

Tripartite Forum Newsletter



Interpreting the Glooscap Stories

The Justice Working Committee's Gluskabewimk (Glooscap Stories) Project has completed four sessions with a core group of participants, engaged in valuable conversations about the nature of Glooscap Stories and their lessons that can be codified into law.

The Glooscap Stories Project has reached the two-year mark, and has secured ethics approvals, hired a coordinator and research assistants. A formalized partnership with four Mi'kmaq organizations is now in place, and a database of Glooscap stories has been created, serving as the foundation for the work to come.

In 2025, work began on the project's active engagement piece, identifying and inviting a core group of 19 to participate in a series of sessions.

To date, there have been four sessions, from December 2024 to July 2025. These sessions, which took place in Millbrook First Nation, Debert, Five Islands, Partridge Island and online, entailed discussions about stories centered on creation and greed, as well as connections in the Glooscap Stories to the places the sessions took place.

Several key themes arose from the conversations surrounding the Glooscap Stories at these sessions.

The first session yielded themes of leadership; respect and reciprocity; humility; consultation; consideration of the consequences of one's own actions – as well as sacred and reciprocal relationships with animals.

(Continued on Page 2)



IN THIS EDITION

Glooscap Stories	PG. 1-2
Sport and Recreation	PG. 3
Project Fund	PG. 4
IRS Legacy Project	PG. 5
Joint Meeting, Announcements	PG. 6
Economic Symposium	PG. 7-8
New Education Co-Chair	PG. 8

The Tripartite Forum Newsletter will be published biannual basis The next edition will be published in Spring 2026.

For more information, please email: sam.macdonald@cmmns.com

Visit the website: www.tripartiteforum.ca

TRIPARTITE FORUM:

Gluskabewimk

Themes found during the second session included the gifts that accompany responsibility; how greed is a violation of balance and harmony; sustainability and Netukulimk as key principles; how overharvesting and hoarding of wealth are wrong; how law is embedded in relationships, how leadership and justice are rooted in responsibility, ceremony and protocols informing legal action – and how law is contextual and living.

The third session's themes include the connection to Glooscap through the process of learning with and from one another; various sources of L'nu knowledge; the gifts and responsibilities individuals have; the living legal tradition of Lnuwey tplutaqan (Mi'kmaq legal principles and laws); respect, not reverence, and humility – and the active role of women in decision making represented in some stories.

The project aims to establish a more traditionally Indigenous justice system that follows Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls To Action #42 and 50, which call for recognition of Aboriginal justice systems and Indigenous law institutes for the development, use and understanding of Indigenous laws.

The Glooscap Stories Project is carrying out more sessions for fall and winter 2025-26. Proponents of the project have been collecting principles and information from each session and are planning to release a full report on findings potentially next year.

Along with this work, the proponents are also developing a glossary of Mi'kmaq terminology to accompany the project, which could be eventually developed into a Mi'kmaq legal dictionary.



Participants reading stories at the trailhead of the Mi'kmawey Debert Interpretive Trail.

Is there something you want to see in the next newsletter? Feel free to reach out:

Sam.macdonald@cmmns.com

Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Project

The engagement phase of the Sport and Recreation Committee's project, The Mi'kmaq Women and Girls Participation in Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity Action Plan, is complete, with all 14 community engagements wrapped up.

This marks a major milestone for the project. Sara-Lynne Knockwood, who is acting as consultant, carried out engagements in 11 communities, hearing from participants from a variety of age groups and backgrounds, who shared valuable insights and thoughtful personal experiences, reflecting on their needs, wants and challenges.

At this time, Sara-Lynne and the other proponents of the project are concurrently preparing a summary of the information gathered at the engagement sessions, and an action plan.

The findings will be summarized and documented, and that will inform the action plan, which will be revealed after a Sports Summit, and released later this winter.

Sara-Lynne shared information on the insights she's gathered, and progress made at a recent luncheon event in Halifax.

The November 14th Mi'kmaq Women and Girls Participation in Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Action Plan Luncheon was led by Sara-Lynne, who presented the insights gleaned from the communities she visited.

She provided an overview of the project to a group of attendees that includes Mi'kmaq Physical Activity Leadership Program (MPAL) representatives, community members and partners. The event included a roundtable discussion, sharing responses to community findings, and a preview of the actions, supports and resources being developed for Mi'kmaq women and girls.

Sara-Lynne has been busy since the outset of the project, having sought input through engagements. Through these engagements, she gleaned feedback from 82 community members.

