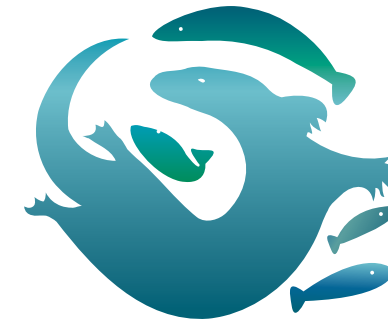


YOUTH FUSION
PROGRAMMING IN
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

2024-2025 REPORT



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Air Inuit
Apatisiwin Skills Development
Avataq Cultural Institute
BMO Groupe Financier
Canadian North
Concordia University
Cree Nation Government
Cree School Board
Cree Board of Health and Social Services
of James Bay
Équitas
ESUMA
ÉTS - École de Technologie supérieure
Fondation Azrieli
Fondation Marcelle et Jean Coutu

Fondation TELUS
Gouvernement du Canada
Gouvernement du Québec
Kativik Ilisarniliriniq
Kativik Regional Government
Makivik Corporation
National Film Board of Canada
Nunavik Regional Board of Health and
Social Services
Polytechnique Montréal
Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de
Mashteuiatsh
Suncor Energy Foundation
UQAM - Université du Québec à Montréal



OPENING NOTE



Since 2009, Youth Fusion has supported thousands of students in their educational journey by nurturing their creativity and passion. It is a privilege to collaborate with Inuit, Cree, Innu, Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, Ojibwe, and Kanien'kéha youth and communities, by building lasting relationships of trust.

As a non-Indigenous organization, Youth Fusion is committed to fostering respectful and genuine relationships. This includes listening to Indigenous voices, local hiring, and building concrete partnerships with communities. We prioritize collaboration with community members, Elders, and local partners to ensure that students are not only participants in community-related activities, but are also supported by a strong, caring network. Our projects are guided by the belief that student well-being flourishes when the entire community is actively involved in their educational journey.

The team is based in Tio'ti:ake (Montréal), the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka and Anishnabeg. It is with recognition and respect that they work there every day.

In 2025, the Reconciliation Committee continues its commitment. Its website, now part of the onboarding process for new employees, offers resources to encourage reflection. This year, two Indigenous film screenings and talking circles were held at the office. These had a direct impact on colleagues, who led the reflection and implementation of land acknowledgements at Youth Fusion events, in an approach aimed at helping non-Indigenous students understand the meaning behind them. As the Honourable Murray Sinclair said, "Education got us into this mess, and education will get us out."

And this is just the beginning. Youth Fusion will continue to create spaces for learning, dialogue, and connection throughout the coming year and interns over the past year, and celebrates the remarkable achievements of the youth who turned vision into action.

We invite you to dive into the following report, which showcases the inspiring efforts of our coordinators, facilitators, and interns over the past year.

Nia:won, Meegwetch, Nakurmiik, Tshinashkumitin, Merci
Sincerely,
The entire Youth Fusion team working with Indigenous communities



OUR PRESENCE IN 2024-2025



	NUNAVIK	5 projects in 5 northern villages
	EYYOU ISTCHEE	8 projects in 5 communities
	MASHTEUIATSH	1 project in 1 community
	CÉGEPS	5 projects in 5 colleges



