



2015

2016

Annual Report

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## Our Mission

Canadian Roots Exchange builds bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in Canada by facilitating dialogue and strengthening relationships through leadership programs.

## Our Vision

We believe in a Canada where youth stand in solidarity to promote respect, understanding and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.



# Chi Miigwetch Cynthia!

Eight years ago, Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux founded Canadian Roots Exchange. Since that time over 4,000

youth from across this country, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have been part of CRE's unique programming.

It started with a week long exchange that brought youth to various communities in Northeastern and Eastern Ontario (Wasauksing First Nation, Serpent River First Nation, Wikwemikong First Nation, Vanier, Ottawa), has turned into a nationally recognized leader in reconciliation programming for young people. Cynthia's vision, dedication, and belief in youth is why CRE exists, and her vision has been an essential guide as we've grown.

We couldn't be more thrilled at two prestigious appointments Cynthia was named to this year. She is now the Chair of Truth and Reconciliation at Lakehead University. Being the inaugural chair will mean that Cynthia has the opportunity to do what she does best, provide vision and meaningful guidance to those who are ready to listen.



Her appointment as a Ministerial Special Representative on child welfare to Minister Carolyn Bennett comes at time when her voice, vision, and experience will help inform and guide the government on changes to the current child welfare system.



We know that these two appointments are going to require a lot of Cynthia, and that's why we understood when she let us know that the time had come for her to move on from CRE's Board of Directors. Through these new positions, we know he work supporting young people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, will continue for many years to come.

Though Cynthia is moving on, she will remain a good friend of Canadian Roots Exchange. For all her contributions, she has been made an Honourary Chair of CRE. With this title she knows just how much we appreciate her, and we remain connected in our new roles going forward.

**Miigwetch Cynthia!**  
**Your CRE Family**

## Tânisi, Aanii, Shé:kon, Nú, Unnusakut, Bonjour and Hello!

Over the last eight years CRE has been successfully delivering meaningful reconciliation programs to Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people across Canada. Today, our work includes: youth exchanges, national reconciliation conferences, the Youth Reconciliation Initiative, and educational workshops. Each program is unique, but all offer the opportunity to learn about our shared history, engage in vital conversations, and start creating a more equitable path forward.

This past year has seen exciting growth. We opened a new office in Saskatoon. Communities, funders, and individuals have been generous with their time, resources, and ideas. Our alumni, staff and volunteers are telling the story of our work through news stories, in op-eds, and during conversations with their friends and families.

Whether it's in Vancouver, Halifax, Rankin Inlet, or the many places in between, young people are committed to working in their communities to create a better Canada. As a board, we're committed to supporting them. We hope you'll join us.

### **Miigwetch,**

*Judith Rae & Justin Wiebe*

*Co-Chairs, Canadian Roots Exchange*



2015-2016 was a year where reconciliation took centre stage in communities across Canada, which helped make an exciting year for Canadian Roots Exchange. Our team seized opportunities, with passion, to ensure that youth were not forgotten in these national reconciliation conversations.

We hear every year from participants about the importance of our programs for creating space where youth can feel empowered to lead change in their communities across Canada.

None of our work could be possible without the support of our funders, individual donors, and partner organizations that we rely upon. Thank you for believing in our work, and the work of youth in your community.

This upcoming year is going to be busy. We'll be looking to build new partnerships, secure new and diverse sources of funding, and as always, support Indigenous & non-Indigenous young people who want to see a brighter future for us all.

With the help of our board, our staff, and our dedicated volunteers of youth across Canada, we'll do just that.

### **kinanâskomitin,**

*Max FineDay & vibhor garg*

*Co-Executive Directors*



# YEAR IN REVIEW

 **1,758**  **NEW FACEBOOK LIKES!**

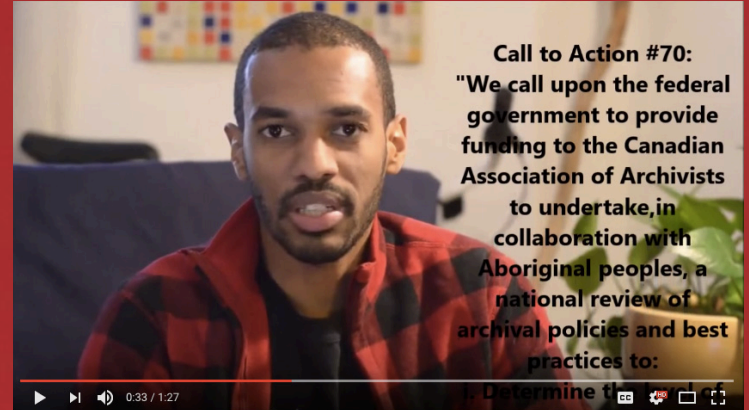
 **403** **NEW INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS!**

**800** **NEW TWITTER FOLLOWERS!**



**1,086**  
**TOTAL YOUTH ENGAGED IN PROGRAMS**

## #94DaysforReconciliation



The #94 Days for Reconciliation was a youth-led social media campaign to raise awareness of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Call to Action. 94 Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth from across the country shared a call to action from the report and each day CRE released one video on our YouTube channel.

