Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
Annual Report
2010-2011
“We the Leadership are committed to working together to restore our cultural and traditional values and rejuvenate the growth of our Nation to govern ourselves, create a self-reliant, safe, healthy and environmentally sound community for all the descendants of Desh-kan-Ziibi”
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Chief and Council Annual Report 2010-2011

The past fiscal year from April 1st 2010 to March 31st 2011 has been very challenging and rewarding for the Chief and Council. As always with our community’s agenda there have been ongoing community issues throughout the year as well as immediate concerns that have risen unexpectedly. The role of Chief and Council as planners and policy makers is to ensure the community’s vision is enacted through high-level decision making taking into account the current environment around us. Over the past year this Council has made decisions that will have an impact on better governance, social-welfare, economic development, community infrastructure and the Big Bear Creek land claim settlement. The following report is a summary of the major initiatives that Chief and Council have been involved in for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

Chief and Council met with National Chief Shawn Atleo at the AFN on January 9th 2011 after reaching an agreement in principle for the settlement of the Big Bear Creek Land Claim the day before with Canada.

Photo L to R: George Henry, Chief Joe Miskokomon, Rawleigh Grosbeck, National Chief Shawn Atleo, Katrina Fisher, Martha Albert, Policy Analyst Raymond Deleary, A/Council Secretary Lorna Chrysler, Kristen Hendrick, C. Darlene Whitecalf
Big Bear Creek Land Claim Negotiations

The 2010-2011 negotiations inherited an agenda from the previous year where the negotiation table was exploring the key factors to determining a settlement value. The work completed included identifying a historical land value per acre of the Big Bear Creek lands, determining the current unimproved value of the settlement lands and agreeing on the real rate of return on investments through time. Various experts in the respective fields were contracted to complete the work needed for the negotiations to move forward. By December 2010 the work completed had culminated to a point where the table was able to start negotiating a settlement amount. On January 8 2011 the negotiation table had reached an agreement in principle on a settlement amount and Canada agreed to take an amount forward to their approval process. To the end of the fiscal year Chief and Council had undertaken numerous planning sessions for the next phase of negotiations relating to land and additions to reserve. A community meeting was held in March where the Council provided an up-to-date account of where the Big Bear Creek negotiations were at.

Greenlane Royalty Negotiations with Oneida

There have been no negotiations meetings with Oneida throughout 2010-2011. The last meeting was held at the end of fiscal year 2009-2010 where our Council presented an offer to Oneida that we felt was fair and equitable, at that time Oneida had committed to responding to our offer. After not hearing from Oneida for some time, Chief Miskokomon prompted movement on this issue after sending the Chief at Oneida numerous emails and phone calls. Both councils agreed to move the royalties which were sitting with the City of Toronto to an interest bearing account held in trust by the Olthuis, Kleer, Townshend law firm. At March 2011 the royalties trust account had accumulated to approximately $3 million dollars. Our position remains consistent that we will begin negotiations on a 50/50 basis and allow the negotiations to proceed in good faith. We will continue to request that Oneida come back to the table to discuss this issue.
Water Treatment Plant

A reliable and clean water source and systems affects health and social safety, economic development, community housing, education and recreation. For this reason the Chief and Council has made it a priority to continue pressuring Indian Affairs to fund a new Water Treatment Plant and distribution system. Numerous meetings were had and a number of documents have been exchanged over the year between Indian Affairs and our office. By the end of fiscal year 2010-2011 the Council and Indian Affairs were discussing a solution that encompassed three major initiatives for our Community’s water issue: A Capital Planning Study exercise, Interim-upgrades to the existing water pump house to ensure clean water now, and major capital funding for a proper Water Treatment Plant and distribution system. Moving into the next fiscal year we anticipate working out the details on how these initiatives will take place and a continued lobbying effort to Indian Affairs to keep this issue on their radar.

Housing

In an effort to provide more housing for members the Council has directed an application to the CMHC housing program. The plan put into place through the application includes the building of 50 more homes over the next five years. The first phase of housing, upon approval, is expected to be built adjacent to the Chippewa Business Park. Under the CMHC application 10 homes will be built every year for the next five years. Preliminary discussions have also begun with the First Nations Market Housing Fund for an application to that program for the ability to finance new housing developments.

