



# Indigenous Student Achievement Awards

March 6, 2024

Honouring Indigenous USask students for their  
academic achievement, community engagement,  
leadership, research and resiliency.

**Congratulations to this year's recipients.**

## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The land is acknowledged as our Mother, the Earth. The University of Saskatchewan is committed to honour and support the Indigenous peoples, Indigenous cultures, Indigenous values, and Indigenous languages that belong to the land of Treaty 6 Territory and Homeland of the Métis. The University of Saskatchewan is committed to working towards mending colonized lands and protecting the land in a way that demonstrates honour, respect and love. The University of Saskatchewan extends this commitment to the lands and Treaty territories (Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10) that constitute kisiskâciwan ([Saskatchewan], "the swift current", Cree/Saulteaux), and all Indigenous people that call kisiskâciwan home. We are born to the land and the land claims us.

# PROGRAM

## **WELCOME AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Angela Jaime, Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement

## **PRAYER AND GREETING**

Elder Roland Duquette and Elder Linda Sanderson

## **MÉTIS NATIONAL ANTHEM**

Brandi Tourand

## **MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS**

USask Senior Leadership

## **AWARDS CEREMONY**

Masters of Ceremonies: Rachel Fiddler, Community and Cultural Resource Manager, Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre, Acagos Carriere, Director of Events, Indigenous Students' Union, and Hannah Bird, VP Internal Communications, Indigenous Students' Union

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

## **HONOUR SONG**

Edward Okanee

## **HONOUREES GROUP PHOTO**

# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

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## **Dannielle Brass**

**USASK PRINCE ALBERT CAMPUS**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING**

*Peepeekisis First Nation*

Dannielle Brass is an Indigenous woman from Peepeekisis First Nation who has navigated through the unique challenges of her cultural heritage, embracing resilience and determination. She is grateful for the opportunity to serve as Nurse, a role that allows her to voice for equality in the healthcare community.

## **Jewel Charles**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**INDIAN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

*Lac La Ronge Indian Band*

Jewel Charles, pronouns she/her, is a proud member of Lac La Ronge Indian Band. As a visual artist and academic with a 85.54 % average, she in her final year of ITEP with teaching areas in Visual Arts and Indigenous Studies. Her passion for Art and Indigenous Studies allowed her to learn more about herself as an Indigenous woman. She is looking forward to empowering Indigenous youth in finding their own voice.

## **Caber Dawson**

**USASK PRINCE ALBERT CAMPUS**

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

*Métis Nation of Saskatchewan*

I am 18 years old, in my first year of university majoring in biomedical sciences and I am pursuing a career in medicine.

## **Victoria Gagné**

**JOHNSON SHOYAMA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY**

**MASTER OF GOVERNANCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NORTHERN AND INDIGENOUS AREAS (GENI)**

*Métis Nation Saskatchewan*

Victoria Gagné (she/her) is a dedicated third-year GENI program student. She excels academically with an impressive GPA over 85. A citizen of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan, her deep commitment to the Métis community truly sets her apart. Through her work with the Clarence Campeau Development Fund, Victoria has been instrumental in supporting Métis economic development, paying particular attention to projects that empower female Indigenous leaders. Her balanced approach to blending academic pursuits with practical community engagement showcases her ability to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges. Victoria's endeavors reflect a genuine passion for fostering economic growth and equality within the Métis community, a commitment that defines not only her academic journey but also her personal values. As she progresses towards her thesis submission in 2025, her work continues to underscore a steadfast dedication to making a meaningful difference in the lives of the Métis people.

## **Christopher Hansen**

**COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING**

**BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING**

*Fishing Lake First Nation*

I am a third year Bachelor degree student majoring in the Mechanical Engineering discipline. I am a member of the Fishing Lake First Nation and was born and raised in the Saskatoon area. My high school experience was unremarkable this was true too for my grades. I struggled deeply with mathematics and had trouble giving the time necessary to comprehend the sciences which nearly made me a drop out! Regardless of this my love for science and what I later understood to be Engineering never changed, by the end of high school I knew that I wanted to be an Engineer. As a child growing up, I had a keen interest in aviation and since aviation was my goal at the time, I graduated with great distinction from SIIT's AME program. After, I upgraded the required math and physics classes that I needed to enter the College of Engineering. Looking forward I've built a passion for nuclear energy and want to further build my love of life long learning, I know that there will be many more challenges ahead, but now I can face them with pride and confidence that they can be overcome.

