

teca oyate  
henadakota wicohan  
yuha mani pte



EMPOWERING  
YOUTH TO LEAD  
THE WAY IN LANGUAGE

Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy

**LANGUAGE SYMPOSIUM**

**FEBRUARY 21 & 22, 2024**

**MAZS**

MANITOBA ABORIGINAL  
LANGUAGES STRATEGY

**m a l s m b . c a**

To Revitalize, Retain,  
and Promote  
Indigenous Languages  
in Manitoba

# We would like to acknowledge our MALS Grandparents for always guiding us in a good way.



**STELLA NEFF**  
Nation: Inineu  
Language: Ininimowin



**WANBDI WAKITA**  
Nation: Dakota  
Language: Dakota



**PATRICIA NINGEWANCE**  
Nation: Anishinaabe  
Language: Anishnaabemowin

The Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy (MALS) is privileged and honoured to receive ongoing guidance from the MALS Council of Grandparents comprised of fluent speakers and Sacred Traditional Knowledge Keepers. These Grandparents represent each of the seven Indigenous language groups found in Manitoba.

It is important to recognize that the Grandparents are the foundation of MALS. Grandparents provide knowledge, experiences, and the first-hand information required for the implementation of MALS Actions and Strategy.

Grandparents support and validate decisions recommended by MALS Working Groups. When needed, the Grandparents will provide mentorship to the various working groups within MALS.



**NELLIANE CROMARTY**  
Nation: Anishininew  
Language: Anisininemowin



**DIANE POWDERHORN**  
Nation: Denesulline  
Language: Dene



**Verna Demontigny**  
Nation: Métis  
Language: Michif

# SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

Wednesday ~ February 21, 2024



9:00am - 9:30am	Opening Remarks - Davin Dumas, MC Opening Song - Walking Wolf	
<b>9:30am - 10:45am</b>	<b>Keynote ~ Andrew Antsanen</b>	<b>Ambassador 1 &amp; 2</b>
	<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
<b>11:00am - 12:00pm      SESSION 1</b>		
	Keynote discussion cont'd ~ Andrew Antsanen	Ambassador 1 & 2
	<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
	nikamotān - mētawētān ~ Ron Cook	Meeting Room E
	Creation Stories based on the star constellations, songs, and teaching relating to the universe in Cree culture ~ Allen R. Keeper	Meeting Room G
	Kinship in Ininimowin ~ Grandmother Stella Neff	Meeting Room I
	Adapting freely accessible visual resources to your languages- Hands on Learning using SouthernMichif.org. ~ Tiara Opissinow and Heather Souter	Meeting Room J
<b>12:00pm - 1:00pm</b>	<b>Lunch ~ Walking Wolf</b>	<b>Ambassador 1 &amp; 2</b>

# SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

Wednesday ~ February 21, 2024

1:00pm - 2:00pm <b>SESSION 2</b>	
	Ambassador 1 & 2
<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
Utilizing Syllabics along with the Online Dictionary in Cree, Ojibway, and Dene ~ John McLean and Michael Li	Meeting Room E
Creation Stories based on the star constellations, songs, and teaching relating to the universe in Cree culture ~ Allen R. Keeper	Meeting Room G
Overcoming Barriers Through Representation ~ Christina Barraclough and Summer Fisher	Meeting Room I
Adapting freely accessible visual resources to your languages- Hands on Learning using SouthernMichif.org. ~ Tiara Opissinow and Heather Souter	Meeting Room J
Health Break 15 minutes	
2:15pm - 3:15pm <b>SESSION 3</b>	
	Ambassador 1 & 2
<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
Beginners Cree with Songs and Games ~ Kim Halcrow	Meeting Room E
Grandmother Teaches Her Grandson the Dene Language in 26 days: Here's What She Learned ~ Lucy Antsanen	Meeting Room G
Overcoming Barriers Through Representation ~ Christina Barraclough and Summer Fisher	Meeting Room I
aadisookaanag (Sacred Stories) about anangokwaan (the Star World) for the classroom ~ Darcy-Anne Thomas and Jason Bone	Meeting Room J
Health Break 15 minutes	

# SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

Wednesday ~ February 21, 2024

3:25pm - 4:25pm <b>SESSION 4</b>	
	Ambassador 1 & 2
<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
Kinship in Michif ~ Grandmother Verna DeMontigny	Meeting Room E
Kinship in Ininimowin ~ Grandmother Stella Neff	Meeting Room G
Language Networking	Meeting Room I
Sayisi Dene Timeline: Pre-Contact to Present ~ Grandmother Diane Powderhorn	Meeting Room J
<b>DAY 1 CLOSING</b> ( <i>Door prize draws, you must be in attendance to win</i> )	

## FEBRUARY 21 OPENING SONG AND LUNCHTIME ENTERTAINMENT

### WALKING WOLF

Ray (Co-Co) Stevenson is a singer and composer of Traditional Songs. Over the years, he has recorded seven original Albums of his own composed music.

