



MANS Class of 2020. Photo by Kelly Stickle.

A Vision Comes Alive

MAMAWI ATOSKETAN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
The Grand Opening September 28, 2018 and Highlights to December 2020

Forward

Living the Dream

Two years ago, on September 28, 2018, when we celebrated the opening of the Mamawi Atosketan Junior and Senior High School buildings, I had to pinch myself. For years we'd dreamed of the day as we squeezed more than 200 students—thanks to portables—into a school intended for 120, a building too small almost immediately when it opened in 2003.

This book documents the day of the grand opening. It also serves as a record of positive trends, outstanding achievements, and portents many good things to come.

These details confirm that our vision—to inspire Maskwacis youth to pursue education, exciting careers, and to make a difference in the world—**is alive, grounded, and growing:**

- We are seeing **students stretch further**, catching a vision for a positive future. They're already going on to university for careers in medicine, business, and skilled trades.*
- We continue to **partner with visionary people and organizations**. Some have been recognized by the Queen for their volunteerism and drive to make a difference, modeling values we strive to instill in our students, and all have contributed to the progress of our students.
- Our donor partners continue to lend valuable support in many ways, including funding for **innovative Cultural Studies, Construction Technology, and Welding programs**. A public **sculpture commission**, won and executed by MANS students, is being publicized in national magazines.**

• Our students are exercising real leadership. They're serious about taking ownership and responsibility for their high school experience, including:

- o An active Student Association
- o The Howler sports teams
- o Fundraising for international travel as a school group

• Our kitchen facilities allow us to welcome families for communal and cultural food experiences like our 2020 Valentine Family Lunch. They also provide a setting where traditional game preparation skills are taught.

• **COVID-19** brought out the best in us and in our supporters, some of whom drove two hours in -40 weather to deliver computers for students. Teachers quickly rose to the challenge of distance learning. A **student developed** a busy private internet hang-out for the MANS community to stay connected, and our **counselor initiated** a virtual counseling group for any Res youth who wanted to join, supported by Samson Cree Nation Community Wellness. Our sculpture commission **artist-welders became philanthropists**, donating a significant part of their earnings to MANS for **COVID safety equipment**. Our students and alumni are already **giving back**.

• On June 16, 2020, **MANS graduated its biggest class ever**. Since we moved into the school, **57% of our graduates are in university or trade school, or the application process**. Despite the challenges of isolation, distance classwork, and the stresses their families faced during the COVID pandemic, six students marched at a “family only” ceremony—just two students less than a large Maskwacis high school, as reported in the Ponoka News that same

month. This graduation was historic in other ways (see story on p. 31). What the achievement means to families is hard to put into words, but one parent provided a glimpse as she addressed the class at the end of the ceremony:

You finished what you started. And to top it off, you did it during a world-wide pandemic. That means that the six of you are capable of anything in life. As our elders say, 'Don't give up. Keep going.'

As a community, we are living the dream that you have enabled. Most importantly, MANS students and their families are living it.

Mamawi Atosketan is no ordinary school. You share in the success and positive trends we are already seeing. As you turn these pages, we hope you will not only remember the day in September 2018 that was so full of promise but that you will also share our joy as we see that promise coming true.

For all that your involvement and these high points represent, we're grateful and full of hope. We are affirmed in our purpose and our name – Mamawi Atosketan/Working Together.



Gail Wilton, MEdu
Principal, Mamawi Atosketan Native School
December 2020

*See videos at www.mans1.ca: *The Valedictorians: Two Best Friends Speak; Eileen's Gift; Tessa: The First in my House.*

**WELD magazine article, p. 25-26, originally published in WELD No. 12 Winter 2020, and provided by the CWB Welding Foundation.

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Junior and Senior High School Building

Architectural Design by Zayda Steinke



PHOTO by Jordie Dwyer, Ponoka News



PHOTO by Jordie Dwyer, Ponoka News

Leon Ingraham Career and Technology Studies Building



PHOTO by Evelyn Ingraham



Chosen by students in a school-wide competition, the school logo was designed by then-student Dianna Mackinaw and is based on a traditional Cree symbol.

THE HONOUR OF YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED AT THE

GRAND OPENING OF THE

Mamawi Atosketan Native School Junior and Senior High School Building & Leon Ingraham CTS Building

Friday, September 28 | 2018 | 1:30 PM | Ponoka, Alberta

GPS/Blue sign address: 441022 Range Rd 253

To **RSVP** or for more
information, contact:
Jenny at **403-342-5044** Ext.226
or jnickel@albertaadventist.ca

Mamawi Atosketan Native School
provides private Kindergarten-Grade 12
education accredited by the Province of
Alberta for more than 200 First Nations
youth of the four bands of Maskwacis.



**MAMAWI ATOSKETAN
NATIVE SCHOOL**
RR 2, Ponoka, AB T4J 1R2

WELCOME

Front Entrance

LARRY WILKINS* – Honorary Chair, *The Bridge Campaign*

RIBBON CUTTING*

Front Entrance

SHANEEK* – Grade 11 Student

PROGRAM

Gymnasium

DEDICATION PRAYER

KEN WIEBE* – Past President, *Alberta Conference of the SDA Church*

CULTURAL DANCE

SHANEEK – Grade 11 Student

DAN JACKSON* – President, *North American Division of SDA Church*

GARY HODDER* – President, *Alberta Conference of SDA Church*

BETTY BAYER, PHD* – Director of Education, *SDA Church in Canada*

KEITH RICHTER* – CFO/Treasurer, *Alberta Conference of SDA Church*

JANET GRIFFITH* – Education Superintendent, *Alberta Conference of SDA Church*

LYNN MCDOWELL* – Director Planned Giving/Manager of The Bridge Campaign, *Alberta Conference*

VERNON SADDLEBACK* – Chief, *Cree Samson Nation*

MAXINE BULL – School Parent

CODY VIGEANT – Program & Communications Associate, *CWB Welding Foundation*

CURTIS CLARKE, PHD* – Deputy Minister, *Alberta Education*

JOHN JAGERSMA – Executive Director, *Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta*

TOTAL PRAISE – Students directed by Teacher Cheri Notice

CLOSING PRAYER – Gary Hodder, President, *Alberta Conference of SDA Church*

TOUR THE HIGH SCHOOL and CTS BUILDINGS

Staff will be in all rooms to answer your questions

REFRESHMENTS

Enjoy these in the Cafeteria

Please be sure to sign the Guest Book

*Ribbon Cutting Participants also include Mark Johnson, President, SDA Church in Canada; Gail Wilton, Principal, Mamawi Atosketan Native School; William Piersanti, Owner, Sunrise Constructors Inc.; Wayne Williams, Executive Secretary/VP for Administration, Alberta Conference.



Larry Wilkins, Honorary Chair of The Bridge Campaign, welcomed guests to the Grand Opening Program held in the new Chase Office Interiors Gym. He shared the excitement of having the dream of this building become a reality. Then he invited the ribbon cutting participants to the front of the gymnasium and handed the scissors to Shaneek Roasting, a Grade 11 student.



PHOTO by Jordie Dwyer, Ponoka News



(Left to right) Wayne Williams - Executive Secretary/VP for Administration, Alberta Conference of the SDA Church; Betty Bayer, PhD - Director of Education, SDA Church in Canada; Ken Wiebe - Past President, Alberta Conference of the SDA Church; Janet Griffith - Education Superintendent, Alberta Conference of the SDA Church; Curtis Clark, PhD - Deputy Minister, Alberta Education; Vern Saddleback - Chief, Samson Cree Nation; Gail Wilton - Principal, Mamawi Atosketan Native School; Shaneek - Grade 11 Student; Gary Hodder - President, Alberta Conference of the SDA Church; Larry Wilkins - Honorary Chair of The Bridge Campaign; Dan Jackson - President, North American Division of the SDA Church; Keith Richter - CFO/Treasurer, Alberta Conference of the SDA Church; Lynn McDowell - PGTS Director and Manager of The Bridge Campaign, Alberta Conference of the SDA Church; William Piersanti - building contractor.





