



KNOWLES CENTRE INC.

Helping Youth Find Their Path: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

INSIGHTS

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An inside look at the programs and services of Knowles Centre Inc.

2008 Annual General Meeting Highlights Successful Year

More than 50 people attended Knowles Centre 2008 Annual General Meeting on June 19.

Aboriginal singers and drummers Mike West and Carl Swan opened the meeting with an eagle song and later closed with *Gitchii Miigwetch Manitou*, a song of thanks to the Creator.

Following greetings from dignitaries and official business reports, several individuals were recognized for outstanding achievements, including:

Wayne Benson was thanked for his two-year tenure as Board President. Wayne will continue as a Past President and later as a Board member. **Gerri Wiebe**, current 1st Vice President, was welcomed as the incoming President.

James Ferguson, a partner in the firm Aikins MacAulay & Thorvaldson, was recognized for volunteering to serve more than 20 years as Honorary Solicitor to Knowles Centre.

A Day Treatment Program client was named as the 2008 recipient of the Vicki Whitehead Memorial Award which honours a deserving participant in the Biimautaziwin Aboriginal Program. Presenter Troy Fontaine noted the student's willingness to help others, sense of fun, kind heart and gentle spirit truly exemplifies the Anishnabe spirit.

Three students from the Group Care Treatment Program received the Public School Award for their successful return to a community school. This can be a difficult transition because students often receive less support, but face higher expectations, and a new group of peers and teachers. The students were presented with a plaque and cash prize. To be eligible, students must complete one semester and earn at least one credit.



Pictured clockwise from top left: Wayne Benson welcomes guests, Mike West and Carl Swan open meeting with a song, Group Care Director Rik Skelton invites all for a barbecue, more than 50 guests attended the meeting.

Six staff members were recognized for their years of service, including: **Roy Forest**, Youth Care Worker, Respect House (20 years); **Keran Storm**, Youth Care Worker, Respect House (20 years); **Dave Purpur**, Unit 2 Supervisor (15 years); **Michelle Zimmer**, Kitchen Coordinator (15 years); **Dawn Danylchuk**, Unit 1 Supervisor (10 years); and **Colleen Keating**, Youth Care Worker, Clyde Road (10 years).

Following the meeting, guests enjoyed a barbecue lunch in the afternoon sun.

**Read Knowles Centre's
2007-2008 Annual Report online at
www.knowlescentre.ca**

Biimautaziiwin Program journeys to cultural events far and near

May was an exciting and adventurous month for a few clients in the Biimautaziiwin Program.

Three youth, accompanied by staff members Troy Fontaine and Lesley Gosselin, ventured to Membertou, located in Sydney, Nova Scotia on Cape Breton Island for six days. The group was invited by Mi'Kmaq elder Jane Meader, a grandmother from the community (*pictured below*). Jane, her mother Paullina and Aunt Katie welcomed the travelers into their homes and ensured they felt welcome and comfortable in the community.



The travelers agreed the best part of the trip was being treated like family as they sat around Jane's kitchen table talking, sharing stories and learning some of the Mi'Kmaq language most evenings.

Here, the group met a relative of Jane's who makes porcupine quill baskets valued at thousands of dollars and learned how the baskets are made from start to finish – a time consuming task. And of course, the group learned how to cook live lobsters and enjoyed a feast hosted by the Mi'Kmaq grandmothers.

During their day trips, the group visited the historic Fortress of Louisbourg National Park and the Louisbourg Lighthouse, Canada's oldest light station, located across the harbour (*pictured right*).