## **Zach Lomsnes**

**COLLEGE OF KINESIOLOGY**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE KINESIOLOGY**

*Métis Nation Saskatchewan*

Zach Lomsnes, he/him, Métis Nation Saskatchewan. Originally from Big River, Saskatchewan, Zach has been living in Saskatoon pursuing his degree in Kinesiology for the last five years with plans of applying to the College of Pharmacy to start next year. While not doing school, Zach enjoys playing sports with friends and is fortunate enough to be employed by MN-S working with Métis culture and language.

## **Fraser McLeod**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

**DOUBLE HONOURS - COMPUTER SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS**

*Métis citizen*

Fraser McLeod (he/him) is a proud Métis citizen in his final semester of a double honours degree in computer science and mathematics. Last summer, he engaged in research developing novel algorithms for quantum computers. Every year he's been at USask he has been named to the Dean's Honour List and was named an Academic All Canadian during his time as a Huskie Athlete. Fraser has shared his passion for learning by volunteering at weekly math help sessions, as an instructor for CampBox YXE, and as a teaching assistant.

## **Alex Pond**

### **COLLEGE OF NURSING**

#### **MASTER OF NURSING - NURSE PRACTITIONER PROGRAM**

*Métis Western Region Two - Big River, Saskatchewan*

After graduating from the BSN program in 2020, Alex started her nursing career in her home community of Big River, Sask. Subsequently transitioning to surrounding rural emergency departments to gain experience in acute care. In 2022, she held an HIV/HCV position in her grandmother's FN community — which led to her passion for community-centered care and furthering her nursing education. Alex is in her final year of the Nurse Practitioner program and is maintaining an 85.1% average.

## **Alexander Tawpism**

### **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

#### **EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

*Muskeg Lake Cree Nation*

Alexander Tawpism (He/Him) is a Member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) located north of Saskatoon. He received his undergraduate degree from the College of Education in 2011. He has gone on to a career in teaching and has recently moved into school administration in his home community. He is a proud husband and father of two children, Keisha and Karter. He is pursuing his Masters in the Indigenous Education Leadership Cohort through the Department of Educational Administration.

## **Robynn Trann**

### **COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY**

#### **DOCTOR OF DENTAL MEDICINE**

*Métis Nation of Saskatchewan*

Robyn was born and raised in Saskatoon and is a proud member of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. She graduated from Bishop James Mahoney High School in 2018. Robyn continued her education at USask, where she completed a Bachelor of Science in Biology before being accepted into the College of Dentistry. In her spare time, she enjoys exercising, travelling and spending time with her friends and family. Robyn would like to thank her parents, Todd and Tracy, for their love and support throughout the years.

## **Brendan Youngchief**

### **EDWARDS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

#### **BACHELOR OF COMMERCE - HUMAN RESOURCES**

Brendan is a fourth-year student who is attending the Edward's School of Business studying Human Resources. Returning back to school at the age of 29 has allowed him to appreciate the importance of education, and after spending his 20's within the construction industry he is excited to begin his new journey as a human resource professional. He aims to acquire his CPHR and has the end goal of becoming a HR consultant.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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## **Sienna McKenzie**

**EDWARDS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

**BACHELOR OF COMMERCE - MARKETING**

*Lac La Ronge Indian Band/Stanley Mission*

Sienna was raised in Northern Saskatchewan and has relocated to Saskatoon for her studies which have sparked a passion in community involvement for her. Sienna's hobbies include raising chickens, gardening, swimming and cooking. She is currently an events planner for the IBSS and part of the co-op program through which she is working for her home community the Lac La Ronge Indian Band through Kitsaki. Sienna thrives on fostering bonds through engaging events and cherishing the time spent with friends.

## **Sasha Merasty**

**COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND NUTRITION**

**PHARMACY**

*Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation*

Sasha Merasty is a fourth year PharmD student. She is a founding member of Indigenous Pharmacy Professionals of Canada (IPPC), which promotes pharmacy practices that respect the safety, equality, strengths, and teachings of First Nations peoples and created the first pharmacy scholarship in Canada designated for Indigenous students. Sasha encourages health care awareness in Indigenous communities, and her goal is to inspire others to reflect on the health care needs of Indigenous populations in Canada.

