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Eenuu-Eeyou
Community Foundation
Fondation communautaire
Eenuu-Eeyou

Casting our net wider

The Eenuu-Eeyou Community
Foundation Inaugural Campaign

Aanischaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute

Building Upon an Extraordinary Success

Located 600 km north of Montreal in the community of Oujé-Bougoumou, Quebec, Aanischaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute is an breathtaking museum, cultural institute, and showcase of the history of the James Bay Cree, and a living, breathing symbol of the Crees' determination to preserve and share their stories, legends, art, and physical objects with the world.

Opened in 2011, Aanischaukamikw has received over 25,000 visitors. In addition, over 200,000 guests have explored its virtual museum. The Institute is now seen by many of the world's prominent museums as one of Canada's most important cultural institutions.

Aanischaukamikw has garnered over a dozen prestigious awards, including the 2018 Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Museums. In addition to its on-site and virtual offerings, the Institute's programming is expressed through powerful, imaginative travelling exhibits like the award-winning "Footprints: A Walk Through Generations", which began an extended national tour in June 2019 at the National Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec.

Aanischaukamikw's programming is strategic by design, and deliberately aligns with many of the key recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

"In just a few short years, Aanischaukamikw has become a touchpoint for all Crees, and a source of valuable education for all Canadians and people around the world. As a nation, we stand taller because Aanischaukamikw has helped us to define ourselves and to place enormous value on our history, our language, and our culture."

Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum, C.M.
Chair – Cree Nation Government



Moving Forward — A Major Expansion

Aanischaaukamikw's key priorities for the next ten years include education of Cree youth about their culture, language, and history; strategic acquisition and repatriation of important artifacts; and educating Canadians about the culture and history of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee.

A thorough and detailed expansion program has been planned in order to help Aanischaaukamikw to meet these critical needs. Funds will be used in these five areas:

Protecting and Strengthening the Cree Language

\$4 MILLION

We live in a time when many First Nations languages in Canada are disappearing as the Elders pass on. Recognizing the critical importance of language preservation, Aanischaaukamikw is committed to developing and strengthening the Eeyou Istchee Cree language through documentation, study, and educational curriculum. Cree is now taught in all Eeyou Istchee schools, an approach that is a positive model for all Canadian First Nations communities. Language development and research conducted at the Institute inform the development of school curriculum, and are critical priorities of the Institute.

Connecting Cree Youth to the World of Multimedia

\$1 MILLION

The success of multimedia and staged theatrical presentations like the highly-celebrated "Voyage of the Odayak" and "The Mind's Eye" have captured Cree youth by making their roots and heritage relevant and exciting by bringing it to life. These presentations have sparked significant interest in the world of multimedia for many young Crees. To effectively reach and educate young people, ACCL must harness innovative educational approaches and deliver new programming to some 6,000 youth across Eeyou Istchee, including technical production (sound, light, music), theatre workshops, artistic training and workshoping (acting, voice work, dance, music), writing classes, and courses in video production and new media techniques.

Confronting the Residential School Era

\$1 MILLION

For over a decade, there has been significant national debate relating to the impacts of the Residential Schools, but there is a distinct lack of documented knowledge and programming about this era. This program will launch important exhibit material, educational and interpretive programming for the more than 5,000 visitors to the Institute, and through both digital and planned travelling exhibits that will reach thousands more.

Reaching out to Canada

\$1.5 MILLION

Aanischaaukamikw must seize every opportunity to share the lessons, beauty, and strength of Cree history and culture with people, institutions, and communities from across Canada. By developing imaginative and powerful travelling multimedia exhibits, by strengthening the Institute's virtual museum offerings, and by building strategic partnerships with Canada's most prominent museums and cultural institutes, the Institute will contribute to the process of reconciliation by informing Canadians about who the Crees are and the remarkable things they have achieved.

Acquisition and Repatriation

\$2.5 MILLION

Acquiring, documenting, and studying important Cree artifacts currently spread worldwide in museum and private collections, enriching the visitor experience and strengthening research through intensive study of these key acquisitions. Acquiring, documenting, and studying important Cree artifacts currently spread across the world in museum and private collections will dramatically enrich the visitor experience and strengthen research through the intensive study of these key acquisitions. In addition to the more than 5,000 annual visitors to the Institute, this work will be highly relevant to thousands of archaeology, anthropology, and history students and scholars around the world, many of whom will study on site at Aanischaaukamikw.



A Unique Opportunity

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action recommend that aboriginal communities and peoples across Canada must be fully in charge of their language and culture as well as their community development. This is also a critical element of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Honouring, protecting, and sharing the art, culture, history, and traditional ways of the James Bay Crees is Aanischaaukamikw's fundamental raison d'être.

“The best way to expose Canadians to First Nations culture is to present it with impact and imagination. That is why we are deeply committed to telling our story in powerful and memorable ways, to carefully safeguarding and developing our language, and to operating at the highest standard possible. We're proud to be the leading indigenous cultural institution in the country, but we know we must continue to reach higher.”

Dr. Sarah Pashagumskum, Chief Executive Officer
Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute

In just eight years, this remarkable institution has set an important new standard for indigenous museums and research organizations around the world. Even more importantly, Aanischaaukamikw has given the Crees of Eeyou Istchee a voice and a platform to share their fascinating history and culture.

In the context of the reconciliation movement, and in light of the success of the Institute, it is clear that the momentum we have built must continue. Strategic support from donors who wish to establish and fortify their philanthropic partnership with the Cree Nation has never been more important.

Your donation will allow the Crees' rich culture to be shared with all Canadians by providing new ways in which the stories, legends, art, and music of the Crees can be shared with the world. Above all, your investment in Aanischaaukamikw will be an invaluable contribution to the future of the Cree people and to the process of reconciliation.



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