He comes from the Treaty One Territory with both Anishnaabemowin and Ininimowin backgrounds. Home for Ray is Winnipeg, where he was born and raised.



# SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

Thursday ~ February 22, 2024

<b>9:00am - 10:00am</b>	<b>Keynote Brady Keeper</b>	<b>Ambassador 1 &amp; 2</b>
	<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
<b>10:15am - 11:00am</b>	<b>SESSION 5</b>	
	Keynote discussion cont'd ~ Brady Keeper	Ambassador 1 & 2
	<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
	nikamotān - mētawētān ~ Ron Cook	Meeting Room E
	The importance of learning Anishinaabemowin and the Dakota language from a learners perspective ~ Brenda Daniels and Doris Der	Meeting Room G
	metawewak (they are playing) ~ Norbert Mercredi	Meeting Room I
	Using Technology to Enhance Language Programming ~ Karen Taylor	Meeting Room J
<b>11:05am - 12:00pm</b>	<b>SESSION 6</b>	
	Speak Indigenous ~ Ramona Neckoway	Ambassador 1 & 2
	<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>	Meeting Room D
	Utilizing Syllabics along with the Online Dictionary in Cree, Ojibway, and Dene ~John McLean and Michael Li	Meeting Room E
	The importance of learning Anishinaabemowin and the Dakota language from a learners perspective ~ Brenda Daniels and Doris Der	Meeting Room G
	metawewak (they are playing) ~ Norbert Mercredi	Meeting Room I
	Using Technology to Enhance Language Programming ~ Karen Taylor	Meeting Room J
<b>12:00pm - 1:00pm</b>	<b>Lunch ~ Luc Wrigley</b>	

# SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

Thursday ~ February 22, 2024

1:00pm - 2:00pm	Keynote Seth Westhead	Ambassador 1 & 2
2:15pm - 3:15pm	<b>SESSION 7</b>	
		Ambassador 1 & 2
<i>GRANDPARENTS LOUNGE</i>		Meeting Room D
Beginners Cree with Songs and Games ~ Kim Halcrow		Meeting Room E
Grandmother Teaches Her Grandson the Dene Language in 26 days: Here's What She Learned ~ Lucy Antsanen		Meeting Room G
Kinship in Aansininemowin ~ Grandmother Nelliane Cromarty and Tanya McDougall		Meeting Room I
aadisookaanag (Sacred Stories) about anangokwaan (the Star World) for the classroom ~ Darcy-Anne Thomas and Jason Bone		Meeting Room J
3:15pm - 4:00pm	<b>Closing Remarks (<i>Door prize draws, you must be in attendance to win</i>)</b>	Ambassador 1 & 2

## FEBRUARY 22 LUNCHTIME PERFORMANCE

### LUC WRIGLEY

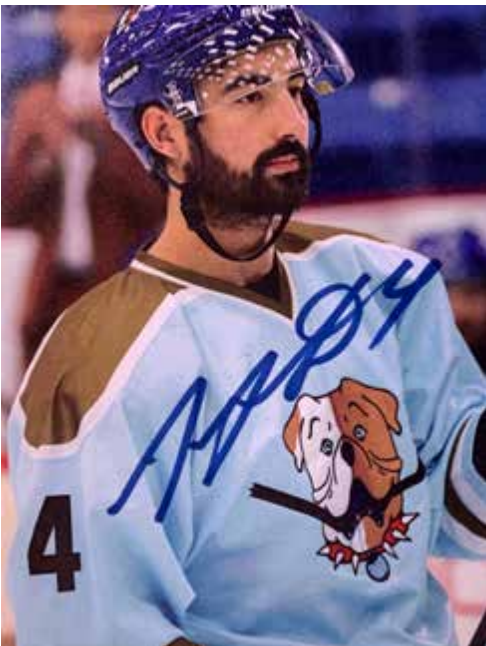
Luc Wrigley, a Cree French-Métis, has been playing music since the age of 3-½ and has been playing on stages since the age of 4. Throughout his performing with Winnipeg band Double the Trouble, Luc has been able to play his fiddle, guitar and sing across the prairies and Canada.

Luc and his brother have been featured at multiple festivals such as the Winnipeg Folk Fest, Festival du Voyageur, and many others across Canada.



# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Wednesday, February 21 ~ 9:30am-10:45am  
Ambassador 1 & 2



## ANDREW ANTSANEN

Hi, My name is Andrew Antsanen and I'm from a small fly in community in northern Manitoba called Lac Brochet.

I grew up speaking the language and living off the land as early as I could remember, until I decided to leave at the age of 13 to pursue my dream as a hockey player. For 4 years, I went to school and played hockey at Notre Dame college, which is in a small town in Wilcox, Saskatchewan. I also played for Team Manitoba, and from there I was scouted and played Junior hockey in Quebec.

After hockey, I started Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) and fought for a number of years. During that time, I worked as a carpenter and also facilitated hockey camps across Canada which I still do till this day.

And most recently, I'm one of the actors on a new TV show called Shoresy! Looking forward to meeting everyone and sharing my story with you all! Masi cho!

*~ Andrew Antsanen*

Andrew will speak on his life as a fluent Dene speaker from northern Manitoba. Being raised to speak the language on the land alongside expectations of an outside world.

With the support of his mom and dad, Andrew was encouraged to reach for the stars. When you do not fit in the world, you change your world to fit you. His language and skills have taken him on a journey which he will share with you today.



# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Thursday, February 22 ~ 9:00am-10:00am  
Ambassador 1 & 2

## BRADY KEEPER

Brady Keeper is a 27-year-old Ininew from Pimicikamak Cree Nation, Cross Lake, in northern Manitoba. He is currently playing for the Laval Rocket Team in the American Hockey League (AHL) while under contract with the Montreal Canadiens.

Throughout his hockey career, Brady has lived in many places across North America, Canada and started his career with the Norman AAA Northstars in Thompson, Manitoba.

As the first hockey athlete from Pimicikamak to get into the NHL, Brady has inspired many Indigenous youth to follow their dreams which he takes great pride in. Brady is semi-fluent in his Ininimowin language and is proud of his family and his roots. Brady currently lives in Quebec with his wife and children.

Brady will discuss his success and trials of life along with his language journey. Coming from a Ininimowin community in northern Manitoba, being immersed in his language, and surrounded by the land along with his family, helped shape Brady to be the person he is today.

Life is not always easy coming from the north trying to reach the top, but with perseverance and determination, anything is possible. Brady's hope is that if he can inspire one person to do the same, he's made a difference.



# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Thursday, February 22 ~ 1:00pm-2:00pm  
Ambassador 1 & 2



## SETH WESTHEAD

Seth is a dedicated and passionate Father, Husband, Consultant, Researcher, Mentor, Speaker and Creator living on Kurna Country in Adelaide, South Australia. With family connections to the Awabakal and Wiradjuri Nations of NSW, Seth draws on his ancestry and the deep wisdom and knowledge of Indigenous practices and Culture to guide and inform all the work that he does.

He works to better equip communities and young people with tools and evidence for public health advocacy.

Seth currently holds a Research Fellow and Community partnership lead role at the Telethon Kids Institute and is Co-leading the development of the National Roadmap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adolescent Health and Wellbeing.

Within his presentation, Seth will speak to his work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young people, their Families and Communities across his career as a Youth Mentor, Researcher, and Public Health Advocate. Seth will discuss the importance of Indigenous self-determination through genuine Governance and shared decision making.

Through his presentation Seth will draw on examples from his early work in Community Language reclamation and more recently the development of the First National Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adolescent Health.

# WORKSHOP SESSIONS

A - Z



## **aadisookaanag (Sacred Stories) About anangokwaan (the Star World) for the Classroom**

Darcy-Anne Thomas and Jason Bone

This presentation will explore Treaty Education from a First Nations perspective by studying Aadisookaanag (Sacred Stories) about Anangokwaan (the Star World) in the classroom. Focus will be on the intricate relationships between Anishinaabe-Ojibwe and their environments.

These stories illustrate the ways Anishinaabeg (humans) should live and act in the world in harmony with others, the land, and the Spirit World. The stories provide important understandings to what constitutes identity, community, and heritage. Stories like these, from our ancestors, our languages, and our cultures, remind Anishinaabeg that our oral traditions hold so much knowledge and wisdom.

We must ensure our youth are familiar with the stories and that they are passed on, so that the stories will always be here to guide us when we need support.

## **Adapting freely accessible visual resources to your languages - Hands on Learning using SouthernMichif.org.**

Tiara Opissinow and Heather Souter

The workshop introduces our website, which is filled with audio and digital resources for Southern Michif. It was developed by dedicated Southern Michif language learners who volunteer with the Prairies to Woodland Indigenous Language Revitalization Circle, working alongside Mother Tongue Speaker, Terry Ireland.