2024-2025 IN NUMBERS



925

YOUTH ENGAGED



21

COORDINATORS



9

ANIMATORS



1

MUSEUM



5

COLLEGES



12

SCHOOLS



19

PROJECTS



6

COMMUNITIES



5

NORTHERN
VILLAGES



20,498

HOURS INVESTED THIS
YEAR TO PROMOTE SCHOOL
PERSEVERANCE

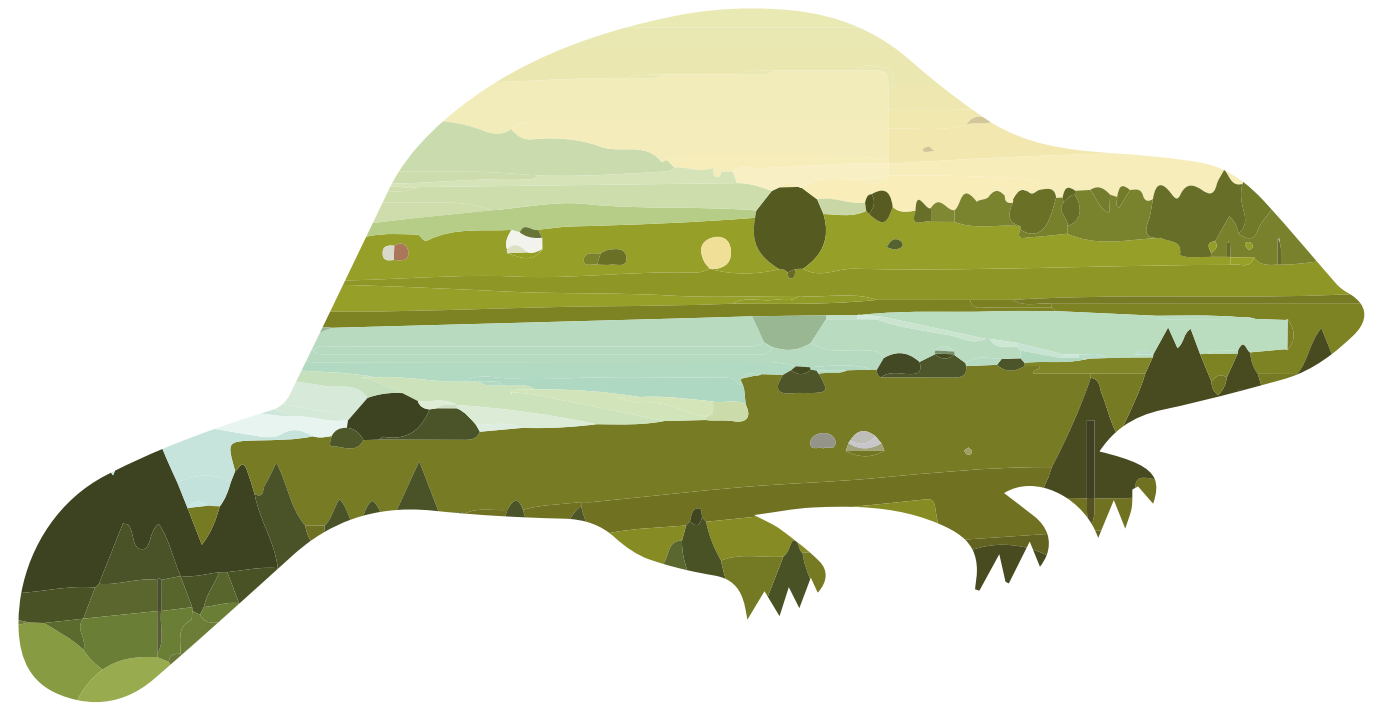
METHODOLOGICAL NOTE: The total number of students in the bubble on this page is less than the sum of the number of students in the projects on the following pages. This is because some students participated in more than one project in their community



YOUTH FUSION PROJECTS IN MAShteUIATSH



QUÉBEC



PROJECTS IN MASHTEUIATSH



26

YOUTH ENGAGED



1

COORDINATOR



1

PROJECT



1

COMMUNITY



1

ANIMATOR

IN
204
ACTIVITIES



1

MUSEUM



2042

HOURS INVESTED THIS
YEAR TO PROMOTE SCHOOL
PERSEVERANCE



JEAN-FRANÇOIS CORNEAU



LEADERSHIP & MEDIA

Musée Innu de Mashteuiatsh, Mashteuiatsh

The youth took part in weekly film and radio workshops to create a short film (for the gala clip) and a “radio tale”, which will be broadcast on Mashteuiatsh radio. The tale will also be animated by a company working with artificial intelligence. The youth also took part in a number of cultural activities and other fun events, such as board games, film evenings and more.

HIGHLIGHTS

- *The trip to Montreal for the FEF was really fun. The youth loved their experience and won a great prize.*
- *The short film and radio project production. We really enjoyed ourselves, and a special mention goes to the participation of Marco Collin, a community member, who was very generous with his time.*

113

ACTIVITIES

1502

HOURS
WORKED

26

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS

ANIMATOR | QUEBEC | MASHTEUIATSH



91

ACTIVITIES

540

HOURS
WORKED

TERRY-AUSTIN VERREAULT



LEADERSHIP & MEDIA

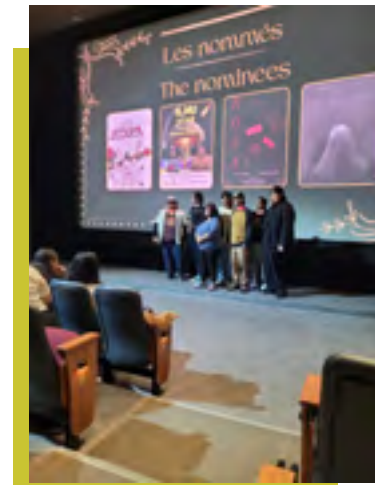
Musée Innu de Mashteuiatsh, Mashteuiatsh

HIGHLIGHTS

- I loved having the chance to work with actor Marco Collin. I learned a lot, and we laughed a lot.*
- I had a blast on our trip to Montreal with the young people for the FEF. We explored the city and did some great activities. I'm also very proud of the prize we won.*



This year, the participants from the Mashteuiatsh project were invited to and took part in the FEF Gala in Montreal, where their film, Ilnu Star Episode 5, was in competition. The group received three nominations in different categories and won the award for Best Editing and Special Effects. The team was very happy to win the award and decided to give it to one of the participants, as it was thanks to her artistic talents that they were able to add colourful special effects to their film. In addition to attending the FEF Gala, they took advantage of their stay in Montreal to visit the exhibitions at the Cinémathèque Québécoise, participate in a virtual reality activity, and dine at a medieval-themed restaurant!