Shaneek, dressed in regalia which she made, was joined by her three sisters to perform a cultural dance.



The Dedication Prayer was offered by Ken Wiebe. Ken was president of the Alberta Conference when the Alberta Conference chose to undertake The Bridge Campaign and remained a member of the Steering Committee.



Gary Hodder shared his perspective on The Bridge Campaign from the time he joined the Alberta Conference as president until this day of celebration. He also recognized Bruce Hinkley, MLA for Wetaskiwin/Camrose and Ron Orr, MLA for Lacombe/Ponoka.



Dan Jackson, President of the North American Division of the SDA Church, addressed the uniqueness of Mamawi Atosketan in North America. He also recognized the other guests from the North American Division – Ken Denslow, his assistant and Native Ministries Director; and Larry Blackmer, Vice President for Education.



The Director of Education for the SDA Church in Canada, Betty Bayer, PhD, spoke about Adventist education across Canada and introduced Campbell Page, newly chosen to serve as director of the Native Ministries Department for the SDACC.



Keith Richter, Treasurer of the Conference, had a few sleepless nights concerning the project but witnessed the amazing providence of God. Keith recognized the School Board and the Building and Steering Committees.



Education Superintendent for the Alberta Conference, Janet Griffith, recognized Dr. Curtis Clarke, Deputy Minister of Education, and John Jagersma, Executive Director for the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta. It was her privilege to also recognize Gail Wilton, the Mamawi Atosketan principal, and her staff.



As campaign manager, Lynn McDowell was pleased to extend her gratitude to the many donors who contributed to The Bridge Campaign. Lynn also introduced Krista Abt, a 2017 graduate of MANS, who presented Larry Wilkins with a framed piece she designed and beaded, adapting the MANS logo (next page).



Above: Gilles Royer, Executive VP of the Edmonton office of Bird Construction, delivered a message on behalf of Dr. Richard Bird. Dr. Bird's message is reproduced on page 14.

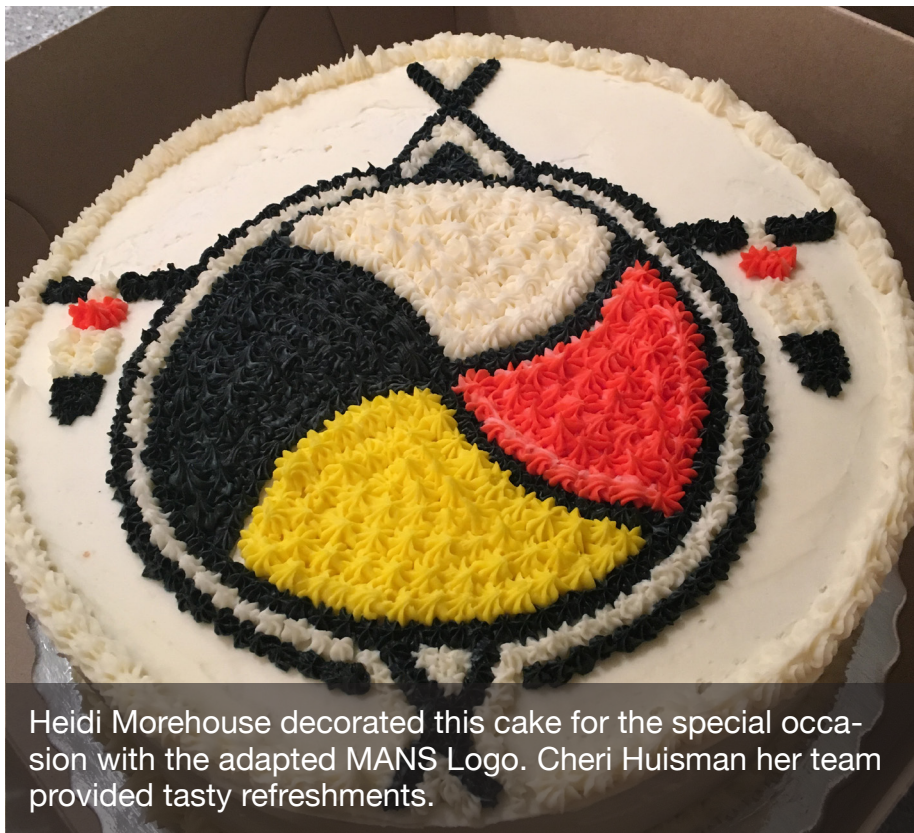
Below: Krista Abt, a 2017 graduate of MANS, presented Larry Wilkins with a framed piece she designed and beaded adapting the MANS logo.



Beadwork logo detail. Artist: Krista Abt, MANS Class of 2017.



Left: The final portion of the Grand Opening was a traditional Round Dance in which all guests could participate.



Heidi Morehouse decorated this cake for the special occasion with the adapted MANS Logo. Cheri Huisman her team provided tasty refreshments.



Over 300 guests attended the Grand Opening Ceremony.



School Parent, Maxine Bull, also chose to miss the Powwow and attend the Opening to express her appreciation for the teachers.



Cody Vigeant, Program & Communications Associate, spoke on behalf of another major donor, the CWB Welding Foundation.



Bruce Hinkley, MLA Wetaskiwin/Camrose, brought greetings from the Honorable David Eggen, Minister of Education.



John Jagersma spoke on behalf of the Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta for which he serves as the Executive Director.



PHOTO by Pattie Reasor

Cheri Notice, a MANS teacher, directed members of her MANS signing group, "Total Praise."



Dr. Richard Bird: Comments for the Grand Opening

The Ptarmigan Charitable Foundation and Bird Construction, for which the Cree Cultural Centre and construction shop are named, are new friends of Mamawi Atosketan Native School who were introduced to MANS through the Bridge Campaign. The comments of Dr. Richard Bird, prepared for the September opening event, provide insight into the hearts of thoughtful people who have observed and believe in the power of the education provided at Mamawi Atosketan.

Good afternoon from Ptarmigan Charitable Foundation and Bird Construction Company, both affiliated with the Bird family of Calgary. I wish I could be present to share in today's opening event for the new Mamawi Atosketan Native School facilities and associated programs.

First, congratulations to the students, parents, staff, Board and all supporters for the remarkable achievement of funding and constructing the new high school and supporting facilities. I think they will make a strong contribution to MANS' continued progress in providing a high-quality education to its students. Of course, this wouldn't have been possible without a tremendous effort from all, but I want to especially note the contribution of the current students and their families to the development of these facilities, not just for their own immediate benefit, but also for the benefit of their fellow students for many years to come. I would certainly not have been nearly so encouraged to support the project were it not for the positive testimonials from the students about their experience at MANS and their plans for their lives, and the positive environment I observed on my visit to the school. I believe that all students can rightly feel that they "own" these new facilities as much as anyone does, and that they will care for both the facilities and MANS' underlying values in the years to come, as owners do.

Education that Matters

I have been asked to comment on why I feel that a rejuvenation of the Cree Culture needs to be an important part of the educational experience at MANS. It starts with my belief in the importance of education itself. There is so much to learn and know about the universe that we all live within and about the development of humanity in all its variations within that small corner of the universe that we occupy, for now. There is the opportunity for personal joy just from the learning of a new thing and for resulting enrichment of one's life that everyone should have the benefit of, even if there were no other practical benefits. But of course, there are immense practical benefits from education and increased knowledge. Education opens up life choice options that otherwise wouldn't exist or would be very difficult to access. Regardless of what choices each one of us makes, it is better to have more choices available than fewer, or none at all. Education provides a broader perspective from which to make those choices and a better chance to make the choice that is best for each one of us. And education increases the likelihood of enjoying a successful, creative and fulfilling life within whatever choices we do make.