# Youth Reconciliation Initiative

Our Youth Reconciliation Initiative (YRI) leaders are teams of approximately 4 youth per region that are trained to promote respect, understanding and dialogue as a form of reconciliation within their local communities. During 2015-2016, we supported 11 YRI teams across Canada.



Teams organize monthly events/programs for youth in their communities. Activities include awareness-raising workshops, arts-based activities, film screenings, story telling and discussions on current realities. In 2015-2016, we had 33 Youth Reconciliation Initiative leaders volunteer to help further encourage the process of reconciliation. Youth leaders from First Nations, Inuit, and Metis communities made connections with other cultural communities through different networks and attended a training with a focus on reconciliation and conflict resolution.

In 2015-2016 we had active Youth Reconciliation Initiative teams in:



## Youth Reconciliation Leaders

### Halifax

Chenise Hache  
Zoé Bordeleau-Cass

### Ottawa-Gatineau

Akehil Johnson  
Dani Lanouette  
Najeeba Ahmed

### Toronto

Akeesha Footman  
Arabi Rajeswaran  
Nura Yunus  
Sage Petahtegoose

### Vancouver

Ellena Neel  
Emely Baker  
Matthew Pi  
Sina Yetbarek

### Hamilton-Six Nations

Kaylin Parker  
Emily Spitzer

### Regina

Austin Josephson  
Giselle Yee  
Lee Prosper  
Lindsay DeRochers

### Thunder Bay

Clyde Moonias  
Caitlynn Gaudette  
Sarah Nelson  
Hazem Sabe

### Winnipeg

Alexandre Quesnel  
Chelsey Meade  
Diandre Thomas-Hart  
Erica Wilson

### Montreal-Kahnawake

Cheyenne Arbulu-Pelletier  
Ivan Arturo Escobar Moreno  
Moussa Sene

### Saskatoon

Arisha Nazir  
Delano Kennedy  
Feather Pewapisconias

### Sudbury-Manitoulin

Sunset Sagutch



## National Youth Conference March 17-19, Sudbury, ON

Since 2013, CRE has been hosting an annual national youth conference communities across Canada. Using a youth-to-youth model, our conferences have become one of our yearly highlights. This past year, CRE held its 4th national conference in Sudbury, Ontario and has attracting 165 youth from across the country.



**165**  
**Conference**  
**Participants**

“Niigaanzhaadaa-Moving Forward Together” was the theme for CRE’s 2016 conference. We provided youth with new ways of moving forward by celebrating the rich histories, traditions and knowledge of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. Reconciliation begins with acknowledging diversity and creating spaces such as the Niigaanzhaadaa National Youth Reconciliation Conference where an open dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples have taken place. CRE has taken this opportunity to channel the energy of young people to forge a new path towards healing and reconciliation.

An opening address was given by the Mayor of the City Of Greater Sudbury, Brian Bigger. Bigger welcomed CRE to the community and affirmed the commitment to bridge the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth. Following Mayor Bigger was a youth panel made up of 5 young leaders from different communities that were taking a leading role in advancing reconciliation and solidarity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth.







## Exchange Programs

“An Opportunity Awaits”

Canadian Roots Exchange offers exchange programs where a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous

youth with diverse backgrounds come together for a week long experiential exchange that focuses on leadership development, reconciliation and community building through group and personal reflection. Exchanges have created strong friendships and connections, giving a deeper understanding of what it means to live in Canada.

The following communities hosted CRE Exchanges (2015-2016)

- Manitoulin Island, ON
- Six Nations of the Grand River, ON
- Greater Toronto Area, ON
- Ottawa, ON
- Lanark County, ON
- Kinosao Sipi (Norway House Cree Nation), MB
- Kuuujuaq, QC

**Total Exchange Participants:**  
**103**

Since 2014, CRE has partnered with the YMCA Youth Exchange Program to help support in allowing youth to travel from their home community to a different community in another part of Canada.