HIGHLIGHTS

- *I really enjoyed my week in Montréal. We explored a lot, and it inspired me deeply. I feel recharged with inspiration.*
- *At first, I wasn't happy about going on stage when we received our award. But today, I'm proud of the work I put into the film and of winning the special effects award.*

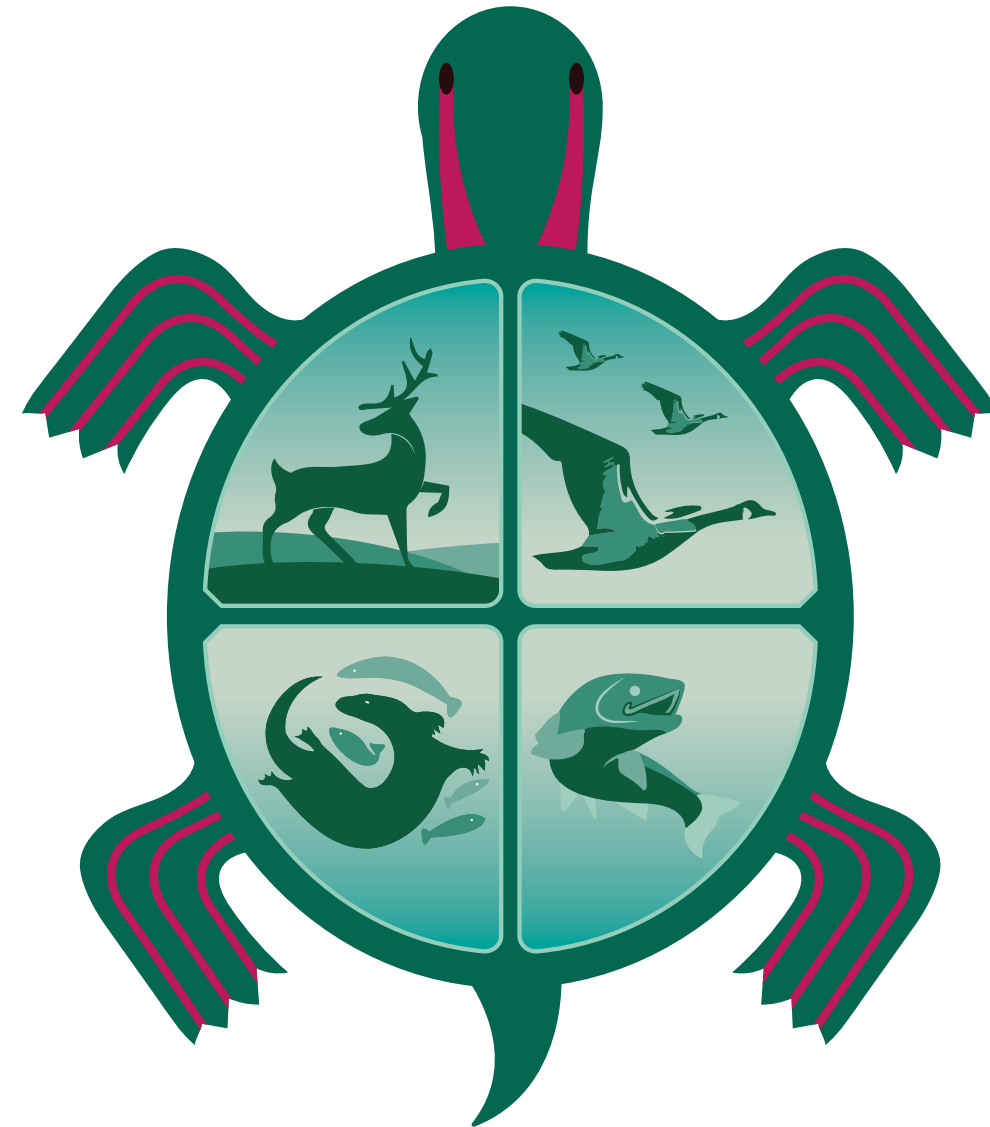




YOUTH FUSION PROJECTS IN CÉGEPS



QUÉBEC



PROJECTS IN CÉGEPs



66

YOUTH ENGAGED



5

COORDINATORS



5

PROJECTS



5

COLLEGES

IN
698

ACTIVITIES



7

ANIMATORS



4202

HOURS INVESTED THIS
YEAR TO PROMOTE SCHOOL
PERSEVERANCE



ALAKU MEEKO



LEADERSHIP, WELLBEING, & COMMUNITY-BUILDING

John Abbott College

Montréal

Throughout the year, I continued my work with Indigenous CEGEP students, spending nearly every day at the Indigenous Student Resource Centre on campus. My role involves supporting students academically, whether through one-on-one help with assignments or teaching study methods. I also provide cultural enrichment through activities such as beading workshops. This year, I expanded the range of activities for students by facilitating both fun and educational experiences, including movie theatre trips, cultural food, and an increased number of student-driven initiatives.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was watching students who once hesitated to participate in activities become excited about learning new skills—whether academic or cultural—over the course of the year. It was fulfilling to see them not only improve but also find their confidence in the process.
- A highlight was the day we got fresh Arctic char. Sharing it together—preparing it, cooking it, and enjoying it—sparked stories from home and created such a strong sense of community in the centre. It was one of those moments that reminded me how powerful food can be in bringing people together.