## **Mike Mercredi**

**SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

**MASTER OF SUSTAINABILITY IN ENERGY SECURITY**

*Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation*

Mike Mercredi is in his second year of the Masters of Sustainability in Energy Security. He was recently elected council of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations (ACFN). He received a Regional Aboriginal Recognition Award from his community. Mike's professional experience has allowed him to work with community members, government officials, and Elders/Knowledge Keepers. Mike has shown incredible growth in the program. Mike had limited expertise in academics, online education, or overcoming technological requirements when he first started. His academic performance can be attributed to his determination and passion to address the pressing need for capacity building in Indigenous communities. Researching issues related to renewable energy initiatives that are significant and pertinent to Indigenous peoples is what motivates Mike.

## **Cherish Morin**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**SASKATCHEWAN URBAN NATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM – PRINCE ALBERT**

*Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation*

Cherish Morin is in her third year at the SUNTEP, Prince Albert Program. Cherish is a proud First Nations woman from Pelican Narrows, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. She is a dedicated student who is committed to engaging in her community. As SUNTEP SRC vice-president and culture committee member she works diligently to engage fellow students in activities and team building. Cherish shows great passion for sharing her Indigenous knowledge with children in the community. Cherish is a worthy recipient of this year's Indigenous Student Achievement Award.

## **Susan Nerberg**

**JOHNSON SHOYAMA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY**

**GOVERNANCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NORTHERN AND INDIGENOUS AREAS (GENI)**

*Coastal Sámi (mearrasápmelaš)*

Susan Nerberg (She/her) is a Sámi writer and journalist and a master's student of Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas (GENI) at the University of Saskatchewan. As a freelance writer, she strives to bring readers to the places where people, including Indigenous knowledge holders and scientists, work to better understand and support the ecosystems that sustain us. In much of her work, Susan uses as the starting point a basis rooted in kinship with the land. As a student in the GENI program, Susan has not only deepened her personal decolonization journey. She has also brought a much tighter focus to her professional commitment to look at how policy decisions have shaped and continue to shape the colonial structures that determine and undermine Indigenous peoples' connection with the land, especially in the circumpolar world. Actively taking back the Sámi language, culture and ways of being and doing, Susan feels an even stronger responsibility to giving back — by centering, uplifting and amplifying Indigenous voices, knowledge and experiences, be they on Turtle Island or in Sápmi, her ancestral territory.

## **Bella Stevenson**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**BACHELOR OF EDUCATION**

*Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation*

Bella Michel Stevenson is in Year 1 of the Cree Teacher Education Program in her hometown of Pelican Narrows. Bella is a proud member of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and a fluent speaker of the TH dialect of Woodland Cree. Married for 24 years, she and her husband have three children and four grandchildren. Bella is an outdoor enthusiast with a passion to gain knowledge and pass it on to the younger generation. She believes in the importance of teaching children her native tongue and connecting them to the land.

## **Shanese Thomas**

### **COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND BIORESOURCES**

#### *Witchehan Lake First Nation*

Shanese Harmony Thomas is studying first-year classes in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources and she plans to major in Resource Science. She is a mother of two children and is from the Witchehan Lake First Nation. Her goal in life is to help her community and to take care of the land so it can in-turn take care of us. She can often be seen at the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre as she enjoys the sense of community she feels, and Shanese has been known to give back to community in extraordinary ways as well.

## **Katie Tolley**

### **SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

#### **MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

I am a proud Métis citizen born and raised in Prince Albert. I currently live, work, and play in Saskatoon on Treaty 6 territory. I received my Bachelor of Science Honours degree in Anatomy and Cell Biology from USask in the spring of 2022. I started the Master of Public Health program immediately after in fall 2022. I am passionate about health promotion and am focusing my summer thesis work on Métis health. In addition to my studies, I also work part-time in the Health Ministry of Métis Nation Saskatchewan. I started as a summer intern and transitioned to my new role as immunization promotion coordinator in October. I currently manage several projects aimed at increasing immunization education and awareness among Métis citizens in Saskatchewan.