As to the Cree culture, on the one hand, I think there is a much better understanding now of the importance of language and culture to individual personal identity, to who we are. That was the terrible failure of the residential school system above and beyond the forced removal of children from their families, and an abysmal governance system that permitted widespread abuses. The forced stripping of language and culture from those generations of children was also stripping away a large part of their personal identities, their very selves. For most the gain in educational benefits was not worth the resulting loss of self.

That's on the one hand - the First Nations people were themselves deprived of the benefits of being grounded in their own culture and were obviously the primary victims. But all of humanity itself has lost something as well. Cree culture and traditional knowledge is part of the diverse development of the overall human experience and has value to the broader society, including though not limited to, both natural science and art. This, too, we all stand to lose if language and culture education is not paired with other forms of education. However, there is no reason why it must be one or the other. It can and should be both, and that is the purpose behind the Ptarmigan Cree Cultural Centre, which we are pleased to have been given the opportunity to support.

An Invitation to Explore

I have also been asked to comment on how the Bird Construction Building Technologies Shop fits with getting a good education. Of course, this bit of the educational panorama is focused on the very practical career opportunity side of things, and a very specific type of career opportunity. It certainly won't be for everyone, but how will you know that it is or isn't for you unless you have the opportunity try it out in high school, at least a little? And I don't mean just the young men among the MANS student body, there is no reason why young women cannot enjoy well paid employment in construction as well. On that note, Construction is an industry where there is a strong demand for trained employees, with good wages and lots of opportunity, and there always should be, so it's a good option to have in your pocket.

I'll close by saying once again, congratulations to you all for what's been accomplished. Make the best of it! And thank you for the opportunity to be involved.

Richard Bird, PhD, MBA

Chief Vernon Saddleback, Samson Cree Nation: Grand Opening Speech *“Tan’si nitotem’tik*

I bring you greetings from the Treaty 6 Territory we are all situated on right now. You know I am Chief of the Samson Cree Nation which is just down the road here, part of Maskwacis.

I come here today with different thoughts. At this moment, at 1:00, there is one of the largest PowWows in western Canada, and probably all of Canada, going on in Edmonton right now – the Grand Entry is at 1:00. If you are a Treaty 6 Chief that’s kind of where you want to be, you want to be seen as part of the Grand Entry. But I chose to come here.

In my personal life, as I think it is for most people, Number 1 in my life is God the Creator, who guides us in all our directions in life. #2 is very strong, too - to be the best husband I can be, the best father I can be and #3 in my life is Chief of Samson nation. I have a priority system in my life. When I got the invitation to go to the PowWow and be part of the Grand Entry and the invitation to the grand building opening at Mama-wi Atosketan Native School, the Dad in me said, “I’m going to come here.”

It’s really simple. My son came to this school. My son stayed here until Grade 9. Kind of funny, I was sitting beside Gail, and I didn’t know it was Seventh-day. I knew it was Christian but I didn’t know which Christian it was, but I want to tell you it was good for my son. It was good for my son. My parting words are these, what I want you all to know is that what you do - especially for the children of Maskwacis - is that you do makes a difference. You made a difference in my son’s life.

My son is 22 years old. He’s not financially successful by any means but he’s successful in every other way

that’s important to a parent. He believes in God, has a strong relationship and he’s making a difference in what he does, in what he’s chosen to do with his life and I can’t be prouder. When my son came here, I see as a parent, that this school helped him to become the man he is today. And that’s why I’m here today.

So, I speak as a parent and I came here today to give my love and support for this wonderful place and I thank people like Larry and I hear all the stories that this place doesn’t exist without you and all the people who contributed money for this beautiful building. When I asked how much it cost – my goodness, it’s amazing, \$4 ½ million for this beautiful building. I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart.

I thought I would put my war bonnet on and bring the full authority of the Samson Cree Nation Council and our territories. I just thank you all from the bottom of my heart on behalf of the people of Maskwacis. *Nitotem’tik* - Thank you very much.”

Chief Vernon Saddleback, Samson Cree Nation



PHOTO by Jordie Dwyer, Ponoka News



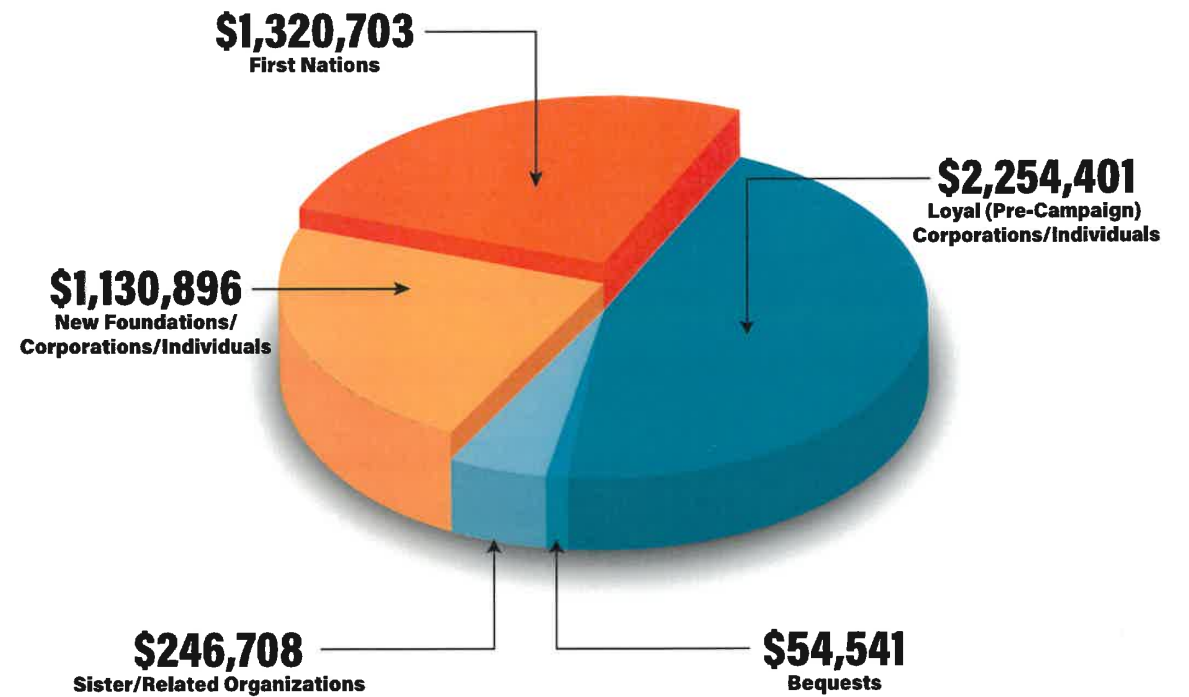
Principal Gail Wilton views the Teepee-inspired entrance to the new school.

About The Bridge Campaign

After repeated requests from parents and students to extend MANS beyond Grade 9, The Bridge Campaign was publicly launched in July 2015. Thanks to visionary donors and partners, the original dream grew from one building with a small industrial arts/CTS room to a main building with a separate industrial arts building.

The goal of \$4.9 million was exceeded by January 2018.

Donation Sources - \$5,026,954 Total



The Bridge Campaign Staff - Warren Kay, Congregation Liaison; Jenny Nickel, Administrative Assistant; Lynn McDowell, Campaign Manager.

Campus Name Plaque

Wahkohtowin: "Kinship, Interconnectedness"



Mamawi Atosketan Wahkohtowin Campus

("Kinship, Interconnectedness")

Named by the Students of Mamawi Atosketan on behalf of Larry Wilkins

Larry's best childhood memories are of weekends at his grandparents' home where the entire family of Indigenous people met to sing and laugh. He was the first in this family to have the opportunity to attend an Adventist Christian university. This education changed his life.

Larry wants children at Mamawi Atosketan to have the same opportunity. He is absolutely certain that Mamawi Atosketan youth will change Canada and the world.