ANIMATORS | John Abbott College

DARIO CHEEZO

55

ACTIVITIES

149

HOURS
WORKED

RANDALL KALEB MIGWANS

14

ACTIVITIES

55

HOURS
WORKED

129

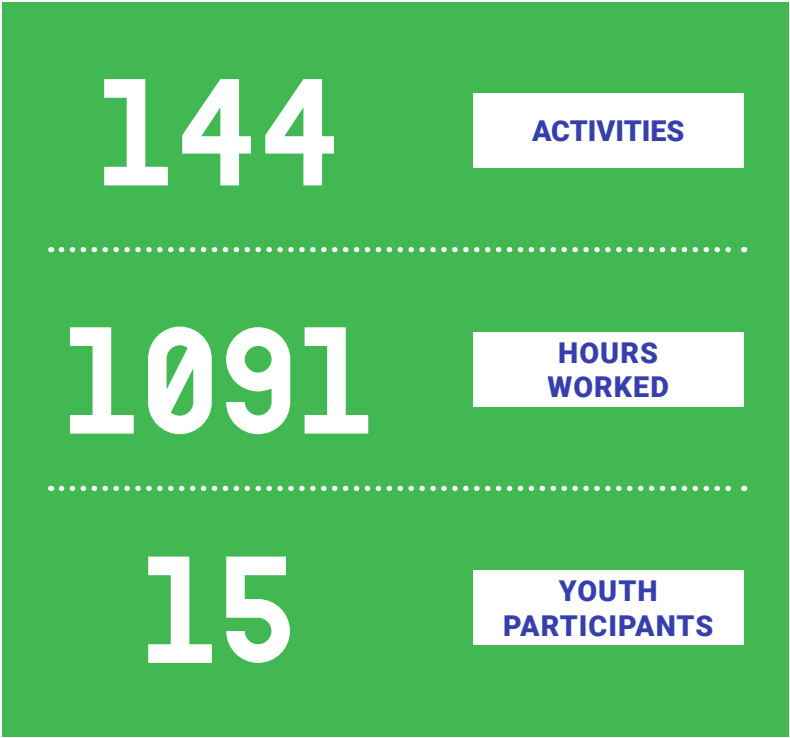
ACTIVITIES

544

HOURS
WORKED

14

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



JACOBA O’HARA



LEADERSHIP, WELLBEING, & COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Dawson College
Montréal

At Dawson College, the Indigenous Student Life project focused on creating a welcoming, supportive, and vibrant space where students could unwind, connect, and express themselves. My mandate involved planning and facilitating a wide range of student-led and interest-based activities—from arts and crafts (like clay sculpture and recycled paper making) to cooking projects (including pancakes and smoothies), academic support, and local outings to explore Montréal. The goal was to make the Student Centre a safe and joyful place where Indigenous students could take a break from the demands of CEGEP life and build meaningful relationships with each other.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was seeing how quickly the Student Centre turned into a second home for some students. Whether they came in for crafts, cooking, or just to hang out between classes, it became clear that the space mattered—it was theirs, and they used it in ways that reflected who they are.

ANIMATORS | Dawson College

KAI LAHACHE	KALID SUNDAY SAYER	VALERIE REYNOLDS	TAIOTHORATIE GELINAS BELLEGARDE
18 ACTIVITIES	14 ACTIVITIES	16 ACTIVITIES	11 ACTIVITIES
55 HOURS WORKED	55 HOURS WORKED	86 HOURS WORKED	52 HOURS WORKED



MEGAN ABREU



LEADERSHIP, WELLBEING, & COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Champlain College St-Lambert

Montréal

The Leadership, Wellbeing, and Community Building project supports Indigenous college students in persevering academically, developing life skills, and building a strong sense of community in their new school environments. Through a mix of academic support, wellness-focused programming, and culturally relevant activities, the project creates space for students to grow, connect, and feel supported. This year, we continued offering tutoring, organizing shared meals and social outings, and integrating fun, low-barrier wellness initiatives that supported students' mental health and peer relationships.

The project also emphasized student leadership and ownership. Many of the year's most successful activities came from student ideas or collaboration, including fundraising efforts and wellness programming. Whether planning outings, studying for a final, or just sharing a laugh over lunch, this year's work helped create a welcoming and affirming space that met students where they were—and celebrated where they're headed.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was running a student-led bake sale that raised enough funds for fun off-campus outings like the movies and trampoline park. It was rewarding to see students plan, participate, and enjoy the results of their hard work.
- A highlight was organizing puppy therapy sessions during high-stress times of the semester. Students lit up the second they saw the dogs—it was a simple, powerful reminder of how small moments of joy can make a big difference in a student's week.

173

ACTIVITIES

1071

HOURS
WORKED

11

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



105

ACTIVITIES

504

HOURS
WORKED

14

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS

ELISE ROY



LEADERSHIP, WELLBEING, & COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Montmorency College

Montréal

Now in its second year, the Youth Fusion project at CEGEP Montmorency continued to grow its roots within the student community. Building on the relationships and momentum from last year, the focus remained on fostering connection, independence, and wellbeing through hands-on, student-led activities. Weekly cooking sessions remained a cornerstone of the project, giving students not only a healthy meal, but also a sense of comfort, collaboration, and ownership. Grocery shopping together and experimenting with new recipes encouraged creativity and life skills.

Outings also played a key role again this year—offering students a chance to explore Montréal, try new things, and connect in new settings. Whether attending local events or discovering new neighbourhoods, the excursions sparked great conversations and bonding moments. Collaboration with school staff deepened this year as well, with more joint programming and a better understanding of how Youth Fusion can support both students and the team around them.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was seeing returning students take on more of a leadership role—suggesting recipes, helping new students feel welcome, and even taking the lead in some cooking sessions. The shift from participant to peer leader was subtle, but meaningful.
- A highlight was watching students relax and open up during our metro adventures across the city. For many, these outings were a chance to see Montréal in a new way, and the shared experiences really helped deepen our group's connection.