Chippewa Development Corporation

The Chippewa of the Thames Development Corporation has been revised as of the fall 2010. The mandate of the Corporation is to build the governance framework now to be able to take on future Nation economic initiatives. An interim Board of Directors of Council has been meeting and guiding some of the developments. In 2010-2011 the Corporation has undertaken the development of a Solar Corporation that is looking into the feasibility of solar power generation on Nation lands moving into 2011-2012 the Corporation will continue its development while at the same time monitoring the solar power generation initiative.
Chippewa Business Park

As most of you are aware the construction of the Chippewa Business Park began this past fiscal year. The road to acquiring financing for this project has been long and challenging. This Council had inherited an initiative from previous administrations and decided to salvage what was started rather than demolishing the building. By the end of fiscal year 2010-2011 the Infrastructure of the Business Park is well underway for seven serviced development lots and the first building is 75% occupied by the SOAHAC. Moving into 2011-2012 the Council expects to see further developments at the site and will work towards developing partnerships to attract more tenants.

Policing

Our community remains as a signatory to the Ontario First Nation Policing Agreement which provides our community with four police constables. Planning and development for a regionalized policing service along with the Southern First Nations Secretariat member Nations has continued for the past year. Internally, we have taken the past year to begin the preliminary planning for a community police commission.

Mount Elgin Memorial and Reconciliation

Council has mandated an ad-hoc committee of Council and residential school survivors in the community to begin the planning around reconciling the Mount Elgin Residential School site. Initial planning meetings have taken place amongst the committee and a staff resource from our political office has been dedicated to the file. This past year we have made a submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada for funding to implement a reconciliation strategy for our community and our member residential school survivors. The strategy includes creating a residential school survivor memorial garden and monument, developing a cultural centre and archives centre and hosting a large regional conference to bring together survivors, their families and the public.
Governance

This Council has made a targeted movement towards achieving good governance for the First Nation. Some of the work completed in 2010-2011 included making a submission to the Professional and Institutional Development program at Indian Affairs for funding to complete a governance strategic plan and the development of a custom leadership selection code. Plans for 2011-2012 will include holding community forums on governance and speaking with members about achieving good governance. Throughout the year you have probably noticed that the Council is seeking an Executive Administrator, that search will continue into the next year until we are satisfied we have the right person.

A fundamental component to achieving good governance is separating the administrative operations from the Council table. Over the year Council has had numerous discussions and planning sessions centered on achieving a clear separation between day-to-day business and politics. Another area of focus has been accountability to the community. Council has made a consistent effort to increase the amount of engagement with the community. This report is a prime example of how Council is committed to ensuring the community is informed, engaged and aware. You’ll also notice accountability measures within the format of Council meeting minutes. For instance, Councilors will always report on the meetings they attend outside of regular Council in a standard format that indicates the purpose and next steps for moving the meeting topic forward. Those summaries are included at the Council table so there is a clear awareness of the work Councilors are undertaking.

Over the past fiscal year Council has initiated a strategy to increase the communications with the community. We have had an unprecedented number of community engagement sessions over the past year where Council takes an active role in facilitating discussions with community members on important community development topics. We look forward to continuing the strategy of increased communications and have plans for a complete website overhaul, off and on-reserve community meetings and increased reporting measures to the membership.
Treaty Area and Inherent Rights Based Agenda

Our Nation’s political office has been active in pursuing initiatives mandated by Council that are aligned with our inherent rights, our treaty rights and our Aboriginal rights. Throughout 2010-2011 we have actively been responding to consultations from proponents and municipalities who are conducting projects within our traditional territory and may have an impact on our rights. Our political office has been active in attaining your input for the development of documents and maps that outline our traditional territory and traditional knowledge. We have actively been pursuing partnerships with some of the major industry suppliers within our territory such as Natural Gas, Hydro and other forms of power generation. Through these partnerships Council will achieve opportunities for members to attain training, higher education and meaningful employment.
Dear Members:

Chief and Council had a very busy and productive year. The construction of the Antler River Commercial Centre was a priority this year. This involved securing funding for the project and getting tenants for the building. The Southwest Aboriginal Health Access Centre has officially moved into the building in January 2011. The remainder of the building is still under construction along with a Greenhouse. The official Grand opening will be in October 2011.

Another area of priority was the negotiations for the Big Bear Creek Land Claim. Council had a number of community engagement sessions over the past year with the community. These sessions with the community will help Chief and Council to ensure that they know what the needs of the community are in regards to Economic Development, Education, Housing and other areas. Negotiations are still on-going with the Government.

A number of new positions were created over the past year. A Senior Policy Analyst, a Junior Policy Analyst and three Office Assistants were hired under a Social Assistant Transfer Fund.

At the end of March 2011, Marcia Doxtator retired after 35 years of service. A number of other staff have reached milestone anniversaries with our First Nation. Irla Doxtator 40 years, Brenda French 29 years, Beulah Kechego 24 years, Merle Fisher 23 years and Brian Sturgeon 23 years of service. Kim Fisher was promoted and is now the Health Administrator.