### Exchange Leaders

Coty Zachariah  
 Harry Au  
 Ivan Arturo Escobar Moreno  
 Jordan Omand

Kaylin Parker  
 Leslie McKay  
 Lynzii Taibossigai  
 Ocean Albert  
 Olivia Ikey

Peter Farrell  
 Rebeka Migneault  
 Sylvia Jonas  
 Tyrelle Clark

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2015
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 104,132	\$ 32,762
Guaranteed investment certificates	91,327	90,804
Amounts receivable	37,571	35,023
HST recoverable	11,265	8,159
Prepaid expenses	3,132	-
	<u>\$ 247,427</u>	<u>\$166,748</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 103,536	\$ 27,472
Deferred contributions	19,550	41,187
	<u>123,086</u>	<u>68,659</u>
Net assets		
Designated	75,000	-
Unrestricted	49,341	98,089
	<u>124,341</u>	<u>98,089</u>
	<u>\$247,427</u>	<u>\$166,748</u>

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2015
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Grants	\$ 401,649	\$ 337,748
Donations	59,212	33,463
Earned income	54,445	44,361
Contributed materials and services	43,580	42,610
Interest	524	732
	<u>559,410</u>	<u>458,914</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Personnel	275,198	207,552
Participant travel and accommodation	102,856	95,189
Program	67,250	62,372
Rent	38,100	40,110
Honoraria	15,618	19,455
Staff travel and accommodation	14,280	9,813
Office and general	9,358	3,105
Professional fees	4,690	3,898
Insurance	4,451	3,926
Website	357	2,717
	<u>533,158</u>	<u>448,137</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR</b>	26,252	10,777
Net assets, beginning of year	98,089	87,312
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<u>\$ 124,341</u>	<u>\$ 98,089</u>

## Our Team

### Staff

Alicia BigCanoe, Program Officer  
Akeesha Footman, Summer Intern, Toronto YRI lead  
Jacqueline Neshkawa, Intern  
Jessica Alegria, Program Officer  
Jaya Bordeleau-Cass, Communications Officer  
Nicole Wemigwans, Program Coordinator  
Rinchen Lama, Financial & Special Event Officer  
Sahar Golshan, Project Development Officer  
Valene Bill, Program Officer  
vibhor garg, Executive Director

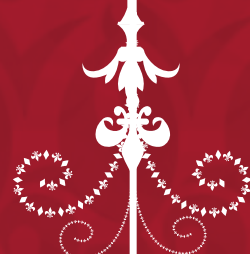
### Board of Directors

Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux (outgoing Chair)  
Alysha Li  
Judith Rae  
Justin Wiebe  
Max FineDay  
Serge Rock  
Selena Gignac

## Key Funders & Partners

Artreach Toronto  
Inspirit Foundation  
Department of Canadian Heritage  
Kiwanis Foundation  
Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation  
Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment & Training  
Toronto Foundation  
University of Saskatchewan  
University of Toronto - Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work

**We acknowledge the generous support of all our donors.**





## SUPPORT CRE #GiveReconciliation



### Moving Forward

- We will continue to focus on four core programs: exchanges, youth-led workshops, intergenerational events and conferences.
- We are exploring more opportunities to include more youth from remote isolated communities including youth from the Arctic in our programs.
- CRE launched a new office in Saskatoon, SK in January 2016.

### Workshop & Partnership Opportunities

CRE is committed to providing more leadership opportunities for youth. We are open to working with different organizations to help us expand our reach to youth across Canada. We have worked with both youth and adults. If you would like to request a CRE workshop, we can design sessions to suit your audience. Feel free to contact us if you see an opportunity to collaborate!

We have been excited to witness the growing movement across Canada, to see the work of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples being prioritized. We operate on a modest budget. All donations go a long way in continuing to support CRE to deliver youth-leadership programming for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth to lead Canada's path towards reconciliation!

**Monthly donors** allow us to plan ahead! We also accept donations of Aeroplan Miles which provide opportunities for youth from more distant communities to participate in our programs. Additionally, as a registered charity we are able to issue tax receipts for all eligible donations.

***We deeply thank you for your support. We couldn't do it without you!***

More information about our programs can be found on our website ([canadianroots.ca](http://canadianroots.ca)).



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[canadianroots.ca](http://canadianroots.ca)

(e) [info@canadianroots.ca](mailto:info@canadianroots.ca)

(t) Toronto: 647-956-5019 | Saskatoon: 306-966-2964