The main goal of the project is to learn more about the access women and girls have to sport, physical activity and recreation resources, eventually planning strategies on how to support those women and girls have better access.

A final project report on the matter is forthcoming and will be shared with the Tripartite Forum's membership and community partners in 2026.



Project Fund

After its first intake of the fiscal year, the Tripartite Forum Project Fund for Social and Economic Change has reviewed three projects.

Of those three projects, all have been approved, and one has been completed.

The Project Fund accepted a second intake of proposals. An open call for applications for funding closed on its November 7th, 2025 deadline with one proponent submitting an application.

To submit an application for project funding, please email Project Fund Coordinator Brad Sullivan, who can be reached at brad.sullivan@cmmns.com.



For more information on the Project Fund for Social and Economic Change, including projects it has previously supported, visit:

<https://tripartiteforum.ca/committees/project-fund>

Wikipaltimk

The first project funded and completed of the three approved through the last intake was the Culture and Heritage Committee's Wi'kipaltimk 2025 – Honouring Indian Day School Survivors and Celebrating Mi'kmaq Culture.

Wi'kipaltimk was a three-day public event at Open Hearth Park in Sydney, held in August, honouring the resilience and cultural heritage of Mi'kmaq communities affected by Indian Day Schools.

The event included an educational component, couched in the guiding principle of reconciliation, celebrating Indigenous culture through music, art, storytelling and wellness.

The project was administered through the Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, by its Culture and Heritage Director Darrell Bernard.

The Wi'kipaltimk event educated guests on Indian Day Schools, and their impacts, through workshops and seminars, showcasing Indigenous artists and culture to a wide audience through a festival stage and cultural demonstration format.

Demonstrations included beading, quillwork, basket weaving, Indigenous culinary and other traditional ways, an artisan marketplace and a Powwow experience.

Wi'kipaltimk is a milestone for survivors, and follows the work of Debra Ginnish, a member of the UNSM's Wellness Team who helped secure compensation claims for Indian Day School Survivors.

IRS Legacy Project

The project honouring the Survivors of the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School (IRS) is now in its final stage.

With funding from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) officially approved and fabrication work underway, and an official unveiling will be coming soon.

Construction commenced on the IRS Legacy Project, with crews breaking ground in August, following the tendering of project work. So far, contractors have prepared the land, with silt fencing, and a culvert. The driveway and road to the site have been built up.

The site work began after the project received approval from the Survivors' Advisory Circle, and the permission of the Sipekne'katik Band to use land it owns.

The concrete pad for the sculptures was poured in September, and the sculptures, which were designed by Mi'kmaw Artist Ursula Johnson, are being installed.

Signage, artwork and seating are also being installed at the site.

As part of the final phase, proponents hosted two-day Healing and Resiliency Gathering in Truro, in late September.

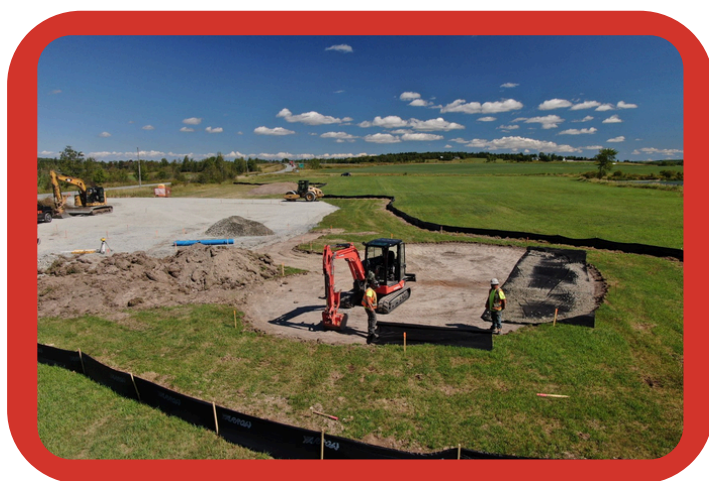
This gathering was the second of its kind, where Survivors were brought together.

"It's been a seven-year journey, we've carried a heavy load and lost so many Survivors since we began," said Tim Bernard, Mi'kmaq Co-Chair of the Culture and Heritage Committee and Executive Director of Mi'kmawey Debert.

"I'm very proud and honoured to work alongside my team and our Survivor's Advisory Circle. They certainly have lightened the workload."