With funds received from Clench Fraud Trust the Council Chambers has been remodelled by local artist Nancy Deleary, painting of the Council room along more cultural relevant items are being displayed with pictures and wall hangings. If you happen to visit the Administration Office, come into the Council Chambers and view her work.

As you read the Program Annual reports you will appreciate some the great work that the employees are doing with their programs. All employees are to be commended on their dedication to their job and making sure that they fulfill their mandates and goals and objectives for the community.

Brenda French
A/Office Manager
YOUTH CENTRE

Boozhoo,

The Chippewa Youth Centre was supported through a grant received from the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport. The Program Co-coordinator was successful in securing the Actual Expenses including In-Kind contributions in the amount of $150,199.00. The Ministry grant received was in the amount of $85,687.00. Other contributors have been the: National Child Benefits program, Union Gas, Chippewas of the Thames Health Centre, Chippewa Social Initiatives Committee and the Chippewas of the Thames Chief and Council. Programming included: Softball, Hockey, Basketball, Volleyball, Weight Training, Badminton, Lacrosse, Biking, Track & Field, Camping, Canoeing, and Golfing. The program employed (2) full-time staff. The Summer Student Program also supported the program with a student that was employed July through August. The Vision of the Youth Program is to plan, implement, deliver, and evaluate a balanced program that is nurturing and inclusive to all youth at Chippewa between the ages of 13-29 years.

The youth centre has and continues to provide a safe environment for anyone to participate in the activities or socialize. Programs include: skill development, leadership skills, and educational and awareness workshops. Workshops delivered by resource people from the Health Centre include; health promotion, HIV, nutrition, smoking cessation, mental health, and drug and alcohol prevention and awareness. Students also have the opportunity to work on homework and assignments with staffs that are able to direct and assist when necessary. A mentorship program is also in place for volunteers and paid youth employees. The youth program has provides support for cultural events and community events.

The Chippewa Youth Centre has ascertained partners within and outside of the community. The Chippewas of the Thames Youth Program is represented at the Healthy Communities and Injury Prevention Middlesex-London Health Unit by the Program Co-ordinator, Union Gas has supported the Youth Program with monetary donations and computers.

James Deleary, B.Ed.
Chippewa Youth Fitness Program Manager
Accomplishments

- Secure funding
- Develop yearly work plan
- Successful program delivery to implement physical activity opportunities and offer educational workshops on nutrition, tobacco use, mental health, injury prevention, and alcohol/substance misuse

Program Highlights

- Youth were active in sport and workshops
- Securing outside partners for program support
- Well attended sport programs by parents and families
- Implementing a fastball program for (15) youth
- Youth Centre Fall Ball Consolation (15) youth
- Placing youth on various teams for fall ball (30) youth
- Delivering workshops to youth
- Supporting youth in extra curricular sports in high school
- Successful volleyball season (60) participants
- Healthy Communities Middlesex-London Health Unit Acknowledgment for Partnering with communities
- Chippewa Social Initiatives Committee monthly programming to compliment the youth program
- Training and Mentorship as well as offering student the opportunity to get community service hours for high school credit
HEALTH CENTRE

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and extend a big Thank-you to Chief and Council for approving the health centre to purchase a database, back in December 2009. The Community Wellness Supervisor and I met with MLD Solution’s Company in January 2010 to design a safe and secure database system, exclusively owned by Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. We wanted a database that would meet our unique needs for reporting and accountability purposes to our leadership and most of all, the community. At this meeting we decided that we would develop the database system in 3 phases and bring on other teams throughout the different phases, with the ultimate goal of having the whole Health Centre completely automated by April 2012.

It was imperative the 1st phase component would be to get the Community Wellness Team on as soon as possible and get all the existing data inputted into the database. The Community Wellness Supervisor and I spent tremendous amount of time and it was quite a task to develop a system to report the data that was required by Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy and Health Canada reports. However, patience and perseverance paid off and we did it. I am pleased to report the Community Wellness Team has been using the database since October 2010. To date we are in our 4th quarter reporting of the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Reports. Since the Wellness Team is using the database on a daily basis we were able to do our 2010-2011 Health Canada Annual Submission for the first time in 3 hours on Friday July 29, 2011 and the deadline was July 30, 2011. I faxed the report and purolated the hard copy to Health Canada. The benefit of having a database is the accuracy of information and makes reporting easier so staff can spend more time with clients.

We met again in March 2011 to start phase 2 of database which will bring on the Community Health Representative Worker, Healthy Babies Healthy Children Worker, Home and Community Care Workers and Seniors Service Coordinator, Health Administrative Assistant/Receptionist, and Health Administrator

Phase 3 will consist of bring on the Community Health Nurse later this year as well all relevant forms and a target date of April 2012 to have the Health Centre completely automated.