CHLOE LAFLAMME



LEADERSHIP, WELLBEING, & COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Vanier College
Montréal

At Vanier College, Youth Fusion’s project focused on community-building and student engagement through creative, low-barrier programming such as weekly cooking nights, trivia games, monthly “Guess the Jar” contests, seasonal celebrations, and ongoing drop-in crafts. Coordinated by Chloé Laflamme, the project rebuilt trust after prior turnover, and fostered a sense of belonging in the Indigenous Student Center. With support from school staff and animator Cyrus, it created a safe, inclusive space where students connected over shared activities, received informal academic encouragement, and found ways to participate regardless of schedule constraints.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was seeing students return each week for cooking nights, even when their schedules were packed. One student dropped her classes for the semester, but kept coming in just to cook together, it showed me how powerful food can be in keeping students connected to their school community.
- A highlight was seeing how small, simple activities like trivia and jar guessing drew in totally different groups of students. Some wouldn’t usually join in, but the low-commitment nature gave them a chance to participate on their own terms, and have fun doing it.

ANIMATORS | Vanier College

CYRUS SMOKE

14

ACTIVITIES

40

HOURS
WORKED

147

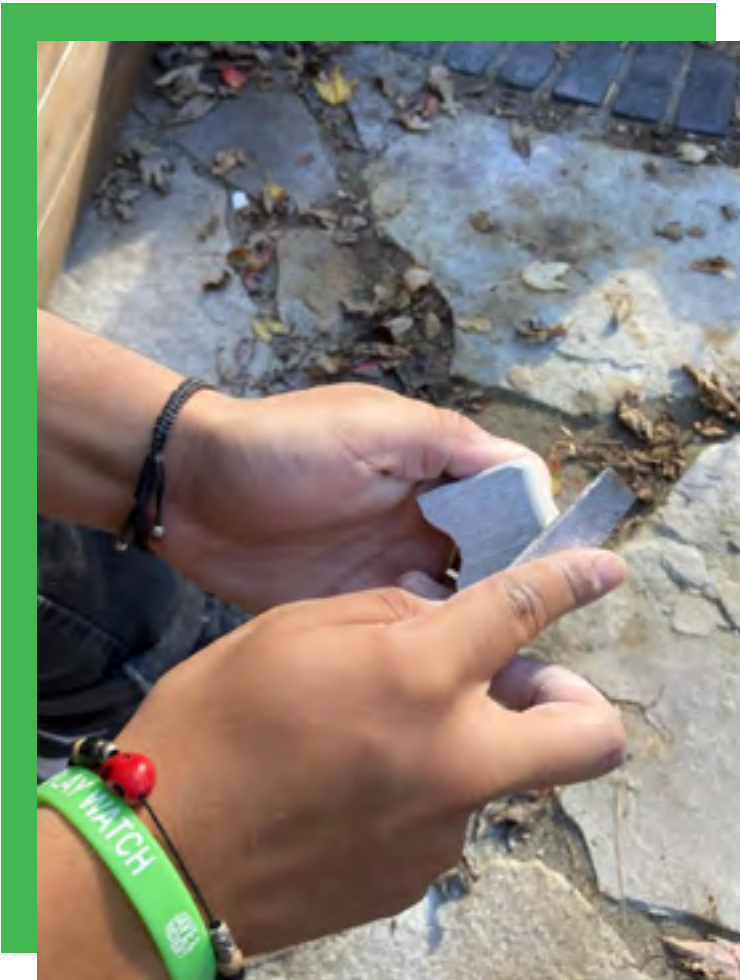
ACTIVITIES

540

HOURS
WORKED

12

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS





YOUTH FUSION PROJECTS IN EYYOU ISTCHEE



QUÉBEC



PROJECTS IN EEYOU ISTCHEE





RENEE JAMES (FALL 2024: GARRETT DUFF)



LEADERSHIP AND WELLBEING

Big River High School, Chisasibi

Cree School Board

I spend a lot of my time in the school meeting with students, helping out with homework and doing some light counselling. The main objective of my job is to create an environment where students are happy and excited to participate in activities. I run events such as cooking workshops, movie nights and musical showcases.

HIGHLIGHTS

- One major highlight is the glee club showcase. We put together a collection of songs and performed them. We weren't quite ready to show a large audience, but we had a small group of people spectating and it went very well!
- Another highlight is that participation in activities grew overtime, specifically with movie night. At first there were four students, and by the end we had more than 10; it was a successful and relaxing experience for the students.

154

ACTIVITIES

881

HOURS
WORKED

116

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS

ANIMATOR | QUEBEC | EYYOU ISTCHEE



125

ACTIVITIES

469

HOURS
WORKED

AMELIA DIOSZEGHY



LEADERSHIP AND WELLBEING

Big River High School, Chisasibi

Cree School Board

HIGHLIGHTS

- One thing loved this year is getting to see the students faces light up when Renee arrived in Chisasibi. They couldn't stop talking about it all year.
- I loved how my students got out of there comfort zone when they were on the Leadership Gathering adventure. A really big highlight of my year was seeing them really enjoy being there and talking with people. They felt welcomed!