The Donor Wall

Thanking Those Who Made This Possible



CHIEF THUNDERBIRD

Larry Wilkins

WHITE BUFFALO \$500,000-\$999,999

Evelyn Ingraham and Family
Anonymous

CHIEF BOBTAIL \$250,000-\$499,999

Chase Office Interiors
Mary Kryswaty
Ptarmigan Foundation and Bird Construction
Alberta Conference of the SDA Church
Anonymous

EAGLE \$100,000-\$249,999

CWB Welding Foundation
Riverton Construction
Spyder Controls (Curtis and Julie Letniak)
Murray and Elaine Sankey
Dr. Howard and Judy Gimbel
SDA Church in Canada Native Ministries



HORSE \$50,000-\$99,999

Greene Family Charitable Foundation
Dr. Henry and Karen Leung
Versacare Inc.

WOLF \$25,000-\$49,999

Adventist Layman's Services and Industries
Audie and Kathleen Benson
Easy Save Appliance Ltd.
(Dwayne and Rosalin Wilton)
Ken and Doris Hubbard
Hilda Jasman and Florence Guinet
Letniak Farms (Ron and Connie Letniak)
Ron and Brenda McCullough
Dave and Shirley Schafer
Siemson Family Trust
Ken and Vera Wiebe
Roger and Marie Wilkins

BEAR \$10,000-\$24,999

Zelma Kay
Letniak Land and Cattle Ltd. (Lawrence Letniak)
Poplar Beaver Construction (Derek & Angela Maxson)



Ken and Gloria Pierson
Keith and Lorraine Richter
Scott Sankey
Pamela Towers
Ben Tataryn
Christina Thorarinson
Ron and Holline White
Floyd and Elisabeth Bell Bequest
Alma Bencivenga Professional Corp.

ERMINE \$5,000-\$9,999

Bob and Ellen Bell
Gerry and Barbara Chipeur
Sandra Dodds in memory of her mother
Diletta Mazzollin
Vernon Gimbel
Larry and Janet Hall
Lynn and John McDowell in memory of
Elsie and Fred Neumann
Dr. Nimrod Montano
Lawrence Nahorney
James and Cheryl Ramsay
Laverne and Joyce Rose
Cleon Wagner
A Better World
F K Morrow Foundation



RABBIT \$1,000-\$4,999

- Gordon and Fern Adams
- Byron Anderson
- Evan Anderson
- Ray and Deb Anderson
- Marion Anderst
- Arthur and Arlene Arndt
- Belinda Bader
- Darrell and Rosie Ball
- Robert Ballou
- Alex and Ingrid Belinsky
- Aaron Bell
- Stan and Debbie Bell
- Adam and Kim Bially
- Kathleen Bissett
- Dave and Darlene Bodnaruk
- Trevor and Tracey Boller
- Edgar and Florence Boschee
- Doyle and Naomi Brandt
- Glen and Sharron Brown
- Ruth Brucks
- Randy and Debra Chenowith
- Ken and Faye Cherepuschak
- Allen and Margaret Clarke
- Keith and Ngaire Clouten
- Jeff Corbett
- Debbie and Leroy Corkum
- Don and Phyllis Corkum
- Keith and Penny Dubuc
- Glenn and Mildred (Geates) Engen
- Tyler and Stephanie Ferguson
- Jr and Massiel Davila-Ferrer
- David and June Fiorto
- Allan and Airlie Fowler
- David and Sheri Gieck
- Phil Gormley
- Leonard Grant
- Ron and Janet Griffith
- Vern and Becky Gustavsen
- Bill and Carolyn Halyrevich
- Kelvin and Marcia Hill
- Howard and Yasmin Hixt
- Gary and Almyra Hodder
- Glen and Wendy Holly
- Clarence and Vera Hyde
- Ron and Lorna Joch
- Phil and Loretta Johnson
- Dale and Nanette Jones
- John Kartik
- Warren and Cheryl Kay
- Derald and Teresa Kisser
- Brian and France Klatt
- Hyruk Jin and Angie Kwon
- Keith and Bernice Leavitt



RABBIT \$1,000-\$4,999

- Glen and Grace McAfee
- Pekka and Sarah Maattanen
- Andrew and Charlene Masson
- Sudha Medavarapu
- Joel and Lara Melashenko
- Miguel and Raquel Melgar Vega
- James and Annette Mills
- Julian Nakonechny
- Caesar and Linda Nawalkowski
- Jenny Nickel
- Aubrey and Carolyn Osmond
- Mavis Page
- Jason Park
- Norman and Diane Pearson
- Sherry Peer
- Doug and Terri Proud
- Bobby and Ewa Rambally
- Ed and Marion Reimche
- Carol Richardson
- Ruth and Sylvester Riffin
- Gordon and Kristine Sandboe
- Bob and Roberta Schafer
- Malcolm Schafer
- Rod and Judy Schafer
- Dean and Suzanne Self
- Dennis Serva
- Russell Sitek
- Terry and Debbie Skoretz
- Dawn Stickle
- Beverly and Yves Tailleir
- Wilf and Annie Tetz
- Eugene and Sally Thorarinson
- Clinton and Honey Todd
- Alfredo and Karelys Torres
- Adrian and Laurel Trenchuk
- Elizabeth Tym
- Joyce and Bill Van Sheik
- Lilya and John Wagner
- Jack Waller
- Lorraine Weardon
- Jean Wells
- Larry and Gail Wilton
- Alice Wombold
- Gary and Wauneita Ziegenhagel
- Harald and Gisela Zinner
- Breakfast for Learning
- Calgary Foundation
- Darren's Truck Repair
- C J Grundling Professional
- Hecla Contracting
- Joseph Oyeyemi Professional
- Rotary Club of St. Albert
- George Vashishta (T4 Tax Inc)



This special plaque completes the donor wall, thanking everyone who contributed to the high school expansion.

The names on this wall represent those who generously contributed monetarily to making this building possible. Many more individuals and Alberta businesses contributed in important and meaningful ways. All who have had a hand in making this dream a reality contributed goodwill and faith in the ability of Mamawi Atosketan students

To achieve academically

To become wise and compassionate agents for change and

To emerge as leaders and helpers who draw strength from the Creator and their Cree heritage.

We believe in and ask the Creator to bless the youth who choose to study and learn here. As we work for a better world, may we never forget the importance of mutual respect and the meaning of Mamawi Atosketan: *Working Together.*

Room Plaques



Dr. Howard and Judy Gimbel Science Lab

The Gimbels built the Gimbel Eye Centre (Calgary & Edmonton) and an international reputation for eye surgery and care. Howard became head of Ophthalmology at Loma Linda University Medical School and Judy earned a Master of Public Health degree, becoming known as the Lover of the Children for her volunteer work.

Howard and Judy believe in the ability of First Nations youth to excel in the sciences and offer this lab in support.



Paskwaw Mostos Classroom

Murray and Elaine Sankey are ranchers and stewards of the land with a Canadian bison herd that roams on native grasslands. Their hearts have been touched by the stories and experiences of early students at Mamawi Atosketan.

It is Murray and Elaine's hope that this room will have far-reaching influence as Maskwacis youth are educated in a setting that values Cree culture.



Debbie Letniak Library and Media Room

From childhood, Debbie wanted to be a teacher. She went first to Zimbabwe, then served as a teacher and principal in Alberta schools, and was a member of the school board when Mamawi Atosketan was in the developing stage.

Debbie's key concern was that students thrive and enjoy variety in their education. Her family and friends give this room to further that vision.



Esther Werner Roberts EA Room

Esther, a prairie girl, wasn't able to attend school beyond Grade 8 due to poor health. She became a cook in a logging camp and then at Bella Bella Hospital, where she enjoyed friendships with First Nations people.

Esther, who passed away in 2005, wanted to help others obtain the education she could not pursue, so her family honours her passion by providing educational support at Mamawi Atosketan.