2010-2011 was a busy and exciting time and the statistics in our Health Canada annual report (80 pages) indicates more and more community members are accessing our health programs and services. The Aboriginal Health and Wellness Strategy Reports indicate more and more clients are utilizing the counseling services provided by our Community Wellness Team.
Accomplishments

- The Community Wellness Team utilizes the back of our health Centre since January 2010. This ensures a client’s privacy and maintains confidentiality when accessing counseling services.
- Formed partnerships with local colleges to utilize free human resources to assist with our programs and services.
- Secured funding from the Local Health Integration Network “Aging at Home Program” for the Senior Service Coordinator Position in the amount $52,00.00 dollars. SOAHAC issues the funds to our First Nation. This program is geared towards seniors 55 + and with multiple conditions to “age at home”.
- Secured funding from the Local Health Integration Network “Aging at Home Program” for maintenance funding in the amount $15,000 dollars which is based on reserve population. Oneida flows to funds to our First Nation. The Seniors Service Coordinator administers this program as well.
- Ensured that all 52 reports were submitted to the various funding agencies, as per agreements.
- Ensured that the 6 annual submissions were submitted to the various funding agencies in order to keep the funds flowing to our First Nation.
- Partnered with Oneida and Researchers from the University of Western Ontario to identify perceptions of health and local environment among the residents of our communities located near the Green Lane landfill. 15 participates from our community will be interviewed about their perceptions of health and local environment. These interviews will be completed over the summer and the University of Western Ontario Researchers will compile the information and give each community a report with their findings.

In closing, I am pleased and honored to lead and be part of a team that will and continue to deliver quality and effective health programming and services to our community members.

Thanks

Kimberly Fisher
Health Administrator
HOUSING

This is written confirmation that there has been no changes in this First Nation’s housing policies and insurance programs. The community housing conditions and maintenance programs has not changed.

This First Nation is proposing to construct 1 new Capital unit this fiscal year and 3 Capital units per year for the next five years. Repairs and renovations will also be done according to need and funding availability.

This First Nation is in the process of applying for the construction of 10 new units through the CMHC Expression of Interest program. This will include infrastructure pertaining to housing lot servicing of road access, water, sewer, hydro hookup, etc. This will also include services to existing dwellings that are in need of these services.

Local businesses and contractors will be utilized whenever possible for the excavation and construction of any new housing developments. Funding will be applied for through the employment and training department to create a labour program for housing construction and repairs.
ENJI-MAAJTAAWAAD EARLY YEARS

A Message from the Director

Enji-Maajtaawaad Early Years has had a remarkable 2010-2011 year. I am honoured to lead this group of professionals as we strive to create quality early learning services for the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. I am pleased to provide our program highlights and major accomplishments that will demonstrate our commitment to early childhood development, early learning and care.

In keeping with the vision and objectives of our program, we have continued to provide a positive experience for our children in a culturally appropriate and nurturing learning environment. Through the core components – culture and language, education, health promotion, nutrition, social supports and parental involvement we were able to address needs and provide that extra support to our families.

The 2010-11 School Year was the first time our Full-Day Junior Kindergarten was delivered outside of Antler River Elementary and at our centre. It was a huge success as the children benefited greatly by having both a Registered Early Childhood Educator and Teacher working together to deliver the Ontario Full-Day Early Learning curriculum. We are proud to have taken a leading role in our innovative partnership with Antler River Elementary to offer our children the very best educational resources available. Although, we did not receive extra funding from the provincial or federal governments we did receive their support and were successful at making it work in our community.

Enji-Maajtaawaad Early Years is gaining increasing respect and recognition in and outside of our community. It’s encouraging to hear that parents, teachers, community members, and governing officials see the true value of the program and how much of an impact it has on the child, their parents and the community itself.

I would like to express our sincere gratitude for the commitment, support and enthusiasm of our many community partners, service providers, and staff for the work that is done every day for our children and families. These partnerships are absolutely vital in our collective priority – Ensuring our youngest children have the tools they need to be successful in school and throughout life!

Jaime Cornelius
Early Years Director
Accomplishments

- Services were provided to a total of 76 children between the ages of 0-6yrs and 66 families
- 2010-11 Partnership Agreement with Antler River Elementary – 13 children attended our Junior Kindergarten program and made significant progress in early literacy and numeracy skills development.
- One-Time Funding in the amount of $24,300.00 was used to complete renovations to classrooms and to purchase new toys and equipment
- 4 children benefited by having access to speech & language services
- 3 children benefited by having specialized educational plans in partnership with All Kid’s Belong
- The Early Years Family Coordinator’s position was created to work with the parents, community partners to ensure all areas of support and resources can be provided to our families
- The Family Outreach & Drop-In Centre was in use 65% of the time during the school year which is a 20% increase from last year!

