

SNP receives \$900,000 from Ontario Trillium Foundation to build opportunities

By TRT staff

SIX NATIONS – Six Nations Polytechnic (SNP) has been approved for a Youth Opportunities Fund (YOF) Grant in the amount of \$900,000 over 48 months to give opportunities for Indigenous education and learning for First Nations youth.

By launching youth ambassador models, SNP will foster cultural resilience, cultural identity and self-confidence for First Nations youth aged 13 to 24. Funding will be used for staffing, curriculum development and delivery as well as ambassador training and mobilization.

“As a First Nations owned post-secondary institution one of our top priorities is to ensure the well-being and success of our young people,” said SNP President, Rebecca Jamieson. “This funding will allow us to create opportunities that are missing for many First Nations youth across Ontario by connecting them to a truly collaborative, respectful initiative that addresses the diversity of their cultures and languages.”

“SNP’s approach to

this project will place considerable emphasis on Indigenous identity construction by encompassing spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical well-being of the youth,” said Jamieson. “SNP is the ideal organization to carry out this work due to our unique perspective as an Indigenous post-secondary institution which allows us to respect Indigenous cultures while recognizing and supporting personal strengths and gifts that build self-confidence in youth.”

Youth ambassadors participating in this project will also be involved in the upcoming tri-annual World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE), co-hosted by SNP and Tap Resources. Vital to WIPCE is a powerful and culturally diverse youth forum that encourages youth to engage, participate, and lead issues of significance, as defined by youth. WIPCE 2017 is an opportunity for participating Indigenous youth to showcase and share their unique skills, talents and personal gifts.

The overall issue

this initiative seeks to address is improved well-being for First Nations youth and, by extension, improved well-being in First Nations communities. This project provides opportunity to build cultural resilience and inspire cultural fluency in First Nations youth. There is also opportunity to redress the legacy of residential schools and directly support some of the recommendations of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Our partners on this project include the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI); Kenjgewin Teg Education Institute (KETI); and the Ininew Friendship Centre.

The outcomes of this project hope to increase Indigenous youth awareness and knowledge of the interconnectedness of culture, wellness and well-being; increase opportunity for local post-secondary education, trades training and skill development; and increase Indigenous youth opportunities for education, skills and attitude to enter and remain in the labour market.