256

ACTIVITIES

1056

HOURS
WORKED

75

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS

TABASSUM MOOSBALLY (FALL 2023: NIRUMITHA MURALITHARAN)



ELEMENTARY ENGAGEMENT

Annie Whiskeychan Memorial School, Waskaganish

Cree School Board

My job at Youth Fusion entailed bringing daily activities that are enriching for the students. Since I am from the South, I would bring them things that I have been exposed to. It was new and exciting for them. In my short time there, I got to witness students opening up to me. I consider myself lucky to have had the chance to provide a safe space for the students and to have acquired knowledge from them. It never really felt like I was doing all the work, we were a team that liked to hang out together. My little time there will be unforgettable.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was seeing the students be able to connect to me in such a short time. I was already familiar with Waskaganish as I had worked there before but it was still challenging to incorporate myself and the activities in the last few months of school. It was a success as the kids and I had lots of fun. I felt a connection with the students and some of them still message me asking for recipes that we did during lunch.
- Another highlight was that I would expose the students to several things that they were not used to (foods, activities). One time I made bean taco with them and some of them did not seem very keen to try. Despite not wanting to, I would encourage the students to just have a bite. Now, whether they liked it or not, I'm just happy to have gotten to know them through their taste and that they were able to try something different.



HAILEY CORBETT



LEADERSHIP AND WELLBEING

Ecole Wiinibekuu School, Waskaganish

Cree School Board

Hailey has been working as a coordinator for Youth Fusion for the past five years, and has been able to create lasting relationships with the youth, staff and community members of Waskaganish. This year, we were lucky to have Hailey again for a short period to continue to organize lunch and after school activities at the high school. It has been rewarding to witness alongside her work the growth and progress of the youth, especially of those who she has accompanied from Secondary 1 to Secondary 5.

HIGHLIGHTS

- One highlight of the project this year was collaborating with youth council to plan a school wide activity day that included a broomball tournament and traditional cooking.
- Another highlight was making clay magnets with the students. It was more difficult than expected but the results were very cute and the students also really enjoyed the activity.

79

ACTIVITIES

149

HOURS
WORKED

74

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



SARAH FLEMING



ELEMENTARY ENGAGEMENT

Luke Mettaweskum School, Nemaska

Cree School Board

As the Leadership and Wellbeing Project Coordinator at Luke Mettaweskum School in Nemaska, I had the privilege of engaging with the youth and the community. This role gave me the opportunity to design and facilitate a diverse range of student-led activities that responded directly to their interests and passions. Throughout the year, I organized and led various clubs and workshops, including beading, cooking, Sanrio, anime, sports, and visual arts. My goal was to provide students with meaningful, creative outlets to support their emotional and personal development. Many of the activities I facilitated complemented the teachings of the SNAP program ran through the Cree Health Board, which equips students with emotional regulation and problem-solving skills. Together, these initiatives created a holistic environment that nurtured both emotional wellbeing and personal growth.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The weekly Art Club was a personal highlight. It became a vibrant space where students explored new artistic techniques, mediums, and styles. Each session offered a fresh creative challenge, encouraging self-expression and building confidence through art.
- The youth of Nemaska left a lasting impression on me and truly captured my heart. Their warmth, resilience, and curiosity made every day in the community deeply meaningful. Despite the challenges that can come with working away from home in a remote setting, stepping into the school each morning filled me with a genuine sense of joy and purpose. It was an absolute privilege to spend time with such bright and welcoming students. Their kindness and creativity were evident not only in our daily interactions but also in the thoughtful, handmade drawings and cards they often gifted me—keepsakes I will always treasure. The connections I built with the youth of Nemaska were among the most rewarding aspects of my work, and they continue to inspire me both personally and professionally.

277

ACTIVITIES

1407

HOURS
WORKED

50

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



KENDALL FLEMING



LEADERSHIP AND WELLBEING

Luke Mettaweskum School, Nemaska

Cree School Board

My time with Youth Fusion in Nemaska involved creating a fun and welcoming environment for students. My programming involved a number of different activities ranging from physical health to art. I was able to plant myself in this community by getting to know all the students, specifically, who they are in and outside the classroom. All in all, I believe the point of Youth Fusion is to find fun and engaging ways to keep students coming to school.

HIGHLIGHTS

- One of my highlights is seeing how excited the students got to be for YF activities. Specifically, one student in particular. This girl had been very enthusiastic from the beginning of the year but due to some behavioural issues, she had trouble regulating her emotions during activities. This highlight is how throughout the year, she got better at regulating her emotions so that everyone involved had a great time.
- This highlight is the feeling of being welcomed in the community. The best feeling to me was walking through the school and seeing all the kids come up and get all excited to come say hello. Students that I'm pretty sure never went to one of my activities still ended up knowing my name and would yell across the hall to say hi.

215

ACTIVITIES

1382

HOURS
WORKED

50

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



OUJÉ BOUGOUMOU



SCIENCE & ROBOTICS

Waapihtiwewan School, Oujé Bougoumou

Cree School Board

We started a science and robotics project at the Waapihtiwewan School in Oujé Bougoumou. The students in this community are very strong in science, and it showed through the science activities organized by the coordinator. Some cooking, sports, and dungeons & Dragons’ activities also took place and were a great success.

Despite the challenges of the year, the youth are motivated and eager to participate in Fusion Jeunesse activities at their schools. They showed up and brought many activity suggestions to the coordinator.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The school gave us a wonderful welcome and even organized a tour of the community. We were lucky to receive such a warm welcome in such a beautiful community.
- The Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute is truly a must see in Oujé Bougoumou. In addition to historical and artistic exhibitions, Aanischaaukamikw offers a variety of activities open to everyone, focused on Eeyou and Eenou cultures.