Program Highlights

- Grandparents Day was the most successful event of the year. We had 100% involvement and participation from our grandparents who spent the day with their grandchildren doing different activities. We honoured them with certificates, gave them each a rose to symbolize our appreciation and love, and a meal.
- Parents and staff raised $5,992.14 in five short months and were rewarded with a one-night stay at Great Wolf Lodge, Niagara Falls, ON
- 1st Place was awarded to our Junior Kindergarten class in the 4th Annual Writing Contest sponsored by the I.E.C.
- 1st Place was awarded to our Junior Kindergarten class for participating in Antler River Elementary School Talent Show (Jun)
- Parent/Child Trip – Disney on Ice (Feb 4) was a memorable experience for many
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recently Chippewa’s of the Thames has begun a proactive approach towards attracting new business and industry into our community. The resources and unique commitment we offer to the business industry is mandated by Council. Our Economic Development Office can now offer exceptional opportunities and unmatched support to commercial and light industry businesses that choose to locate on or do business within our community.

By offering unparalleled community support with a quality workforce, strategic location, strong infrastructure, high growth potential and a high return on potential investment, Chippewa of the Thames represents an intelligent opportunity for today’s commerce.

The natural environment of the Chippewa Community is a valuable asset to the business sector.

First, the community is made up of a group of extremely close individuals -- many of whom are related.

Second, the structure of the Community’s government provides for an atmosphere which is extremely positive towards business.

Third, the Chippewa Community has an impressive membership of individuals with experience in a variety of industries including banking, the media, national and provincial politics, entrepreneurship, construction and project development.

And finally, the community is home to a large number of business people enthusiastic to share their success and expertise with others. Chippewa is home to approximately 26 locally owned businesses offering a broad range of products and services -- from crafts and cabinets to heavy excavating and trucking services. Members of the community believe that the road to increased prosperity begins with mutually beneficial partnerships and alliances with new businesses in new industries.
During this past year, in conjunction with our Leaders, several projects have been the worked on in the Economic Development Department. The top priority has been the completion of the Chippewa Business Centre, which is now 75% full. Other projects are: creating a feasibility study for a solar farm, a roof top solar panel system contracted by the province to be installed on three band buildings, construction of 10 homes through the CMHC program, capacity building for our experiences in relationships being created with the Strathroy Chamber of Commerce and the London Chamber of Commerce, and the creation of a non profit corporation with the intention of acquiring a charity number for taxable deductions, adding three parcels of land to the Chippewa reserve, creating a business plan concept for a skills and development training centre targeting the trades industry that will be our second building on our commercial site and finally, entrepreneurial training with seven members who would like to start new businesses in our community.

Into our future with the second lot on our commercial development area, we will be focussing on the creation of a training centre for skills and trades. Through trades training our attempts will be to build the capacity of our human resources in our community.

**Housing**

Housing as a business is one endeavour the economic development department is exploring, we look forward to presenting our finding to our membership.

**Training**

We can provide access to ongoing entrepreneurial training at a business centre that has developed a curriculum that has internationally recognition for its success rates. Through entrepreneurial development we will to create long term employment. Just call 519-289-5555, Dwayne Kechego is willing to help you develop your business plans, and market strategies of success.

**Economic Development Mission**

To establish a positive link to Ontario’s Business community by opening the door to Ontario’s business world, our members enter the commercial enterprise in competition for individual successes. As small business coordinator’s, our successful entrepreneurs create long term employment and services for our community at competitive prices, all driven by supply and demand. Through this we empower our members to achieve success.

**Economic Developments vision**

Raising our standard of living creates goals with long term benefits for our children within the teachings that fit today’s society, while embracing our culture and traditions. We will never trade our integrity, as a cost of doing business in our steps toward success. Chippewas success is beneficial to the society in which we must survive. Together, we are “DESH KAN ZIIBI” The people of Antler River.
EDUCATION

The Education program at Chippewa includes the operation of Antler River Elementary School for students in Senior Kindergarten through to Grade 8, support for secondary students who reside within the First Nation and attend Saunders, H.B. Beal, Thames, Strathroy District Collegiate Institute, Medway, Holy Cross Catholic School and Anishinawbe Skiniw Alternative School. The Education program also includes the administration of the Post Secondary program.

The Education system is governed by a Board of Education consisting of 7 elected Trustees and 1 appointed Council Liaison. The Board is responsible for approval of the budget, staffing, and policies.

