



OTTAWA ABORIGINAL COALITION (OAC) COMMUNITY FORUM REPORT – February 8, 2017



The Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition's (OAC) Community Forum on February 8, 2017 was a wonderful evening. Over 200 participants came to hear about the work that is being done by the OAC with our community partners. We wanted to highlight some of the exceptional people and moments throughout the evening.

OUR ELDERS FOR THE EVENING:

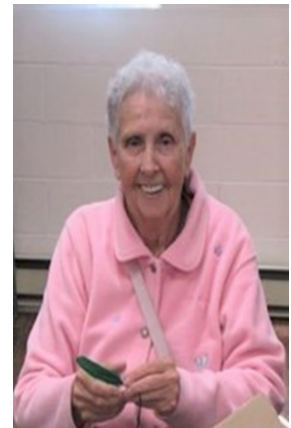
First we want to thank all of our Elders who were able to join us for the evening. We would like to extend a very special thank you to Grandmother Irene Lindsay, Elder Sally Webster, and Senator Lois McCallum, who provided the opening and closing prayers.



Grandmother Irene Lindsay



Elder Sally Webster



Senator Lois McCallum



Cody Coyote and Theland Kicknosway

OUR ENTERTAINERS, OUR YOUTH:

Theland Kicknosway opened our evening with a drum song, and then closed out the evening with a dance performance accompanying Cody Coyote's powerful and inspiring song performance.

Should you wish to see more performances by these two amazing young men, just click the links below:

Theland Kicknosway: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgBJZX55bFo>

Cody Coyote: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYU6FMVOG8E>

MAYOR JIM WATSON, CITY OF OTTAWA:

Thank you to Mayor Watson who was able to join us for the first hour and a half, and provide an inspiring speech acknowledging the work that the OAC and the City of Ottawa are doing together in partnership. It was recognized that, although we have many issues that we continue to work on, we continue to have a number of key issues in this City that we must address collectively; including the high numbers of Indigenous people that are homeless and living in the streets, as well as the lack of services for those with addictions and mental health needs.



Mayor Jim Watson, City of Ottawa



Tara Shannon Renaud

TARA SHANNON, SINGER/SONGWRITER:

Thank you to Tara Shannon, who partnered with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition and Aboriginal youth in our community to complete the studio recording of the song, “Someone Who Understands”. This song, which will be included on her new album “Unfinished”, will provide financial support to Aboriginal youth programming. Tara’s vision is to help Aboriginal youth who have the highest rates of mental health distress, including youth suicide rates, in this country.

Tara’s new album, “Unfinished” will be released at the end of February 2017, and will be available on youtube.

To watch the video of the making of the recording, “Someone Who Understands” click on the link below:

<https://youtu.be/h6WnSHwMwq8>

OAC AND CITY OF OTTAWA:

Marc Maracle, OAC Chair, and Co-Chair of the City of Ottawa’s Aboriginal Working Committee (AWC), presented with City staff member, Clara Friere on the work that is ongoing to address the key areas that the AWC is focused on.



AWC Working Model



Steve Kanellakos, City Manager

Steve Kanellakos, City Manager, also addressed the participants on the continued work that the OAC and the City of Ottawa have done collectively in their partnership that continues to move forward for the betterment of Aboriginal people residing in Ottawa.

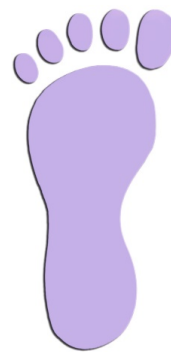
OTTAWA URBAN INDIGENOUS HEALTH STRATEGY:

Thank you to all the presenters, and particularly to our community partners, including Ottawa Public Health for providing all the work done around an Ottawa Indigenous Health Strategy (OIHS). The OIHS report will be available to the community shortly. However, in the meantime the PowerPoint presentation presented at our Community Forum can be reviewed by clicking the link below:

<http://ottawaaboriginalcoalition.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/UIHS.pdf>

THE HISTORY PROJECT:

Thank you to the community for providing us with some great ideas for moving forward on the history project. Footprints (similar to the footprint pictured on the left) were provided to each table and the ideas were written on them, and then posted on the wall. Some of the ideas we were given included:



<http://ottawaaboriginalcoalition.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/OAC-History-Project-Footprint-summary-Feb-2017.pdf>



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FOOD:

Whenever we gather together as an Aboriginal community it is our custom to strengthen our mind, body and spirit with great food! So we give very special thanks to Wawatay Catering, owner Marie-Cecile Nottaway, and her fabulous team.

Wawatay Catering encourages Aboriginal youth living in the city to enhance their existing skills by hiring them when catering events in Ottawa. Wawatay Catering teaches youth by providing them hands on experience in food preparation, serving, and other aspects of the catering profession.

Marie-Cecile's detailed care for the food she and her staff prepare and serve is not only tasty, but presented in a unique and picturesque manner for all to enjoy.



Contact *Wawatay Catering* for your next meeting or event at:

819-441-1111/819-334-2728

wawataycatering@gmail.com

THE EVALUATION:



The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive and we want to thank you for completing the evaluation form provided to you at the Forum.

Feedback from those in attendance will provide us with constructive input for consideration when planning the next Forum.



To view the results of the compiled evaluations, just go to the link below:

<http://ottawaaboriginalcoalition.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/FINAL-Compiled-Evaluations-February-2017.pdf>

IN CLOSING...

A huge thank you to all of YOU - our Elders, our community members, and our partners for making this Community Forum the huge success it was. Thank you for your guidance and your input as we move forward, working with our various partners, to continue to address those issues that impact our diverse Aboriginal community residing in Ottawa.



We also wish to thank all of the member organizations of the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition, and the staff members at the City of Ottawa for making this Community Forum the best one yet.

We hope to see all of you again at the next OAC Aboriginal Community Forum, but until then....

Chi-miigwetch! Nia:wen! Zujannamiik! Thank You!