Marion Thorarinson Music Room

Marion Thorarinson gave generously of her time and talents, playing organ and piano in Calgary churches while raising six boys and working with her husband to establish Riverton Construction.

Marion's sons continued the family business and funded the Marion Thorarinson Music Room to honour Marion's interest in young people and her desire that all have access to musical education.



Cornerstone Chaplain's Office and Academic Scholarship

The donors believe in academic excellence and the ability of indigenous youth to become leaders in their chosen fields. They desire that recipients of the Cornerstone Scholarship, with God as their cornerstone, will dedicate their lives to service for humanity.

This scholarship is awarded to students who achieve honours while at Mamawi Atosketan and in their first and second years of post-secondary education.



Jackson Young EA Room

Jackson, a cowboy who enjoyed rodeo and adventure, showed his big heart by volunteering at the soup kitchen with Indigenous friends in Edmonton. If he were alive, Jackson would be intensely interested in the success of Mamawi Atosketan students.

Jackson's sister Kathleen and brother-in-law Audie hope their gift in his honor will help students thrive and enjoy life as much as Jackson did.



Hilda Jasman Health Room

Hilda's nursing career was made possible by her parents' sacrifices for education. Nursing and her sense of adventure took Hilda to Australia, Egypt, Scandinavia, and Israel, but she especially enjoyed trips to Mamawi Atosketan.

It is the hope of Hilda's family and sister Florence Guinet that this room will help students thrive so that they can pursue lives of service and adventure.



Chase Office Interiors Gym

Danny Chase, founder of Chase Office Interiors, is a status Indian who credits much of his success to the opportunity he took to be educated. He believes everyone deserves a good education so they can be a better version of themselves.

Danny's hope is that his gift will help thousands of First Nations youth in their journey to bringing increase into the world and to living lives of excellence.



The Emilie Schafer Family Staff Room & Scholarship

As a young widow left with 13 children, Emilie determined that Adventist education would be a priority. Her two oldest boys, teenagers Fred and Dave, worked the family farm so each of their siblings could attend Burman University.

Because of Emilie's faith and determination, the brothers' sacrifice, and the family pulling together, three generations have succeeded through education and changed the course of an entire family's story.

Dave and his wife, Shirley, gave the founding gift for a scholarship that extends the Schafer legacy of helping those with few means to advance and flourish.

Naming Opportunities were available for investors. They could lend their name or the name of someone else they wished to honour to a program, scholarship, or building feature.



Ethan Bird EA Room

Ethan, a grade 12 student, was respected and admired by all for his kind heart, hard work, and fun-loving acceptance of others. Caring teachers and Mamawi Atosketan's Afterschool Program kindled Ethan's enthusiasm for learning and his future. He earned hunting certificates and became interested in several career paths, including chef or electrician.

But for Ethan's death in December 2017, he would have graduated from Mamawi Atosketan in June 2018.



Jojo Wolf EA Room

Jojo loved everybody and everybody loved Jojo. A kind-hearted girl who loved giving gifts through notes and drawings, her beautiful, shy smile made everyone smile right back at her while she attended Mamawi Atosketan (2013-16) until her death.

Jojo's loving and caring spirit will never be forgotten.



Mary Kryswaty Classroom

Mary was a catalyst for education, both as a philanthropist and as a teacher for over 30 years. She gave generously to build the original Mamawi Atosketan building, and was among the first to give a major gift for this new high school building.

Mary is remembered by family and friends as a humble person who cared for the needs of others.



Ptarmigan Cree Cultural Centre

The Ptarmigan Foundation recognizes the value and importance of Maskwacis Cree culture.

The Foundation also recognizes that knowing what it means to be Cree is part of the educational bedrock that will help Mamawi Atosketan students succeed in their journey through high school and higher education, and as future leaders in their community and Canada.



Ed Desjarlais Classroom

Ed Desjarlais spent his life in service to fellow First Nations people. In the 1980s he shared his dream of a centre in Maskwacis that would provide vocational training, cultural connection, and spiritual community.

The driving force in the opening of the first school, Ed began what many Alberta Conference visionaries and teachers, together with students and their families, have continued to shape, making Ed's vision a reality.



Sandra Kiehlbauch Toms Classroom

As the first principal and teacher of what would become Mamawi Atosketan, Sandra provided dedicated and committed leadership under God's direction and guidance to the first Adventist First Nations school in Canada.

Sandra's effort and The Bridge Campaign that supported it years later have resulted in this new school that is a witness to God's love, shared freely with each student.



Marlene Sinclair Commercial Kitchen

Marlene was the first Education Assistant. She was part of the opening staff of two, including the teacher/principal, who welcomed the school's first students. Always a mother at heart, Marlene saw the need to have breakfast available for any child who wanted it.

Marlene laid the cornerstone in the Mamawi Atosketan philosophy of providing good nutrition to aid learning.



Linda and Graham Calderbank Classroom

Linda and Graham Calderbank fostered the growth of Mamawi Atosketan in its middle stage and had the vision of bringing it to the present location. Linda instigated the choice of the current name to honor the students' culture. Linda served as principal from 1999 to 2004 and Graham started the bussing program.

Seeing Mamawi Atosketan today, Linda and Graham still believe that they were doing the Creator's work.



Greene Family Counselor's Office

The Greene Family believes that education is fundamental in creating equal opportunities in life.

What you think about yourself and the effort you make determines the Power to become who you want to be.



Roger and Marie Wilkins Common Room

Roger's Mohawk grandfather blessed each meal in his native tongue. Those prayers had the power to set Roger, Marie and their friends to the task of gardening, gathering a bounty to ensure that the Aboriginal tradition of celebrating God's gifts continues at the dining tables of Mamawi Atosketan.

Their faith-driven servitude and monetary support is a Christian answer to some very old prayers.

Leon Ingraham CTS Building



The Leon Ingraham Career and Technology Studies Building

Leon Ingraham grew up near Mamawi Atosketan. Leon had a passion for industrial arts/career & technology studies education (CTS), which he saw as a door to self-reliance and many careers.

Leon founded and taught in several CTS programs, served as a principal, and especially encouraged First Nations students to develop their natural skills through education.

Leon's family hopes that through the gift of this building, Mamawi Atosketan students will excel and develop skills and confidence to last a lifetime.



CWB Welding Foundation Welding Shop

By sharing knowledge, experience and financial support, CWB Welding Foundation laid the footing for collaboration and the beginning of a welding program for Mamawi Atosketan, which will serve future generations of welders.



Bird Construction Building Technologies Shop

Established by Saskatchewan World War I veteran Hubert J. Bird in 1920, Bird Construction stands for excellence in construction, including major hospitals, universities, and industrial facilities.

The Bird Family greatly values education, including education in modern construction technologies. The family and leaders of Bird Construction look forward to seeing Mamawi Atosketan students advance as business and community leaders.



The Ingraham family is pictured in the entry of the Leon Ingraham Career and Technology Studies Building. From left to right: Scott, Chip, Jodie, Arthur, Evelyn and Lauren Ingraham.