## **Brandi Tourand**

### **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

#### **SASKATCHEWAN URBAN NATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

#### *Métis*

Brandi Tourand, is a proud Métis person from Saskatoon. Brandi devotes her time to her family, her studies as a teacher candidate in the SUNTEP Saskatoon program and to the greater Saskatoon community. Brandi completed a very successful extended practicum with secondary students, which prepared these young adults for the world. Brandi is creative and musically talented; she shares her music and experiences through humility and a great respect for our natural surroundings and community. Brandi wears her cultural pride with a deep sense of belonging and encourages others to follow.



## **Hannah Tremblay**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

**ARTS AND SCIENCE**

*Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation*

My name is Hannah Tremblay, I'm a proud member of Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation and I'm in my third year of philosophy honours. I plan to pursue law in areas specific to human rights and multiculturalism. I have volunteered with Indigenous youth for most of my university career, supporting their journeys in their own cultures, uncovering interests in academia and providing a safe and engaging space. My goal is to be in a position that I may promote equity, safety, diversity and respect among all persons, which is both a goal and core value I hold to the highest regard that I credit to my participation in Indigenous learning and communal support.

## **Doris Wesaquate**

**COLLEGE OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES**

**KINESIOLOGY, DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

*Piapot First nation #385*

I greet you all from Treaty Six territory as a Treaty Four member. I am a mother and grandmother first and that is a priority, as they are my life and my loves. I am also a daughter to my loving 92-year-old mother, the matriarch of our family, to whom I owe our lives. I am a life-long learner next. My post-secondary career began as a mature student in the mid-1980s, as a pregnant 18-year-old summer student in a combined life skills cohort where I achieved the highest GPA. It was a time when all treaty peoples had full access to education (and a decent living allowance). Due to the massive influx of students at the time, suddenly government policy had to change to limit the numbers. Treaty Rights to Education still matter to Indigenous People currently. Unfortunately, many don't get this opportunity. I laugh when people say I am a "career-student" and not because it is true, but because I will be retirement age by the time I complete my Ph.D. I have had many life and illness challenges for the duration of all my studies, yet I managed to maintain my marks for continued enrolment. I feel like that Duracell rabbit that keeps going and going. I completed the B.E.A.D program in Education and Indigenous Studies at the U of R, along with the Indigenous Communication Arts Certificate. I worked as a Program Consultant with the Public Health Agency of Canada for 13 years and applied to the M.Ed. in Educational Foundations graduating in 2018 from USask. I appreciate all the mentors, knowledge keepers, advisors, support and library staff, and the students who offer their assistance freely and willingly. I give credit to my supervisors for having the patience to bear with me as I went through my ordeals. I appreciate the College of Kinesiology and the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for their continued support as I am here through scholarship. I admit technology is my weakest link and it has been a thorn in my side since day one. Please someone recommend a way to learn this in an easier format. Laugh out loud, I am serious! How I got this far in university with technology as my barrier is a testament for me, that miracles do happen! I feel like an imposter being in your presence. Thanks to the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Centre staff for their warm welcome and hospitality, and for their Monday morning Circles. I am consumed with so much appreciation! Would you believe I went to ceremony, and I prayed for this? Now to get my energy and motivation levels back on track, and to find a cheap working computer next. The ability to learn all the applications for software programs is daunting, if only it can make my life easier, because anything that aids in functionality for my disability and ADD is a much-needed resource in my opinion. I never imagined being a career-student. Honestly, I never heard about or knew nothing of university back in my high-school days. My closing remarks entail a dedication to my late hubby who supported me and encouraged me in all my endeavours (and to get those titles with letters behind my name), and to my late daddy who instilled perseverance, and the willingness to work for what you want. He instilled the Cree words "love one another" (sah-kee-he-took) in all our lives. I remember the term but not the actual spelling in Cree, so it's spelled out here as it sounds to me.

Doris Wesaquate is a career-student, and a life-long-learner by choice. Due to her disability, she is unable to manage full-time employment anymore. Her greatest accomplishment was being a grandmother thus far. Doris has four adult children and seventeen grandchildren who mean the world to her. She wants them to know anything is possible with perseverance and grit. Controlling our thoughts manifests the imaginable to be possible.

