

# ANHN Report

## Partnership with YWCA

Tansi, Anin, Bowzo, Greetings to the City of Regina Council and attending citizens of Regina

(introduce yourself with your title and where you are from)

I am here representing the All Nations Hope Network Staff and Board of Directors. We are one of the many partners of the YWCA and we are delighted to come share with you the vision we bring to the project proposed.

The Network acknowledges the tremendous amount of community work that the YWCA currently and historically has provided to the citizens. We have been part of that work and we are currently part of the vision for the YWCA project, the vision to create a place of healing and wellness for all nations, accessible to the citizens of Regina.

This proposed place will be a safe place for ceremonies of healing and celebration, a place for traditional medicines and traditional medicine practitioners, and most importantly a place to bring to life the traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples of all nations. ANHN brings to the proposed project many knowledge keepers, ceremonialists, linguists, medicine people, herbalists, healers and teachers. As indigenous people, we have a tremendous amount of wealth and knowledge as we practice the ways of our ancestors who have been on this land since the beginning of time.

The Network was created in 1995 by a group of concerned Indigenous people and was supported by the local AIDS organization then called AIDS Regina, now called the AIDS Programs South Saskatchewan. In 2004, the Network incorporated and became a Network in Saskatchewan with its roots in the city of Regina. Today we have an office on Treaty Four land in Fort Qu'Appelle, an office on 2735 5<sup>th</sup> avenue and a sacred site on 3040 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

At the center of all work being done by the Network is a human being, we circulate the following four areas of work around that human being – Networking, Research, Training and Outreach. We are governed by 9 Board members from across Saskatchewan each with many skills and contributions to the Network. We have three ex-officio's who bring vast amount of knowledge to the network. We have 12 full time staff, 8-part time staff, 1 -5 practicum students throughout the year and many partners and volunteers.

As an Indigenous Network, we continue to understand and bring to life the Indigenous laws of this land, one of these laws, wahkohtowin, which is a Cree word meaning kinship or relationships, we practice this with the community, our partners, the land, the animals, the plants, the water and all things on this earth. This work we propose is vitally important to the Indigenous people of this land, we are very spiritual people, we believe that all things begin in a prayerful way which is a powerful way too.

Prior to the Network supporting the YWCA proposed project, we entered into ceremony with them, we conducted a sweat lodge, smoked the pipe and feasted with the YWCA, we asked the ancestors

to help us to bring to life this vision, we asked for Pimasowin, a Cree word for life, the center of this vision is the people we serve.

Currently we have a sacred site where we have been doing ceremony for the past three years. It has a sweat lodge which is operational when weather permitting. It is a vision to have an indoor lodge that would be operational year round. Currently the Traditional medicine practitioners have three sites where we practice the medicines. It will be good to have one place to store, clean and make the medicines for the traditional herbalists and medicine people. It will also be good to have a place for the citizens of Regina to come to see a medicine person and get medicines.

Currently we have pipe ceremonies, sweat lodges for both men and women, Moon Ceremonies along with the Strawberry teachings (rites of passage for girls), traditional teachings, traditional healers and therapists', Indigenous language sessions (Cree and Salteaux), daily smudge ceremonies and keytayaks available daily for the people.

The Network is just entering the Eastern door; we can offer so much more to the citizens of Regina with the vision we have with the YWCA. All Nations Hope Network has a vision to continue with the following work:

- 1) Knowledge building of Indigenous health and wellness systems through language, culture, medicines, and ceremonies.
- 2) Navigation provided to Indian Residential School survivors and families through healing and counselling programs.
- 3) Navigation provided to the families of Murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls through healing and counselling programs.
- 4) Reconciliation with institutions, systems and agencies through indigenizing the programs and services.

All Nations Hope Network would like to thank you for listening and taking to heart the vision for the people, we know that working together in unity and ceremony we can help the many Indigenous citizens of Regina and we look forward to lighting the way for all the nations. HIY HIY