Antler River Elementary School

- The Clench Fraud Trust approved a proposal in the amount of $15,000.00 to support our Breakfast Program. This funding has helped us to enhance our Breakfast and Box lunch program with a milk program.
- The Clench Fraud Trust approved a proposal in the amount of $7,300.00 to support Engaging Community Spirit in Education.
- The Clench Fraud Trust approved a proposal in the amount of $39,200.00 to support the hiring of a teacher to enhance student learning.
- The Clench Fraud Trust approved a proposal for $55,800.00 for Language & Culture Community Support. This funding enabled us to hire an Ojibwe Language Coordinator and purchase materials to enhance the culture program in the school.
- Proposal funding was received from the New Paths $24,000.00, Parental & Community Engagement Strategy $20,000.00, Teacher Recruitment & Retention $12,600.00 programs to enhance the programming at the school.
- Proposal funding was received from the National Child Benefit program, through Ontario Works in the amount of $30,000.00 to sponsor the Breakfast and Box Lunch program.
- The Board provided an Annual Awards program for the elementary school students living on-reserve and attending Antler River Elementary School. Three students received an award for perfect attendance.
- The Indigenous Education Coalition provided $90,000.00 from the First Nation Student Success Program to support academic programming.
- In collaboration with Enji-Maajtaawaad Early Years program the Junior and Senior Kindergarten program was enhanced by offering a teacher and an Early Childhood Educator in each of the classrooms.
Secondary School Students

- Participated in a Career Fair hosted by Caldwell First Nation in Leamington.
- Honoured four Secondary School graduates, along with five students receiving good attendance.
- Saunders students participated in League of Nations.
- Beal students assisted in planning and organizing of Pow Wow at Beal.
- Hosted an annual awards banquet for the Secondary students in conjunction with the Post Secondary students.
- There is one bus contractor; one Board operated bus, and one Board operated van that provide transportation services for the students.
- A financial incentive was provided to students who have not missed more than two days of school for the month. Students also received a financial incentive for each credit (course) that they earned. The student activity fees are paid for as well.
- Compensation was provided to families to help with transportation costs for extra-curricular activities.
- Proposal funding was received from the Skills Link program for career development opportunities, student workshops, and to support students to participate in an overseas educational trip.

Post Secondary Program

- Provided financial support to 100 students living on and off the First Nation.
- Supported 19 Secondary students transitioning into Post Secondary studies.
- Honoured 7 graduates and 12 scholars at the annual awards banquet.
- The Clench Fraud Trust approved a proposal in the amount of $40,000.00 to provide scholarships and graduate awards for Post Secondary students at the annual awards banquet.

Report submitted by

Starr McGahey-Albert
Education Coordinator
WIIJII ANOOKEEWIN

Vision Statement

"While in pursuit of opportunities, goals and ambitions for Deshkan Ziibi, we the team of Wijji Anookeewin will remain dedicated to the responsibilities entrusted within our sacred understanding of integrity"........WiiJii Anookeewin

Executive Summary

Wijji Anookeewin’s Employment and Training has commenced their 5 year AHRDA agreement, which generated $2.7 million dollars into the Chippewas of the Thames community, over a period of 5 years. Thus, creating endless opportunities for professional growth and development while broadening skills and establishing a prestigious workforce.

Within this past year AHRDA has secured Employment & Training opportunities for 276 clients. Opening the door for networking and partnerships with various employers in the Arts, Health and Social Services fields; as well as Apprenticeships and Trades.

In October 2010, Chippewa has signed a new agreement with Service Canada. The well-known AHRDAs are now called Aboriginal Skills Training Employment Strategy (ASETS). This agreement has our staff focusing on 3 main pillars; Demand driven skills, Partnerships and Accountability. With the signing of this new Agreement Chippewa has transferred from Walpole Island First Nation to Southern First Nation Secretariat (SFNS) to hold our ASETS Agreement. This transfer has resulted in a higher administration fee to SFNS, but we will receive a lot more administrative support and has also resulted in a 11% decrease in funding; with Chippewas population growing every year; minimum wage rates continue climb, as well as the cost of living. On a positive note we received a 14% increase in childcare subsidy to assist ENJI-MAAJTAAWAAD EARLY YEARS pay for the extra resources. This increase was based on their childcare license combining seats from Aboriginal Head Start and Early Years in the same location; thus determining it as a multi-faceted childcare facility and making it a high priority for additional funding.

Projected Goals

Aboriginal Skills Training Option

We plan to assist 25 clients and have at least 10 clients receive certification and increase their employability.
**Aboriginal Labour Force Option**

3 clients per year to be given enough work experience and get foot into door to obtain permanent employment.