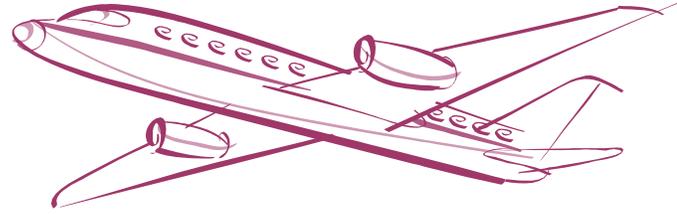
The group also hiked to Glooskap's Cave on Kelly's Mountain, led by Mi'Kmaq elder Lawrence Wells. After an hour climb up the steep mountain, entry to the cave was denied by the incoming tide. Still, the group was able to visit a small waterfall that feeds four small, sacred pools where the Mi'Kmaq people cleanse themselves in the waters before going on a vision quest or ceremony at the traditional mountain site.

On the second last day, the group crossed the channel in a ferry – a first for all three clients – and drove the Cabot Trail, a mountainous highway that winds along the ocean.

The last day of the trip was spent in Halifax and Dartmouth, where the group took a guided tour of Halifax which included close-up views of Canadian Navy, Coast Guard and container ships.

There was little rest for the travelers. Only a day and a half after returning from Nova Scotia, two of the same youth plus one other and the two staff left for Dog Creek, MB for the Ogitchida Ceremony. The four-night ceremony is a healing opportunity where participants can continue their journey to spiritual, physical, emotional and mental well-being.

All three youth proudly and joyfully received their spiritual names at this ceremony. They also enjoyed listen-



ing to traditional songs, spending time around the eight sacred fires, and participating in the evening ceremonies. During the day, they ventured on short trips to Steep Rock and Riding Mountain National Park (*pictured below*), and fished at Lake Manitoba Narrows. Like other ceremonies, this one created excitement and fostered further growth towards a greater understanding of our Ancestors way of life.



Youth are selected for activities such as the trip to Nova Scotia and Dog Creek based on their commitment and participation in the Biimautaziiwin Program and good behavior at school and Knowles Centre.

Both trips were made possible by the outstanding generosity of the Graham C. Lount Family Foundation whose continued support is greatly appreciated and have made many great things possible for Aboriginal youth, their families and communities.

*Contributed by Troy Fontaine,
Biimautaziiwin Aboriginal Cultural
Coordinator*

Teen Talk gives youth power through information

For several years, *Teen Talk* has run Youth Health Education Workshops for the kids at Knowles Centre. *Teen Talk* is a peer education service provided by Klinik Community Health Centre.

While Knowles Centre promotes abstinence, the reality is that behaviorally challenged youth often come to us having already been exposed to, and participated in high-risk behaviors. Education empowers youth to make safer, more responsible decisions, and to have healthier, positive relationships.

Workshop topics this year included youth sexuality, sexually transmitted infections and birth control, teen dating violence, mental health, body image, and substance use awareness.

The kids sometimes initially complain “Do we have to do this?” But for weeks afterwards, they ask staff follow-up questions. Most importantly, they use the information to help with the decisions they make.

Education is power, especially for youth whose lives may feel out of control at times. The presenters from *Teen Talk* are young, well educated, patient, supportive, and humorous. They are skilled at engaging youth and put their audience at ease by talking *to* them, not *at* them.

Contributed by Carol Watson, Youth Care Worker, Respect House



Thanks to the presenters from Teen Talk for helping us to empower youth at Knowles Centre. We look forward to seeing them again next year!

The kids are off to camp!

With joyful spirits – and a little trepidation – the first Group Care clients headed to camp on June 30. The boys and accompanying youth care workers will spend six days at Knowles Centre’s camp at Big Whiteshell Lake.

“Although they don’t know it, they will be creating positive memories that will last for years,” says Unit Supervisor Marshall Gardner. “For many of the kids, it will be their first time fishing, canoeing, hiking in the woods, or swimming in a lake.”

Some of the campers are very nervous about taking on new and different activities so far away from the familiar setting of the city. In the past, however, other clients have said attending Knowles camp was one of the best times of their lives, says Marshall.

Over the summer, other groups of boys and girls from the Group Care Treatment Program will spend their own memorable week at camp.