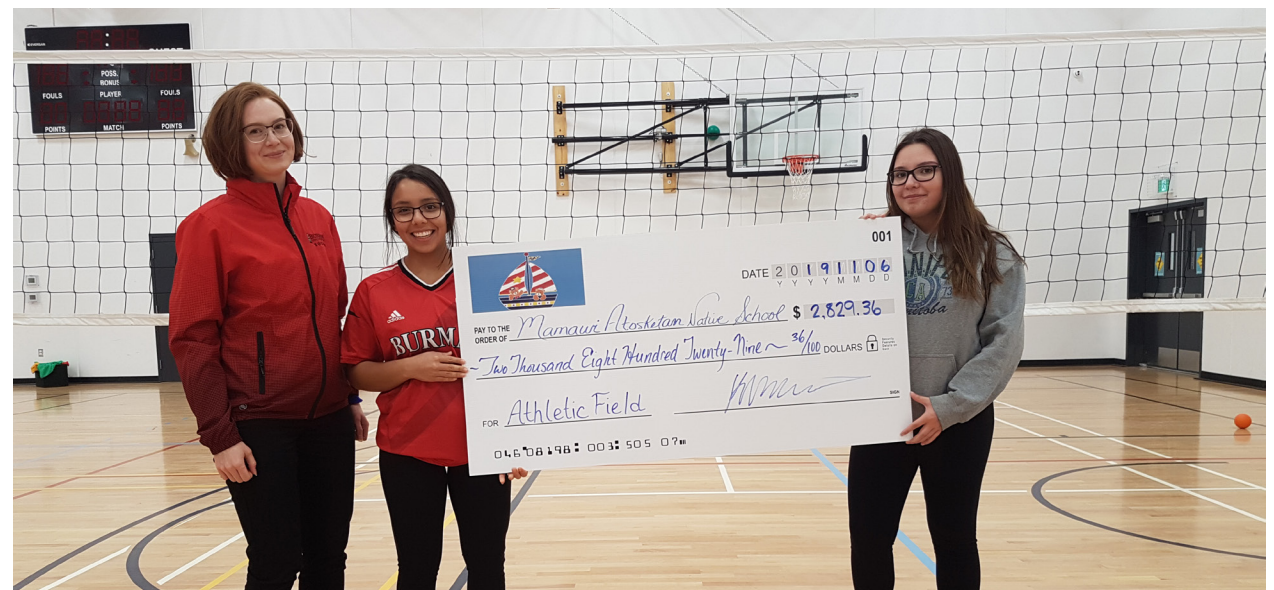
Student Association & Sports



The Howlers volleyball team at the tournament with their two coaches Kim Harrington (left) and David Barritt (right).



Welding students created a trophy for a volleyball tournament held at MANS in fall 2019.



The Howlers sports teams create camaraderie and enhance school spirit while building leadership skills and connection with other teams. The Burman University Women's Soccer team raised funds for a future athletic field at MANS. Fundraising organizer Stephanie Ferguson and BU/MANS student teacher Elsy Fernández presented a cheque to MANS SA president Jade Rabbit at the end of the 2019 season.

Cultural Studies

Sewing, Wood burning, Leather Work, and Cree Grammar Lessons



In Fall 2020, every student in Grades 2-9 began learning basic sewing skills, including the use of a sewing machine, thanks to the support of the Ptarmigan Foundation. Sewing is a highly-valued skill in Maskwacis among all genders. It is particularly valuable to dancers, as it's a point of pride to create one's own regalia and stand out in competitions. The Grade 2 girl (left) is on her way to becoming a seamstress, and teenage boys are keen to master the skill. A junior high girl is learning to create distinctive ribbon skirts, worn for generations on special occasions (traditional skirt in background).



Wood burning and beading are skills enjoyed by multiple age groups, and older students often assist the younger ones.



An elder from the community shares his skill in leather work with eager students during Cultural Studies.



Cree grammar comes alive in nature as students connect and creatively illustrate the concept of animate and inanimate nouns (ex.: tree roots are animate, leaves inanimate) with a connection to earth and the life cycle.

Sculpture Commission

City Unveils Sculpture Created by MANS Students, VP

COVID-19 couldn't keep well-wishers and the curious away from the unveiling of Lacombe's newest public sculpture on Sept. 26, 2020. Michael Willing, vice principal of the junior and senior high school at MANS, was instrumental in facilitating the proposal that resulted in the sculpture commission and its production.

Willing gave the below speech on behalf of himself and artists Eileen Firingstone and Tessa Potts, who designed Miweyihtowin and were the primary welders.

Greetings. My name is Michael Willing. I'm proud to be here today to show you what Eileen, Tessa and I have been working on for four months.

This work has been a blessing to us in many different ways. From offering a summer employment opportunity to these two deserving and energetic youth to affording the opportunity to the three of us to explore our creative sides, this project has manifested the best in us and we are excited to showcase it.

In many ways, the best in us is exactly what this sculpture represents. *Miweyihtowin* or "Affinity for One Another" is a visual representation of

the natural tendency of many creatures, both big and small, to seek out relationships that are warm, healthy and close.

Animals, like humans, are attracted to each other for safety, security and community, and this attraction is what we aimed to represent here. As artists, we would like to share a message that coming together is our best quality, our prime directive, our goal, and ambition. We hope that through kindness, familiarity and compassion we can be a community bound by unfettered strength during times of hardship and separation.

There is no time for this in the future; the time for this is now. Now, during our uncertain days, it should be our goal to unite and commit to treat each other fairly and with an attitude of affinity for one another.

Through the over 450 hours that we spent building this project, we can attest that working well together is not simplistic, facile or easy. It takes work to understand each other. It takes time to understand each other. But the one thing that has kept coming back to our minds is how this represents the challenges that we face as humans. We want this sculpture to speak to the

necessity of not giving up, of continuing in face of hardship and stress, and most of all coming to the end without losing what makes us human.

We are proud that this legacy will sit here and be a beacon for the opportunity that we have to make the world a better place for each other.

I am proud to present *Miweyihtowin*.

By Vice-Principal Michael Willing, one of the three creators of Miweyihtowin

See a video of the unveiling at www.mans1.ca

A local news story provides more detail on the ceremony: www.lacombeonline.com/local/miweyihtowin



Photo by Todd Vaughan

Miweyihtowin (Cree for “Affinity for Each Other”), a welded steel sculpture commissioned by the City of Lacombe, is installed at the intersection of the Calgary-Edmonton Trail and College Avenue, the major approach to Burman University. Potts and Firingstone donated a significant part of their earnings to MANS to help cover COVID safety costs.



Photo from *Lacombe Online*



Photo by Lynn McDowell

Vice-Principal Michael Willing shares the podium with co-artists Eileen Firingstone (Grade 11, MANS) and Tessa Potts (Class of 2020) at the unveiling ceremony coordinated by the City of Lacombe.

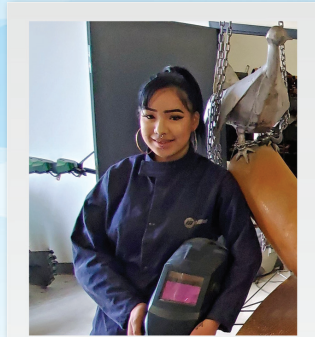


Photo by John McDowell

Three generations of the Buffalo family danced the traditional “Chicken Dance” as part of the unveiling ceremony, which included city dignitaries and members of the Maskwacis community, where Firingstone and Potts live. The sharp-tailed grouse depicted by the sculpture, also known as “prairie chickens,” were an important food source after the bison were decimated.

MANS Story from Weld Magazine

Winter 2020/2021 Edition



MANS Welding Students Create Commissioned Sculpture for City of Lacombe

This summer while most high school students were looking for jobs, two Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS) students took the initiative to apply to create a sculpture for Lacombe's turn-a-bout at the intersection of Calgary & Edmonton Trail, and College Avenue. Tessa Potts, who graduated from MANS in June, and Eileen Firingstone, a current grade 11 student, spent approximately 150 hours with their welding teacher, MANS high school vice-principal Mike Willing, to create Miweyihstown. Firingstone and Potts donated a significant part of their earnings to help cover MANS' COVID-19-related expenses.

The welded metal sculpture of two sharp-tailed grouse was commissioned by the City of Lacombe as part of its public art program. The Cree name of the sculpture, which can be translated as "Affinity for One Another," was chosen initially to represent friendship and connection between the Plains Cree people and the people of Lacombe. It has, however, taken on a very personal meaning for Firingstone and Potts.

