and regional offices in Amherstburg, Brampton, Fort Frances, Penetanguishene, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Searchmont, and Sudbury.

### **Northern Ontario consists of six treaty areas:**

- Robinson-Huron, 1850, north of Lake Huron including Manitoulin Island
- Robinson-Superior, 1850, north of Lake Superior
- Manitoulin Island Treaty, 1862, Manitoulin Island excepting Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve #26
- Treaty 3, 1873, southern part of Northwestern Ontario
- Treaty 5, 1875, portion of area extends into western Ontario from Manitoba
- Treaty 9, northern two-thirds of Northern Ontario.



## Contact Information

**For more information about the Northern Ontario School of Medicine's Aboriginal Affairs Unit, or working with NOSM's Aboriginal Elders, please contact:**

**[aboriginal@nosm.ca](mailto:aboriginal@nosm.ca)**



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### **West Campus**

Lakehead University  
955 Oliver Rd.  
Thunder Bay, ON  
P7B 5E1  
Tel: 807-766-7300  
Fax: 807-766-7370

### **East Campus**

Laurentian University  
935 Ramsey Lake Rd.  
Sudbury, ON  
P3E 2C6  
Tel: 705-675-4883  
Fax: 705-675-4858

**| [www.nosm.ca](http://www.nosm.ca)**





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### **West Campus**

Lakehead University  
955 Oliver Rd.  
Thunder Bay, ON  
P7B 5E1

Tel: 807-766-7300  
Fax: 807-766-7370

### **East Campus**

Laurentian University  
935 Ramsey Lake Rd.  
Sudbury, ON  
P3E 2C6

Tel: (705) 675-4883  
Fax: (705) 675-4858

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