37

ACTIVITIES

618

HOURS
WORKED

25

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



304

ACTIVITIES

1328

HOURS
WORKED

83

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS

DAREN TRINH



LEADERSHIP & MEDIA

Willie J. Happyjack Memorial School, Waswanipi

Cree School Board

The Digital Media and Leadership Project covers integration of digital media and technology into activities that the youth can engage with while learning new experiences.

Some of the workshops include:

Video Game Development:

Students work either individually or in collaborative groups learning the integration of pixel art (PiskelArt), and coding (Construct 3) to develop their very own Top-Down or Platformer action games. Each week, students can attend this workshop and learn new structures of design that they can implement into their projects

Drama/Film Club:

Students are able to spend time weekly developing their acting skills while learning more about digital media equipment as they experiment with cameras, drones, and various other recording equipment. Students work in a group to plan, develop, and edit their very own short film.

Dungeons and Dragons:

Students learn to create their very own character using DnD Beyond (an online platform for DnD) and play weekly DnD sessions amongst their friends. Students learn to utilize the SmartBoard technology as express their creativity as they interact with a live display of the Dungeons and Dragons map.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Major increase in student attendance for Youth Fusion activities during the integration of 2-weekly DnD 3-hour long sessions, including students who were frequently in trouble due to substance use at school, or lack of attendance.
- Wonderful online informercial session + Q&A with Ubisoft regarding the Video Game industry. 15 Students ranging from sec 1-5 attended and got to learn more about the industry and careers and give feedback regarding currently live game Rainbow Six Siege.



SARAH ROES



ELEMENTARY ENGAGEMENT

Rainbow Elementary School, Waswanipi

Cree School Board

I provided after school activities for the students of Rainbow school in Waswanipi. During the school day I was available to help teachers and students inside and outside the classroom, and I also supervised recess for students. I worked with students from grade one to grade six. My favourite thing was when I got to go to the zoo with grade 1-3. It was a very long drive but it was worth it to see the students have a new experience.

HIGHLIGHTS

- *My first arts and crafts event had maybe 5 students, my last one had 12, and my biggest one had 15!*
- *Students went from not being able to knit at all to picking up their knitting without me needing to help them at all! Many of them expressed interest in continuing knitting outside of Youth Fusion.*

572

ACTIVITIES

1155

HOURS
WORKED

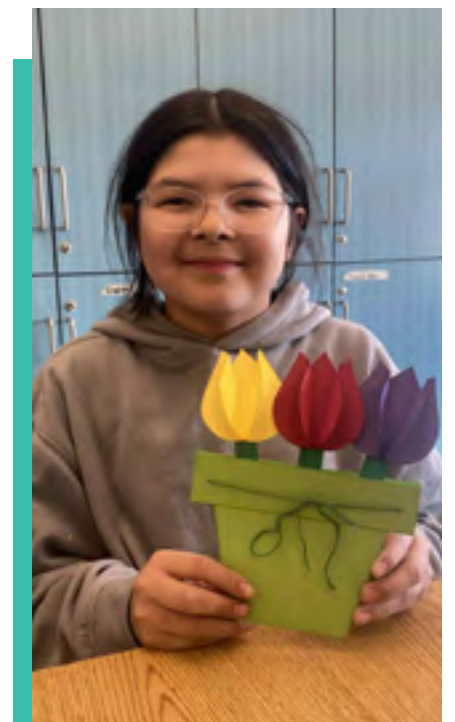
86

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



The 9th Youth Fusion Leadership Gathering in the Eeyou Istchee took place in June this year, after years of being on pause. We invited Youth from Chisasibi, Nemaska and Waswanipi in the beautiful cultural village of Down the River in Waswanipi.

Students had self esteem activities, team-building activities and cultural workshops. We had the honour to see the youth arrive shy and leave with new friends and inspired for the next school year. Community organizations and members were also present during the event. It was a true collaborative event for and by the Eeyou Ischtee students.



HIGHLIGHTS

- *I would like to organize an activity with Youth Fusion next year at my school so students start liking themselves. Tell the next coordinator to come and see me and I will help with the activities. I want the students at my school to like themselves better.*
- *I never thought I could make new friends. I've always been alone because I'm special and I like to create. But here, I can see that people like me for who I am, and I am not alone. I have friends now!*





YOUTH FUSION PROJECTS IN NUNAVIK



QUÉBEC



PROJECTS IN NUNAVIK





104

ACTIVITIES

1009

HOURS
WORKED

38

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS

SHAHEED JIWA



PERFORMING ARTS

Asimauttaq, Kuujjuaraapik

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq School Board

The Performing Arts project in Kuujjuarapik focused on fostering connection, creativity, and joy through a wide variety of student-centered activities. Programming remained flexible throughout the year, allowing the coordinator to adapt to student interests and school rhythms. From collaborative crafts and cozy movie nights to casual creative expression, the emphasis was always on building strong relationships and offering a safe space for youth to unwind, connect, and explore their creativity in different forms. While not always traditional “performing arts,” the project succeeded in using arts and culture as a bridge to deeper student engagement.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was creating a consistent space where students could show up as they were—whether to make art, watch a movie, or just be around others. That sense of calm connection made a big difference.
- A highlight was seeing how small, creative moments—like making crafts or sharing popcorn at a movie night—could spark meaningful conversations and give students something to look forward to each week.