These resources, initially created to support an online Southern Michif speech community drawing from language acquired through comprehensible input-based immersion experiences, are now being used by learners beyond this group. The platform features free language resources adaptable for other Indigenous languages, making it accessible to families, community members, or teachers in educational institutions.

During the presentation, we will provide a walkthrough of the website and demonstrate how to effectively customize the learning material to align with your specific language needs using resources like Canva or Adobe. We will also showcase how other language learners are using these resources to support their language learning journey. This presentation also illustrates how the strengths of learners of all ages, but particularly youth, and the strengths of proficient speakers, particularly elders, can be combined to create incredible synergy. We are happy to share these resources with all others who are working hard to revitalize their languages. Please bring a laptop for hands-on participation.

# WORKSHOP SESSIONS

## **Andrew Antsanen, Keynote** ~ Presentation and Further Discussion

Andrew will speak on his life as a fluent Dene speaker from northern Manitoba. Being raised to speak the language on the land alongside expectations of an outside world. With the support of his mom and dad, Andrew was encouraged to reach for the stars. When you do not fit in the world, you change your world to fit you. His language and skills have taken him on a journey which he will share with you today.

## **Beginners Cree with Songs and Games**

**Kim Halcrow**

In this workshop you will learn techniques through songs and games to help language learners in retention. Total Physical Response (TPR); actions, singing, games, and puppets are props I use to build confidence and respect with learners of the Cree language. If you're a beginner Cree language teacher and wanting more ideas and help, this is the workshop for you. ekosani!

## **Brady Keeper, Keynote** ~ Presentation and Further Discussion

Brady will discuss his success and trials of life along with his language journey. Coming from a Ininimowin community in northern Manitoba, the positives of being immersed in his language and surrounded by the land along with his family helped shape Brady into the person he is today. Life is not always easy coming from the north trying to reach the top but with perseverance and determination anything is possible. Brady's hope is that if he can inspire one person to do the same, he's made a difference.

## **Creation Stories based on the star constellations, songs, and teaching relating to the universe in Cree Culture**

**Allen R. Keeper**

My name is Allen Richard Keeper born in Northern Mb Tataskweyak and work at MFNERC as a Cultural Facilitator. I worked as Cree language teacher in the Classroom and taught land based education. I was a sled dog musher for many years and hosted sled races, practiced trapping, fishing and hunting.

I also practice my spiritual way of life and have lived off the land. My relatives lived the nomadic way of life and followed the customs and traditional way of life. I learned the stories from Elders and attended ceremonies, songs and teachings. I included the lessons in my classroom while teaching. The stories, songs and teachings help students to understand who they are as young Cree people. I will use a Nightshade program to include some star knowledge in the presentation.

# WORKSHOP SESSIONS

## **Grandmother Teaches Her Grandson the Dene Language in 26 days: Here's What She Learned**

Lucy Antsanen

How much of a First Nations language can a five-year-old child learn to speak at home in 26 days (3 ½ weeks)? To find out, a grandmother will be teaching her grandson how to speak their First Nations language using pictures, photos, books, labels, phrases, songs, play, and flashcards.

Other family members will help with this learning experiment. During this workshop, the presenter will share the results and some techniques to conduct your own "language experiment" at MALS on February 21 and 22, 2024.

## **Kinship Talks with MALS Grandparents**

MALS Grandparents will speak on kinship systems of their spoken language. How to traditionally address someone and the significance of the language words. MALS Grandparents would like those words revitalized and utilized for generations to come. They are more than just words, they are a way of being.

## **metawewak (they are playing)**

Norbert Mercredi

The participants will have the opportunity to gain information about First Nation Games and why teaching games can teach the four domains of the traditional learning circle (physical, intellectual, social/emotional and spiritual). nacinehikewin – the seeking of sacred cultural knowledge.

Participants will be engaged in learning about history, value and importance of First Nation games at instilling positive self-identity, self-esteem, pride, social/emotional, physical, mental and spiritual wellness in our youth. (kayas isihcikewin – traditional culture).

The presentation will use a holistic approach to learning and teaching through power point, with physical activity and active participation by participants.

## **nikamotān - mētawētān**

Ron Cook

In this session, we will sing and play games in nēhinawēwin. Our language has humour imbedded within it and the best way to bring it out is to celebrate by singing and playing games.

We will try to limit the use of other languages, using actions and pictures to convey message.

ki ka mōcikihtānaw.