**Aboriginal Business Incentive**

To assist 3 clients during the first year of starting their own business and have at least 1 of those business succeed.

**Aboriginal Labour Force Promotion Option**

To assist 3 clients to become more employable by gaining job experience.

**Aboriginal New Start**

To assist 25 clients receive materials needed while starting a new job. Will provide clients to remove all hardships and stresses while starting their new job and have at least two of those clients not need employment and training services anymore.

**Aboriginal Student Career Option**

To help 12 youth gain skills and experience related to their career. Student will be able to determine if this career is suitable for them before attending post-secondary education.

**Aboriginal Youth Initiative**

To assist 2 youth in thinking about their career by exposing them to a particular field of interest and show them where education can lead and gives students work experience for their career choice.

**Aboriginal Employee Skills Enhancement Option**

Assist 5 Clients that are employed but are receiving minimum wage or slightly higher and the training opportunity will allow them to achieve a promotions or a higher wage.

**Aboriginal Community Development Program**

Provide assistance to departments that will increase the economic growth of our community and to assist our community with projects that will create employment with our community.

**Aboriginal Disabilities Initiative**

To assist 1 client that self identifies as having a disability encouraging them with opportunities and work experience.
LIBRARY- RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL RECONCILIATION & HERITAGE PRESERVATION PROJECT

Message from the Project Coordinator

Although we are still in the early stages of the Chippewa of the Thames Library -Residential School Reconciliation and Heritage Preservation Project, the first four months of this pilot project was both a challenge and a privilege to work on. I started out by canvassing our artists within the community. I have discovered that there is an abundance of creative peoples who live on Chippewa of the Thames both professionally trained and self-taught artisans. By setting up a preliminary meeting on June 28th, 2011 a small group of attendees articulated what they would like to see develop out of my program. From here we created the Art Mentorship Program (AMP) and the Chippewa Heritage Project. The Chippewa Heritage Project utilizes Facebook as a promotional tool listing various events and program dates culturally specific to Chippewa of the Thames heritage. AMP is the name of the project that is going to facilitate art seminars and workshops.

My goals are to secure funding to carry out future programs and acquire space for artists to develop their projects. Since then I have secured a small budget through the National Childcare Benefit program and have been able to create and deliver various art projects, seminars, and workshops that target families and youth as the main participants. The projects strive to engage these community members to express our cultural identities through different modes of conceptualizing, realizing and presenting art.

Another challenge that I have encountered was the poor attendance for the Writers Collective that the library hosted through the summer. Since then the program had been dissolved. I believe the attendance was so poor because summer was in full swing and not many youth were very interested in what we were offering. This component will be launched again in the new school year. Hopefully, this will be a program that not only will help students with homework, but also contribute great stories from our members.

On the up-side great progress is already being made in these few short months. The integration of the Summer Student Employment program proved to be a success as our two main projects were completed. These projects included an independent publication called a ‘Zine that presented the information and the works of various contemporary First Nation artists and the Mural Project located behind the Youth Center. The first two projects were carried out successfully and continue to generate more interest within the community.
Moving forward a painting project for our local artists is about to get underway. In the next few months a sculpture seminar, ‘Zine/Art Book workshop and photography seminars are going to take place. Out of these projects AMP hopes to generate artwork that will be featured in a Chippewa of the Thames First Nation Art Exhibition.

Keeping our vision and goals in mind I continue to look forward to securing a space for artists within the community.

Accomplishments

- Meeting with local artists and crafts people
- Securing a budget through the NCB: $8,000
- Integrating my services with the development of the Research/Documentation Assistants Summer Student position
- Mural project by AMP: a mural that presents the 7 original and clans of the Anishinabe
- ‘Zine publication by AMP: presenting the information of various First Nation contemporary artists to inspire the creativity of our own artists.
- Chippewa of the Thames Pow-Wow AMP booth: Drawing competition and butterfly teaching workshop for youth, promoting AMP and its various programs.
- Developed and designed brochures, and flyers for AMP
- Facebook profile for Chippewa Heritage Project

Program Highlights

- Professional artist Douglas Clark was consulted to mentor the Mural Project participants.
- Pow Wow promotional booth was a huge success as many participants signed up for future workshops and seminars.
- Promotional items for AMP were secured with the help of partner the Chippewa Health Center.
PUBLIC WORKS

Public works mission:

The work the public works department works consistently to provide services in an effective and efficient manner that provides for the better quality of life for all members of the Chippewas of the Thames. Within our department we strive to provide services in a caring, courteous and respectful manner. The work we do ensures the safety and health of the community and our environment. In order to accomplish our mission the 4 sectors, (Roads, Water, Wastewater, and Band Properties) work together.