MUILA ROBERTA STRACHAN



LEADERSHIP & WELLBEING

Kiluutaq, Umiujaq

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq School Board

As the Leadership and Wellbeing Program coordinator at Kiluutaq School in Umiujaq, I had the opportunity to support students through a variety of recurring initiatives focused on creativity, self-expression, and wellbeing. Throughout the year, I ran several well-attended activities including Photography Club, Cooking Club, Taco Tuesday, Wellness Lunch, and Art and Talk sessions. These programs provided students with safe, engaging spaces to express themselves and build confidence.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight of my year was co-facilitating the girls-only Art and Talk and Wellness Lunch sessions alongside the school counsellor. These activities created a dedicated space for female students to explore creative expression and engage in open dialogue around a range of topics. They also played a meaningful role in building trust and strengthening relationships among the participants.
- In addition to the weekly programming, I collaborated with school staff and local partners to help organize and support larger events and experiences. This included a storytelling event co-hosted with the Umiujaq Youth House and ESUMA, Cirqiniq-led workshops, and a land-based field trip for primary students in partnership with Nunavik Parks. These activities created meaningful cultural learning opportunities and supported student wellbeing in diverse ways. The combination of regular programming and special events made this year both dynamic and rewarding.

341

ACTIVITIES

1321

HOURS
WORKED

46

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



CHIKE ONYENWUZOR



LEADERSHIP & WELLBEING

Tukisiniarvik, Akulivik

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq School Board

In Akulivik, my project evolved over the year as I built trust and adapted to the unique needs of the students. I spent the first half of my contract mostly in classrooms, using that time to build relationships and set the foundation for more engaging, activity-based programming later on. I leaned into what worked: indoor connection through food and conversation. Cooking Club quickly became a staple, with students regularly returning and sharing the meals we made with their families. My programming choices were always shaped by dynamics of age, gender, and cultural context, realities that require sensitivity and self-awareness in a coordinator role. I was able to foster a space that prioritized safety, respect, and fun.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was watching Cooking Club become the heart of our programming. It started small, but it became a weekly ritual—kids would come early, ask what we were making, and always made sure to bring extra portions home for their families. It became more than just a club—it was a connector.
- A highlight was seeing how much of a difference those early weeks in the classroom made. By the time I shifted to more independent programming, students already knew me, trusted me, and were excited to join. It made everything from discipline to participation flow more easily.

155

ACTIVITIES

1118

HOURS
WORKED

35

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



MAYA MORTON NINOMIYA



LEADERSHIP & WELLBEING

Jaanimmarik, Kuujjuaq

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq School Board

In Kuujjuaq this year, I ran weekly lunch-hour Cooking Clubs and Self-Care Clubs with both elementary and secondary students, along with coaching volleyball and supporting Student Council. These regular activities created meaningful weekly touchpoints for students to connect, learn new skills, and have fun in a safe, supportive environment. Cooking with the younger grades was especially popular—students and teachers were eager to bring me back week after week, and it helped fill a gap left by the absence of a formal cooking elective. I also contributed to community building through arts-based projects, collaborative leadership programming, and consistent presence at lunch hours and after school. Supplies and resources have been carefully organized for next year’s coordinator, and I’m confident these programs can keep thriving with the right support.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was joining Student Council and watching the older students take the lead on planning real changes for their school. They had big ideas and strong voices, and I’m proud I got to help support that momentum.
- A highlight was watching the Self-Care Club evolve from just doing nails to becoming a place where students could chat, relax, and share space together during a busy school week.
- A highlight was how much the elementary students loved Cooking Club—we had classes lining up to be part of it every week, and it became one of the most asked-for activities from both kids and teachers.

144

ACTIVITIES

942

HOURS
WORKED

88

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS



VINCENT GARDNER



LEADERSHIP & WELLBEING

Ulluriaq, Kangiqsualujjuaq

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq School Board

At Ulluriaq School, the Youth Fusion project found its rhythm within one of the most structured and tight-knit school environments in Nunavik. This year, I focused on relationship-building, physical activity, and adaptive programming that responded to student needs and the realities of a highly scheduled school day. I started by supporting gym classes—an essential pillar of the school’s culture—and gradually introduced after-school programs like boxing, weightlifting, and basketball. While in-class programming was difficult to implement, I found success through flexible, student-centered activities that were high-energy, high-structure, and aligned with student interests. Building trust with students and staff, navigating complex community dynamics, and remaining responsive to social and cultural context were key to my impact this year.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A highlight was watching students take real ownership over our boxing and basketball sessions. Once they saw I was serious and passionate, their buy-in skyrocketed. The gym became a place where confidence, consistency, and respect led the way.
- A highlight was seeing how being visible and involved in the school—especially in gym class—helped me connect with almost every student. That space was my biggest bridge, and once students got to know me there, they were more open to participating in after-school programs.
- A highlight was pivoting from a jiu-jitsu program that wasn’t working to something more structured and engaging. Being able to adapt to the group’s needs and still provide meaningful activities showed me that flexibility doesn’t mean compromising impact—it means chasing it differently.

183

ACTIVITIES

1419

HOURS
WORKED

67

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS





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