# WORKSHOP SESSIONS

## **Overcoming Barriers Through Representation**

**Christina Barraclough and Summer Fisher**

This interactive session will connect those who are beginners to language learning to share ways in which they are overcoming barriers within their everyday lives. This session is meant for others to gain confidence in their native tongue, by creating a painting surrounding the word of their choice is a great way to practice and expose others to their language.

Our slideshow will include basic language skills, words, and inspiration ideas to help create a tote bag to secure confidence and pride during their language learning journeys. We will provide resources for our upcoming language programming and ways that have benefitted programs successfully in the past to ensure participants are actively motivated to learn and pursue their language.

## **Sayisi Dene Timeline: Pre-Contact to Present**

**Grandmother Diane Powderhorn**

A chronological timeline of historical events of what happened to the Sayisi Dene First Nation of Manitoba from the Sayisi Dene perspective. This timeline will give you insight and understanding of how the Sayisi Dene people were forcefully relocated to an urban setting and almost destroyed. The Sayisi Dene are a strong, resilient people who took over their own lives and decided to move back to their traditional territory to reclaim their culture, language and traditions.

## **Seth Westhead, Keynote ~ Presentation**

Within his presentation Seth will speak to his work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young people, their Families and Communities across his career as a Youth Mentor, Researcher and Public Health Advocate. Seth will discuss the importance of Indigenous self-determination through genuine Governance and shared decision making. He will outline the importance of holistic understandings of health and wellbeing and the interplay between the Cultural and Social Determinants of health.

Through his presentation Seth will draw on examples from his early work in Community Language reclamation and more recently the development of the First National Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adolescent Health.

## **Speak Indigenous**

**Ramona Neckoway**

The Speak Indigenous language campaign is intended to promote awareness and to advocate for the creation of safe spaces for our languages. Our message is for everybody, from new language learners, to Indigenous peoples who connect with and have pride in their identities, to businesses and organizations. Speak Indigenous celebrates the rich linguistic diversity of Indigenous peoples and invites diverse audiences to get curious about and embrace Indigenous languages.

# WORKSHOP SESSIONS

## The importance of learning Anishinaabemowin and the Dakota language from a learners perspective

Brenda Daniels and Doris Der

The workshop facilitators will share their experiences of learning their traditional language as an adult which includes both successes and challenges. The facilitators will provide their experiences from an Anishinaabe and Dakota perspective.

They will discuss with the group why learning their language is important. Nourishing and celebrating the pride of Indigenous languages is a catalyst approach that can encourage and support youth on their language learning journey.

Language activities and games will be demonstrated that can make language learning fun for a variety of ages.

## Using Technology to Enhance Language Programming

Karen Taylor

Working with technology in any language setting can be overwhelming. In this session, we will look at ways of enhancing language lessons to engage students. Rather than tool driven we will review the needs-based approach to incorporating technology. We will glance through various on-line tools, the ability to integrate technology into the curriculum, use of technology for assessment and improve collaboration.

We will look at some examples for use in the classroom, the main one being using audio to record the language.

## Utilizing Syllabics along with the Online Dictionary in Cree, Ojibway, and Dene

John McLean and Michael Li

The Online Dictionary developed by the presenters is an ongoing project which has consistently been growing now includes a system of utilizing syllabics along with the Roman Orthography writing system. Indigenous Language Teachers and Learners will be able to write words and phrases in their own dialect/sub-dialect using both writing systems.

Workshop Options: Participants can develop an online dictionary for their own community in the local dialect/sub-dialect with our technical assistance.

masi-cho pidamaya mahsi maarsii  
Qujanaqqutit ᖃᐅᐱᐃᐅᐅ kinánaskomitin miigwech

We recognize and acknowledge Partner Co-Lead Organizations, the Partner Representatives and the MALS membership for their continued support.

**PARTNER CO-LEAD ORGANIZATIONS:**



Membership and representatives consists of Grandparents from each of the Manitoba Aboriginal Languages groups, and representatives of leaders from the First Nations, Inuit and Métis (FNIM) education organizations, provincial school divisions and post-secondary institutions.

**PARTNER REPRESENTATIVES:**

Brandon University

Manitoba Metis Federation  
Louis Riel Institute

Manitoba Indigenous Cultural  
Education Centre Inc.

Manitoba Inuit Association

Red River College

School District of Mystery Lake

University of Winnipeg

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg School Division

Frontier School Division

Indigenous Inclusion Directorate/  
Manitoba Education



To Revitalize, Retain  
and Promote Indigenous  
Languages in Manitoba

DESIGN & LAYOUT