A warm thanks to the many wonderful friends of Knowles Centre whose generous donations made camp possible this year!

LeeAnne Sinclair honoured with Jim Smith Award



Since 2001, Knowles Centre has awarded a Red River College Child and Youth Care graduate with the Justice Jim Smith Memorial Award in recognition of excellence in academics and volunteerism. This year's recipient was LeeAnne Sinclair.

This well-deserving student contributed to the community by volunteering with the Rainbow Resource Centre and the United Nations in Canada, in addition to her studies. At the Rainbow Resource Centre, LeeAnne helped run the youth group and the peer support info-line for gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and trans-gendered youth. She also served a term as

Winnipeg Regional Coordinator for the Sense of Belonging Project for the U.N. where she networked with schools and developed an anti-racism workshop.

The memorial award was established in memory of the Honourable Jim Smith, a Court of Queen's Bench Judge, who passed away in 2001. He served seven years on the Board of Directors of Knowles Centre. Every year his widow Jean and Respect House Supervisor Juana Schoch present the award at the College’s graduation luncheon.

LeeAnne is an asset to Child and Youth Care field. Her volunteerism has no doubt made a huge impact on the lives of at-risk youth she has served.

Contributed by Carol Watson, Youth Care Worker, Respect House

Manitoba Moose Champs at Knowles Centre

The Manitoba Moose and its Foundation scored a hat trick with the young people at Knowles Centre.

The highlight was a generous grant used to repaint and re-equip Knowles Centre's on-site Manitoba Moose recreation room with new televisions, video games and consoles, a pool table and a fresh coat of paint in the team's color. The Recreation Room is a welcoming place and favourite for clients to play and enjoy being kids despite the challenges they are facing.

Throughout the past season, the Manitoba Moose provided several

complimentary tickets so that clients could attend games and cheer on the team, as well. A highlight for a few lucky boys and girls was watching a game against the Hamilton Bulldogs from a sky box at the MTS Centre.

Knowles Centre looks forward to attending the official cheque presentation in August. Seeing the Centre recognized as a worthy and respected community agency builds clients' confidence in their treatment and encourages their path to wellness. As well, it reminds them that there are many people in the community that want to help them succeed.



Manitoba Moose Yearling Foundation Executive Director Kelly McArthur presents a cheque to Knowles Centre Recreation Coordinator to re-outfit the popular Manitoba Moose Recreation Room at Knowles Centre.



Former students bring history back to school



Former 1940s students Harry Collins (left) and Bill Polonuk visited the students at John G. Stewart School in June to share stories of their years at Knowles School for Boys.

The audience of mostly teenaged boys was keenly interested in day-to-day life at the old school and asked about things like haircuts, uniforms, chores, pets and chances to meet girls.

Staff News

Nikki Spigelman, BSW, RSW, joined Knowles Centre in May as a Clinical Case Manager in the growing Treatment Foster Care Program. She brings direct experience in both treatment foster care and group care.

Heather Chandler, BSW, will serve as Acting Coordinator for the Treatment Foster Care Program for a one-year term beginning in September. She will assume a permanent, full-time position as Clinical Case Manager with the program at the end of the term. Heather joined Knowles Centre in August 2007 as the Acting Coordinator of the Sexual Abuse Treatment Program.

Relief Youth Care Workers **Kayla Syrota** and **Josue Rodriguez** both graduated from Red River College's Child and Youth Care Diploma Program in May 2008. As part of their two-year programs, Kayla did her practicum at Respect House and Josue worked with the staff and clients at Clyde Road. *Congratulations Kayla and Josh for your accomplishments!*



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Knowles Centre Inc.
2065 Henderson Highway
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R2G 1P7

Maureen Britton, Editor

Phone: (204) 339-1951
Fax: (204) 334-4173
Email: info@knowlescentre.ca
Web: www.knowlescentre.ca

Comments, suggestions and inquiries are welcome.