# LEADERSHIP

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## **Indiana Best**

**COLLEGE OF MEDICINE**

**DOCTOR OF MEDICINE**

*Métis Nation Alberta*

Indiana is a third-year Métis Medical student who has completed a Bachelor of Health Studies with honors, and completed her Master's in Public Health studies in 2021. Chosen for this award by her Indigenous peers in Medicine, Indiana is an exemplary candidate for the Leadership Award. She holds several leadership positions including as the leader of the Advocacy division within the SMSS. As VP Advocacy, she is an integral voice for Indigenous students, fighting for cultural and safe spaces for us. She sits on committees such as the Indigenous admissions process and the Indigenous Health Working Group. Her leadership style includes empathy and compassion and is rooted in her Métis culture. Indiana has passion, dedication and has participated at the national level with mentorship and creates opportunities for youth in Saskatoon to be mentored by Indigenous medical students.

## **Kree Byrne**

**WESTERN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**

**DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE STUDENT**

*Métis Nation BC*

Kree Byrne is currently a second-year student in the DVM program. Previous work as a teacher in B.C. has given Kree excellent leadership skills, and this academic year he is serving on the executive for WCVM DIVERSE, a student club focused on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the veterinary profession. Kree also serves as a student representative on the WCVM's Committee on Indigenous Engagement, which shapes the college's Indigenization and Reconciliation activities.

## **Jordan Calladine**

**COLLEGE OF LAW**

**JURIS DOCTOR (LAW)**

*Métis Nation of Saskatchewan*

Jordan is a proud member of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan focused on working with and for Indigenous people and communities. She is currently assisting the Maya Leaders Alliance of Southern Belize through Osgoode Hall's Intensive Program in Indigenous Lands, Resources and Governance. She holds various leadership roles, including VP Social for the Indigenous Law Students' Association, Regional Youth Representative for Western Region IIA (MNS), Youth Minister of Justice (MNS), and Director for Métis Local 126. She will be moving to Ottawa for a clerkship with the Federal Court of Canada under newly appointed Honourable Julie L. Blackhawk.

## **Jocelyne onímihtow-nipiyaskwew Chief**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**INDIAN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM (INDIGENOUS STUDIES)**

*Onion Lake Cree Nation*

Jocelyne Chief (she/her) is a nēhiyaw and Métis woman from Onion Lake Cree Nation and St. Hippolyte, Saskatchewan. Her Cree name is onímihtow-nipiyaskwew meaning “Dancing Leaves Woman.” Her leadership inside and outside the program embodies the spirit of ITEP. Jocelyne has been a mentor for Indigenous High School students for three years through the Building Intercultural Resilience Mentorship (BIRM) program. She shares her love of culture and dance (fancy shawl and traditional) with students.

## **Santanna DeBray**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**SASKATCHEWAN URBAN NATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM – PRINCE ALBERT**

*Duck Lake*

Santanna DeBray is a proud member of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan, 2SLGBTQAI+ and the SUNTEP Prince Albert community. She is currently in her second year of studies, showing leadership through her role as the President of the SUNTEP SRC and as an active member of the Culture Committee. Santanna was the lead student planner and Master of Ceremonies for the Next Generation of Leaders Symposium, which helps support students as they prepare to be leaders for the future. She continually demonstrates true leadership skills by inspiring, and supporting her peers while also bringing awareness and advocating for the Indigenous, biracial and 2SLGBTQAI+ communities.

## **Reed Delainey**

**SCHOOL OF REHABILITATION SCIENCE**

**MASTER OF PHYSICAL THERAPY**

*Aquadeo, Sask*

One of my roles in the School of Rehabilitation is being an active leader in developing *The Circles of Reconciliation*. This initiative brings awareness around the importance of Reconciliation and having everyone in the school be an active participant. The overall goal is to bring the same awareness into our future profession as Physical Therapists.

## **Eileen Lennie-Koshman**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

**INDIGENOUS STUDIES MAJOR AND HISTORY MINOR**

*Her ancestral roots are in Green Lake, Saskatchewan, along with the Red River Settlement in Manitoba.*

Eileen is a third-year USask Indigenous Studies major and history minor. Though she now lives in Saskatoon, her maternal grandparents raised her in small town Saskatchewan, and her ancestral roots are in Green Lake, Sask. along with the Red River Settlement in Manitoba. Eileen wants her education to help marginalized people. She wants to enter a master’s program that will assist her in the empowerment of Indigenous communities helping them to find their voices.

