



The Gichi Kendaasiwin Centre

Lakehead has made a significant commitment to reconciliation, committing to address many of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's "94 Calls to Action." In particular, #63.3 "Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect" has become a guiding principle for the commitments Lakehead has made to the Indigenous community in Northwestern Ontario.

The Gichi Kendaasiwin Centre (meaning "higher knowledge" in Ojibwe) acknowledges that education is key to Reconciliation and to the creation of a culture of understanding across communities that will support a more equitable and inclusive future for Indigenous people.

The Centre will provide critically needed community and cultural infrastructure for Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario. Located in the heart of the Lakehead University campus, in the City of Thunder Bay, this facility will be a community destination that will be an expression of Indigenous culture, a centre focused on Reconciliation in the land of the Anishinaabe.

It will also act as a community hub – a gathering and meeting place welcoming Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members. The Centre will provide archival space to store documents of historical significance, such as artifacts and legal documents, and to display and share knowledge related to curated collections to visitors from the community and region. The Centre will expand outreach activities to youth and increase teaching and support services for Indigenous learners

Building a facility that will reflect and celebrate the culture of Indigenous communities in the region will help encourage Indigenous students to pursue postsecondary studies. The Centre will also provide support for work placement, training and skills development. Moving forward with this project will have significant impact on economic development in Northern Ontario.

Gichi Kendaasiwin

- Upon construction, the Gichi Kendaasiwin would contribute an estimated \$37.5M to Ontario's GDP
- Once Operational, an additional estimated \$10.28M will be contributed to Ontario's GDP on an annualized basis
- Over the next five years provide a total contribution to Ontario's GDP of approximately \$75.7M
- The Centre will generate an estimated 300 full-time jobs associated with the major capital build
- Once operational, estimated to offer 83 full-time jobs a year

As Northwestern Ontario's only university, Lakehead University has long played an essential role in the region's economic growth, helping it transition and diversify from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy. Lakehead University is an integral component of Northern Ontario's competitive advantage and the Gichi Kendaasiwin Centre will help the Indigenous population in Northern Ontario to take full advantage of economic development opportunities.



Ontario has the **largest Indigenous population** in Canada (374,395)*. The second largest population is in British Columbia (207,580).

Non-Indigenous
\$42,564
Indigenous
\$33,218



The medium annual income for Indigenous people in Ontario (aged 25-64) is **\$33,218** compared to **\$42,564** for the non-Indigenous population.



Thunder Bay is the Census Metropolitan Area with the highest proportion of Indigenous People in Canada (12.7% of the population)