For Firingstone, a MANS student since Grade 7, and Potts, a student since kindergarten, "Affinity for One Another" sums up their relationship to the MANS community, but it especially sums up their summer experience in the CWB Welding Foundation Welding Shop in the Leon Ingraham Career and Technology Studies (CTS) Building at MANS. Both studied welding there before becoming entrepreneurs, paying for the material and space they used as well as Willing's supervisory time from commission funds. Potts and Firingstone worked intensely together, designing and welding six hours a day, two days a week in July, and kept an even more rigorous schedule in August.

As if in synch, the two girls can finish each other's sentences. "We [Mr. Willing, Eileen and I] spent the whole summer together," begins Potts, and Firingstone adds, "It's brought the three of us together—like homies!"

The girls were also of one mind when, as they were finishing the sculpture, COVID-19 safety protocols were being announced by Alberta Education, and it became clear that the measures exceeded MANS' budget for the coming year. With opening day just a few weeks away, Potts and Firingstone chose to donate \$750 for an electrostatic cleaner to help keep future students safe.



Photos: Eileen Firingstone, philanthropist and Grade 11 student at MANS, is co-creator of Miweyihstown, and subject of Eileen's Gift, a video that can be viewed at www.mans1.ca. (Photo: Pattie Reasor).


Tessa Potts, philanthropist and one of the co-creators of Miweyihstown, graduated from MANS in June 2020. Tessa talks about her experience with MANS and welding ambitions in *The First in My House*, a video that can be viewed at www.mans1.ca. (Photo: Pattie Reasor).

"I have some pretty important people in my life," said Firingstone, including a twin brother who also attends MANS. "I don't want to risk losing them."

The two philanthropists unveiled Miweyihstown at a special ceremony on September 26, 2020, marking two years since the CWB Welding Foundation Welding Shop in the CTS building at MANS was officially opened. It was in this welding shop that Firingstone and Potts developed their skills. The new shop was made possible by donations from First Nations individuals, corporate partners, and not-for-profit organizations, including the CWB Welding Foundation.

"The CTS building has been a major project that has created so many opportunities for youth in Ponoka and surrounding areas and will encourage Indigenous youth to further their trades training through education," said Michael Willing, Vice Principal, Junior and Senior High School, MANS.

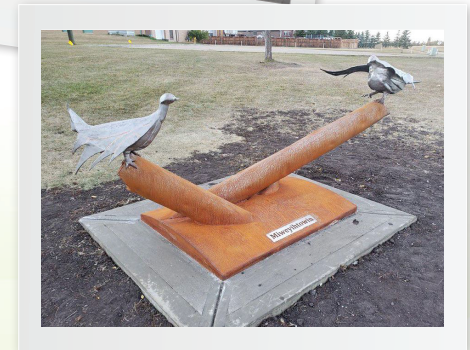
The CWB Welding Foundation continues to work with MANS to encourage youth to explore opportunities and further their education in welding. For instance, in the spring of 2019, the CWB Welding Foundation in partnership with TransCanada introduced students ages 12-15 to the trade through a Mind Over Metal welding camp for Indigenous youth.

"These camps are specifically designed to provide youth with a hands-on introduction to welding and inspire them to pursue a career in welding. Students build confidence and have fun while being supervised by professionals in a safe environment," said Susan Crowley, executive director, CWB Welding Foundation. "Through experiential learning opportunities like the Mind Over Metal welding camps, their newly sparked interest in welding may lead to further education and employment." 

► **Lynn McDowell**, Director of Planned Giving/Philanthropy for the Alberta Conference
Maria Hypponen, Communications Specialist, CWB Welding Foundation.

"Through the over 450 hours that we spent building this project, we can attest that working well together is not simplistic, facile or easy. It takes work to understand each other. It takes time to understand each other. But the one thing that has kept coming back to our minds is how this represents the challenges that we face as humans. We want this sculpture to speak to the necessity of not giving up, of continuing in face of hardship and stress, and most of all coming to the end without losing what makes us human."

Michael Willing, Vice Principal, Junior and Senior High School, Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS)



Miweyihstown, a public art sculpture commissioned by the City of Lacombe, was designed by Eileen Firingstone and Tessa Potts. The welded steel sculpture with stainless steel highlights took shape in MANS' Leon Ingraham CTS Building, The CWB Welding Foundation Shop in July and August. (Photo 1: Mike Willing, MANS. Photo 2: Todd Vaughan, City of Lacombe.)

Graduation 2020

Excerpt from Bridge Update Newsletter

TWO VALEDICTORIANS, BRIDGE CAMPAIGN SCHOLARSHIPS, UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS & PERSEVERANCE CELEBRATED IN HISTORIC GRAD

MANS' June 16 High School Graduation was not only incredible, but also historic: The Class of 2020 was the largest ever; it was MANS' first livestreamed grad (courtesy of COVID-19); the Roan sisters graduated as the first siblings to graduate together from MANS; and two valedictorians were declared.

In the weeks of government-mandated school closures and online classes leading up to grad night, it wasn't clear that there would be any ceremony at all, but a record number of seniors become graduates. Six graduands marched down the aisle of MANS' high school gym and receive their diplomas to much cheering from proud families. Three graduates are the first in their families to attain a high school diploma.

With seating strictly limited due to COVID-19, even the presenters of two scholarships established as part of The Bridge Campaign (The Emilie Schafer Family and The Cornerstone Scholarships) had to attend virtually. Both presenting families pre-taped speeches of congratulations to the two students who had earned their scholarships—valedictorians Shaneek Roasting and Jade Rabbit. The Emily Schafer Family Scholarship presentation can be viewed in the video section of mans1.ca.

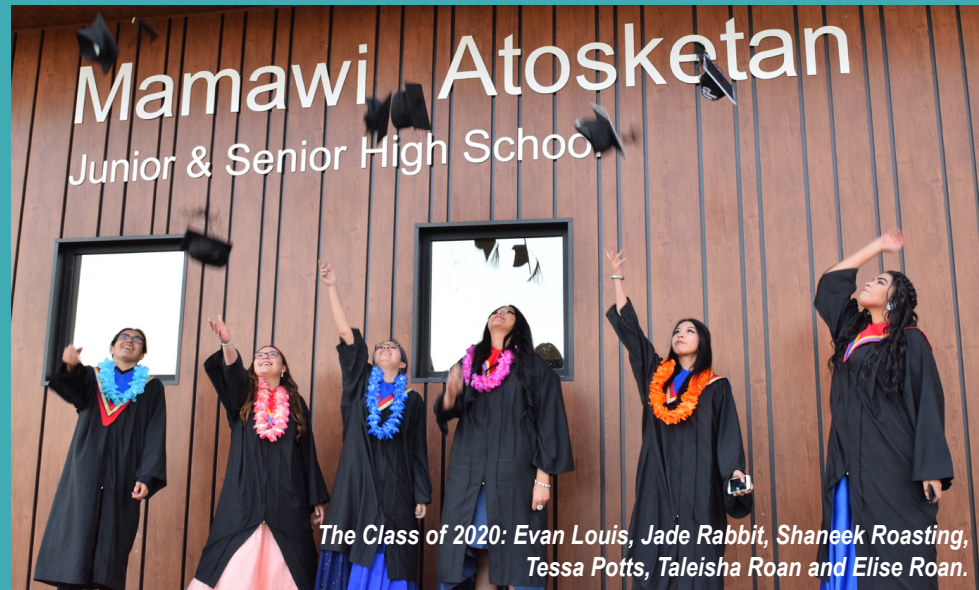
Both Roasting and Rabbit had already applied to and been accepted into Burman University's business and pre-med programs, respectively—a dream realized for the two best friends.

For Roasting and classmate Tessa Potts, the evening signified something like leaving home. Both have been at MANS since Kindergarten, and both are the first in their families to earn high school diplomas. Evan Louis, who has represented the youth of his community in Ottawa, also become the first in his family to graduate.