## **Nathan Oakes**

**COLLEGE OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES**

**COMMUNITY HEALTH AND EPIDEMIOLOGY, DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

*Piapot First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory, Saskatchewan*

tānisi kiya ēkwa tāwaw niwāhkōmākanak, Nathan Oakes nihtihsikāson. Nēhiyāwpwātihk nēwo tipāhatahmin āskiy sāwanohk Saskatchewan (Sask) ōhci niya. Hello and welcome my relatives, I am Nathan Oakes. I am from Piapot First Nation Treaty 4 Territory south Saskatchewan. With humility by introducing myself in the nēhiyāw language, I intend to represent my growing passion and responsibility for one day fully learning it, in the spirit of revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and identity for our future generations. Among my siblings, I am the eldest of 4, so I come from a background where growing in leadership was expected of me at an early age. Today I owe credit to my wonderful family, especially my mother and loving partner and children who support me at home through my endeavors both in and out of academia. I would not be here today if it weren't for the collective support that has been gifted to me through the wonderful people who've provided me with support in many areas of my life along my journey both in and outside of academia. I walk this path to honor those who have offered me help and guidance when I've needed it. To honor those who have come before me, those who will come after me, and make use of the gifts the Creator has offered me along this journey. ekōsi, ayahay!

## **Trayce Williams**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

*Ahtahkakoop*

Trayce Williams is a traditional powwow dancer from the Ahtahkakoop First Nation. He is a second year Arts and Science student, majoring in Computer Science. Trayce ran in the recent Indigenous Students' Union bi-election. He was appointed Secretary Treasurer. Trayce first came to the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre as a very shy, polite, and kind student. He has shown considerable growth, and he has flourished into a leader and role model to his fellow students.

## **Emma Winrow**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**SASKATCHEWAN URBAN NATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

*Métis*

Emma Winrow is a proud Métis person from Martensville. Emma will graduate with her B.Ed. through the SUNTEP Saskatoon program in the spring of 2024. She is a dedicated and hard-working teacher candidate presenting determination, a cultural pride and strong steward leadership skills. Emma is known for her generosity, sincerity and commitment to learning and supporting others, while persevering through family health difficulties. Emma leads by example and is a quiet, ambitious, strong and charismatic leader.

# RESEARCH

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## **Olivia Andres**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE - ISAP**

**BSC BIOLOGY, MINOR INDIGENOUS STUDIES**

*Sweetgrass First Nation*

Olivia Andres is a member of Sweetgrass First Nation with ties to Birch Narrows Dene Nation. She is pursuing a B.Sc. in biology and a minor in Indigenous studies, aiming to practice veterinary medicine and improve remote community access to animal care. Olivia has explored intersections of Indigenous and Western knowledges with an archaeological GPR survey team, a study abroad course focused on Indigenous Leadership and field research with wild horses on Sable Island, NS.

## **Scott Caron**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

*Métis*

I am Scott James Caron (he/him), and I am Métis. I hope to shed light on the effects a short training session, which mimics video game stimuli, in our study can have on the reading ability of those participating in the experiment. My thesis has further implications because (much further down the line) this could translate into creating video games which specifically target reading ability to improve comprehension and speed of reading for a short duration (imagine a student playing this video game before a test who has a reading disorder such as dyslexia).

## **Jeremy Irvine**

**COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND BIORESOURCES**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE, PLANT SCIENCE**

*Yellow Quill First Nation (No. 376; Treaty No. 4, Saskatchewan)*

Jeremy Irvine is passionate about advocating for Indigenous scholars while working towards decreasing Indigenous underrepresentation in academia. He participated in a career fair at his reserve to spark interest in post-secondary education and assisted in starting a charity that provides science outreach programming to school-age children. He has authored an article highlighting the importance of integrating Indigenous knowledge into the traditional Western scientific approach in order to create a more inclusive and equitable academic landscape.