Managers Introduction to Public Works

Because of the nature of this department, employees must be willing to take action and react quickly to community emergencies. A few examples are break-ins, water line breaks, winter storms, and river over flows, fire and any emergency that requires the activation of the community Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Public works is about repetition, seasonal cycling and having the capacity to deliver services to the community. Some regular and ongoing services provided through this department everyone notices is the weekly pick-up of Garbage, spring clean-up, grass cutting, roads being graded or ploughed and the cleanliness and preparedness of the community buildings.

What is unique with the public works department is the flexibility in the job and what is viewed by the community and leadership as the role of public works when a community member or family is in need. This flexibility is a costly and with no budget item, that must attend to, for example, when the community calls to notify of a death, a community event.

In instances should an area not be tended to, the Public Works hears from the community and is immediately labelled as not doing the job. The community does not want excuses but rather they want their needs tended to. Often community members call directly to the Chief or Council members, or the Public Works Manager with their complaints. It is an unforgiving environment, and at times callous.

The COTTFN Public Works department is responsible for building, upgrading and maintaining the community works systems and facilities including buildings, roads, water, and water treatment facilities, as well as for delivering services such as sanitation disposal, public recreation facilities and cemeteries. Attached to this report is a table indication the public works department duties and the names of who is employed.
As the Manager of the public works department my leadership efforts and approach working with the public works staff is to role model an effective and sensitive manner and ensure the level or morale is maintained. In doing so, it is my hope when the community comes calling, all public works staff will utilize the same approach when responding to concerns and complaints of residents in a positive and courteous manner.

Accomplishments:

- All the Road Workers have completed “Hazardous Spills Training”.
- The Three Fires road was reconstructed during the months of June and July. This involved laying down 10 inches of additional gravel on the 1.5 kilometres of road before we tar and chipped.
- The Waster Water Plant received upgrades to the aeration lines in July.
- 310 Acres of Band Land was leased for farming purposes this year.
- The community centre was the benefactor of kitchen upgrades that included commercial quality dishwasher and cooler, and replacement of countertops and cabinets.
- Meetings with the Department of Nation Defence has resulted in the DND will be collecting bomb fragments from our territory along the 1st range. (near the new mall/plaza)
- Investigation of installing Solar Panels on one of the Band Buildings has resulted in the completion of an application made to Hydro 1.

Challenges:

- The waste water building and equipment is complying with the regulations at the time it was designed. It does not however comply with the current regulations.
- The Public works building office is deplorable. Prompt attention to a new building for the Public Works department must be considered by Council.
- The waterline system was installed 19 years ago and we must begin planning about replacing the system.
- Workers in the Public works department require detailed job descriptions.
SOCIAL SERVICES

Department Mandate:

Social Services/Ontario Works program delivers social assistance to residents of Chippewa of the Thames First Nation who are in temporary need of financial and employment assistances. Ontario Works focuses on helping employable people find work and become independent of social assistance. People in receipt of social assistance will be required to participate in programs as part of their continued eligibility for assistance. They must complete a ‘Participation Agreement’, which lists the activities they are agreeing to take part in or complete. These activities may include job searching, attending a job-finding club or other job training, completing their education or starting their own business. Participations may have ‘deferral from participation’, which removes their requirement to participate or restricts their participation. This may be because they are medical unable to participate, they are a single parent with pre-school children or there may be another reason.

Current Initiatives and Projects:

- National Child Benefit Reinvestment (NCBR) – Funding provided by Department of Indian Affairs Canada (INAC) on year-to-year basis
- 2 Social Assistance Transfers (SATF)
  - Chippewa Roads & Trails Maintenance 2011. Hired 7 people to do various clean up in the community from July 5, 2011 to December 30, 2011.

Future Developments:

- Bring in a pre-apprentice program to the Chippewa of the Thames First Nations. Members under the Stepping Stones Support Services Program would be able to provide OW clients with various options in order to achieve skills/employment in any of the 157 trades offered by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.
- Programs from the First Nations need to apply for NCBR funding for 2012-2013 fiscal year.
- SATF programming.
Lobby Requirements:

- Need Chief and Council to lobby to INAC to get them to commitment to the NCBR dollars for programs that benefit families in the community. This program right now is on a year-to-year basis and could potentially be cut.
- Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (DAAND) are not following the funding framework set out in the 1965 Welfare Agreement. Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) have increased their cost per case for Cost of Administration and DAAND has not followed through with their funding increase for cost per case. All though MCSS has increased their cost sharing, municipalities receive 51% more than First Nations for doing the same job.