Closing Wisdom of the Elders

Evan's mother, Michelle Louis, was obviously moved when she addressed the graduates at the end of the ceremony. "You finished what you started," she told the Class of 2020. "And to top it off, you finished during a world-wide pandemic. That means that the six of you are capable of anything in life.

"As our elders say," concluded Louis, "Don't give up. Keep going."



The Class of 2020: Evan Louis, Jade Rabbit, Shaneek Roasting, Tessa Potts, Taleisha Roan and Elise Roan.

Photo by Kelly Stickle



Jade Rabbit, Valedictorian

Valedictorian Jade Rabbit donned a customized mortar board cap with intricate beadwork in the colours of her formal gown to receive her diploma, while valedictorian Shaneek Roasting proudly sported beadwork with her grad formal gown. (Photos by Pattie Reasor)



Shaneek Roasting, Valedictorian

Larry Wilkins, pictured with Alberta's Lieutenant Governor, was honoured for his volunteer leadership over six years as a member of the Steering Committee, Building Committee, and Honorary Campaign Chair of The Bridge Campaign to build a high school at MANS. Larry volunteered countless hours and was also among the campaign's top financial donors.

By Larry Wilkins



The Meaning of MANS High School

In a November 9, 2019 ceremony at Government House in Edmonton, First Nations businessman Larry Wilkins* received The Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers.

The Sovereign's Medal recognizes the extraordinary dedication of a select few Canadians to causes that makes Canada a better place. Larry's CBC Radio interview before the award ceremony aired across Canada.

November 9 was a very important day to me. I'm a proud Canadian, but this recognition by the Queen's representative was important not because I was personally honoured; I accepted the award on behalf of all the volunteers and donors that gave selflessly to make the MANS High school project a reality. The main reason that this national recognition is so important is that it symbolizes a landmark snapshot in time in Canadian history.

Led by the God-given bravery of the leadership of the Alberta Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, a line has been drawn in the sand, a line that cannot be erased. The prejudices that formerly defined an oppressed people in Canada now has a glimmer of hope of being totally obliterated. The people of The Alberta Conference have

spoken, and the leaders were joined by church members, and Canadian citizens and business leaders across the country. In effect, MANS and this Sovereign's Medal amplify a new way of thinking and acting in Canada.

The message is this: The status quo for our First Nations babies, brothers and sisters is no longer tolerable. We will no longer stand by idly and passively while time marches on. Our government's hands seem to be tied helplessly and hopelessly, but thank God, ours are not.

Faith and bravery are for me synonymous terms. There

“**Today's thoughts, prayers, and actions will become tomorrow's reality.**”

are times when the faithful are called to action. That time is now.

We cannot change the past. The skeletons of residential schools, segregation, disease, child poverty and government

sponsored ethnic cleansing programs will remain a part of this great nation's history, but we have drawn a line. By our actions at MANS, we choose to break with old attitudes and patterns. We collectively have made a decisive choice for change, and we need to continue to press for a Canada that is much better.

The children of Maskwacis designed their school logo. “Mamawi Atosketan” means

“working together.” The logo encapsulates a handshake. It is, in essence, a plea to all Canadians. Whether your families have been here on these lands for hundreds of years or hundreds of days, if you consider yourself a Canadian, you will be held partially responsible for shaping the future of our magnificent country. Today's thoughts, prayers, and actions will become tomorrow's reality.

In the ongoing Great Controversy involving First Nations, Canadians make choices for one side or the other. This medal confirms an important shift. With MANS, we have drawn a line that is marked by Heaven. We have done His bidding. We have prayed for His will to be done, and it will be done.

Of that, we can be sure.

*Larry Wilkins is owner and CEO of External Affairs Medical Spas in St. Albert and Edmonton. Listen to his CBC Radio interview on “Daybreak Alberta” with Russell Bowers - Nov. 8, 2019: [Larry Wilkins Volunteers to Change Lives cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-95-daybreak-alberta/clip/15745785-larry-wilkins-volunteers-to-change-lives](https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-95-daybreak-alberta/clip/15745785-larry-wilkins-volunteers-to-change-lives). His reflection on the meaning of MANS was first published in the January 2020 issue of *Messenger*.

A DREAM COMES TRUE

“I want to go to Burman University for a biology major so I can pursue a medical degree.”

Jade Rabbit, MANS Valedictorian 2020
Freshman at Burman University

People who believe in you make you believe in yourself.

When students like Jade read about the Schafer Family and the scholarship they recently established at MANS to help graduates attend Burman, a seed is planted. They can see themselves in the story and at Burman—and a life they never thought possible.

MANS Scholarships
You can Make a Difference Too



**MAMAWI ATOSKETAN
NATIVE SCHOOL**
mans1.ca

The Emilie Schafer Family Staff Room & Scholarship

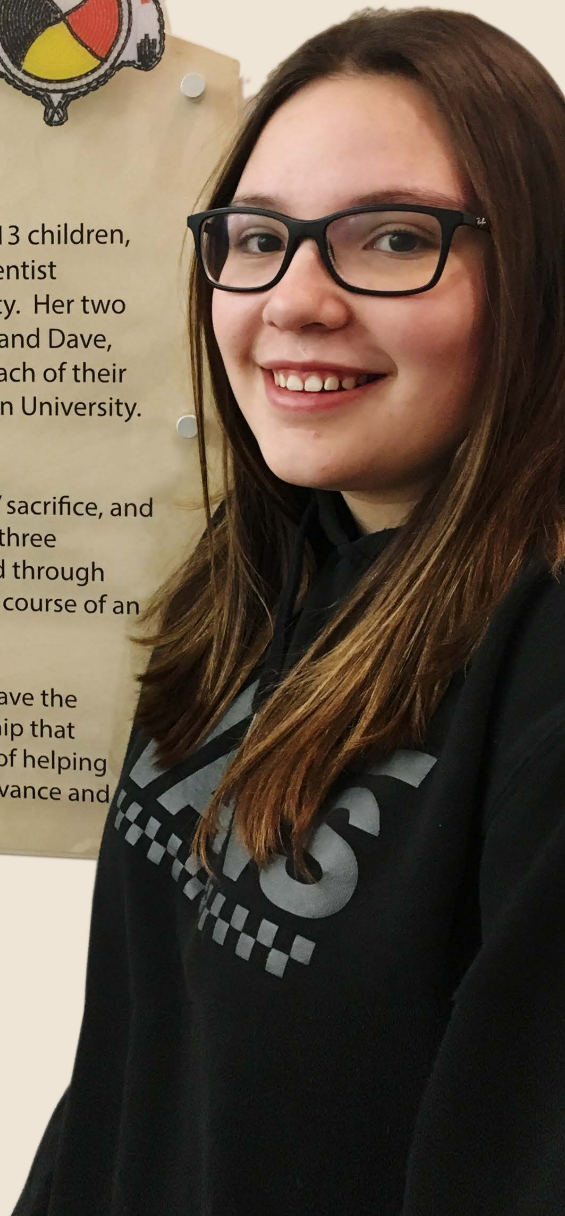
As a young widow left with 13 children, Emilie determined that Adventist education would be a priority. Her two oldest boys, teenagers Fred and Dave, worked the family farm so each of their siblings could attend Burman University.

Because of Emilie's faith and determination, the brothers' sacrifice, and the family pulling together, three generations have succeeded through education and changed the course of an entire family's story.

Dave and his wife, Shirley, gave the founding gift for a scholarship that extends the Schafer legacy of helping those with few means to advance and flourish.

Watch Jade and Shaneek's interview, *"The Valedictorians: Two Best Friends Speak"* at mans1.ca.

To donate to MANS scholarships, contact
Lynn McDowell
(403) 342-5044 x 233
lmcdowell@albertaadventist.ca
Alberta Conference
5816 Hwy 2A, Lacombe,
AB T4L 2G5



Thank you for making Mamawi Atosketan Junior and Senior High School a reality.

Your investment in the youth of Maskwacis is having an impact that will be felt for generations to come.