# RESILIENCY

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## **Danielle Boyer**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**SASKATCHEWAN URBAN NATIVE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

*Métis*

Danielle Boyer, is a proud Métis person from Prince Albert. Danielle has successfully completed her BED when she completed her extended practicum in Saskatoon working with Kindergarten students. Danielle persevered and worked diligently, responsibly and professionally throughout our SUNTEP Saskatoon program while enduring great barriers with her personal health. Danielle's respect and care of her students helped her achieve success!

## **Leona-Grace Cook**

**EDWARDS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

**BACHELOR OF COMMERCE - HUMAN RESOURCES**

*Lac La Ronge Indian Band/ La Ronge*

Leona-Grace Cook is a proud member of Lac La Ronge Indian Band (LLRIB), she is a single mother of two children, and also has custody of her nephew. She is currently on a education leave from work as an HR Officer with LLRIB. Leona-Grace commutes every week from La Ronge to Saskatoon so her children do not have to relocate. Upon finishing her Bachelor of Commerce, Leona-Grace will return to work with LLRIB and apply the new knowledge she has gained from Edwards to help her community.

## **Charles Dettaniba**

**COLLEGE OF NURSING**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING**

*Black Lake Band/Prince Albert, Saskatchewan*

Charles, a second-generation residential school survivor, has overcome immense challenges such as poverty, homelessness, addictions, racial profiling, and traumatic losses. Despite these hardships, he is in his fourth year of the BSN program while raising his children as a single father. His impact extends beyond this: Charles serves as a USask ambassador and volunteer at conventions for traumatized youth and northern students. He is a role model and leader, providing support and encouragement to many.

## **Damien Georges**

**COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND BIORESOURCES**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE MAJOR, TOXICOLOGY MINOR**

*Métis Nation of Saskatchewan*

Throughout his studies, Damien Georges has worked as an environmental coordinator and educator, recently becoming manager at Kineepik Métis Local. His engagement involves collaboration with mining corporations, fostering partnerships with land users as well as USask researchers. His aim is to educate his community about Duty to Consult and create a youth leadership stream. He plans to further his education and channel his experiences and expertise for the betterment of his hometown of Pinehouse Lake.

## **Brett Hildebrandt**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS AND SCIENCE (HONS) IN HEALTH STUDIES (PSYCHOLOGY MINOR) AND A CERTIFICATE IN MEDICAL LANGUAGE**

*A citizen of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon Métis Local 126)*

Brett (he/him) proudly identifies as a citizen of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon Métis Local 126). He aims to become a compassionate physician championing reconciliation and supporting Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities' mental health. Brett's research, informed by personal experiences and centred on mental health interventions, drives him to foster understanding and healing. His dedication to rediscovering and reconnecting with his Métis heritage enriches his personal growth.

## **Brett Lachance**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

*Big River and James Smith First Nation*

Brett Lachance is from Big River and James Smith First Nations. Brett is a fourth-year Huskie Track and Field athlete who has received a Bachelors of Education Degree. Brett's journey as a student athlete has not been without significant challenges on and off the field of play. In fact, there has not been an indoor season in Brett's Huskie career not marred by personal family tragedy and loss which includes the James Smith Cree Nation tragedy in the summer of 2022. What makes Brett's resilience even more amazing is having to navigate pre-existing mental health battles with anxiety and depression, something Brett has recently opened up about in efforts to help youth struggling with their own challenges.

## **Dallas Sutherland**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**INDIAN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

*One Arrow First Nation*

Dallas Sutherland, from One Arrow First Nations is a loving partner to his fiancé and a dedicated father of six awesome children. Both his parents are educators and feels he found his passion as well. When Dallas first started ITEP it was right in the middle of the COVID pandemic, adjustments had to be made not only professionally, but as a parent and partner as well. This life changing decision to attend ITEP during a pandemic was challenging, but the right decision. It was the most challenging endeavor to take on in the middle of a pandemic, to not have the full on-campus experience and meeting the needs of his family and still try to present university level work on his own. It has been quite a journey not only dealing with the pandemic, but also having to deal with life situations such as, loss of a pregnancy, moving homes, loved ones passing and undergoing surgery. Dallas persevered these situations and demonstrated his commitment and dedication to the profession and will be a proud ITEP graduate this Spring.