The project is the culmination of more than a decade of work by Tim and Mi'kmawey Debert, to honour the lives of Survivors and their families. The project began with proponents gathering IRS experiences from Survivors, followed by a video documenting those experiences released in 2023, showcasing their resiliency.

In addition to Survivors' input, the project has been guided by the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre Elders' Advisory Council.



Joint Meeting

In June, members of the Health and Social Working Committees collaborated to host a joint meeting to discuss the potential impacts of the federal changes to Jordan's Principle.

The meeting took place amid ongoing concerns on the part of First Nations families about the services, and associated application process.

Committee members, as well as Mi'kmaw, provincial and federal reps reviewed the federal changes to Jordan's Principle policy, providing information to federal representatives about the impacts those changes have had, and will continue to have on First Nations families – primary among them, the barriers to the provision of services to youth many Mi'kmaw families now face.

Excavation

The Culture and Heritage worktable is congratulating Committee Member Catherine Cottreau-Robins and her archaeological team for their work at the Fort Saint-Louis National Historic Site, in Port La Tour, Shelburne County.

The team is carrying out a long-term field excavation of a Mi'kmaw landscape visited by the French, Basque and others in the late 16th and 17th Centuries.

This work was done with the help of participants in the Sipekne'katik Archaeology Training School and community members from Wasoqopa'q First Nation.

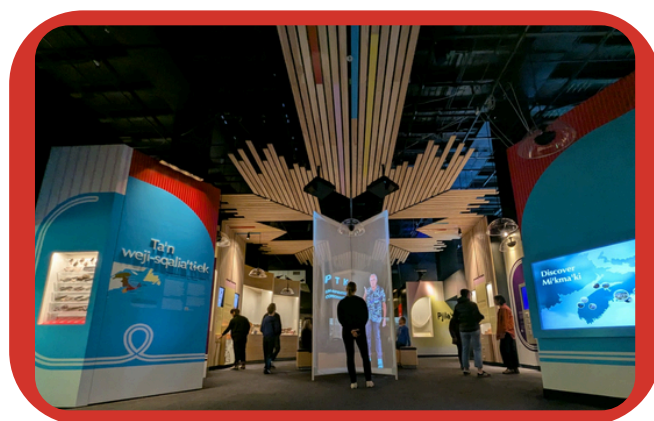
New Indigenous Gallery

In Spring 2025, the Culture and Heritage worktable celebrated the opening of a new Indigenous gallery in Kijipuktuk (Halifax).

The Nova Scotia Museum officially opened Pjila'si (Mi'kmaq for welcome). Pjila'si is an interactive space celebrating Mi'kmaw culture and language at the Museum of Natural History in Kijipuktuk (Halifax).

The exhibit features guided tours, a gallery, and collection of museum Mi'kmaw community belongings – and is free to access for Indigenous peoples. Pjila'si is the result of collaboration between a Mi'kmaw Advisory Group (MAG), the Museum of Natural History and the Nova Scotia Museum. It follows a series of recommendations and objectives identified by the MAG. The MAG also selected the community belongings that are now on display in the permanent gallery.

For more information, please contact kayla.rudderham@novascotia.ca or 902-424-6467.



Successful Symposium

At a September Ec Dev Committee meeting held in Potlotek First Nation, the committee heard about the economic activities Potlotek is developing and reviewed the outcomes of the success of the Mukk Nqa'ltultik: A Community Connections Symposium hosted by the Ec Dev Committee in May 2025.

The symposium – the name of which means “we meet again,” in Mi'kmaq – was the first opportunity for Mi'kmaw economic development officers (EDOs), Indigenous employment officers and partners from several sectors to meet to share knowledge and build stronger working relationships in person since the pandemic.

The May 21-23rd event hosted at Truro's Inn on Prince Hotel and Convention Centre, put the spotlight on community-led initiatives, deepening understanding of key sectors like clean energy, procurement and tourism, providing opportunities to explore and show how partnerships can support Mi'kmaw self-determination and economic resilience.

Some distinct themes emerged from the symposium, including:

- The priority of clean energy
- The narrative nature of tourism
- The importance of strong partnerships
- The need for greater support for EDOs and Indigenous employment officers
- The sectoral importance of youth and entrepreneurs
- Clarity on the roles of key organizations
- The importance of in-person relationship building and conversation.

Over the course of 15 sessions, 22 presenters spoke from their perspectives as Mi'kmaw community members, regional organizations, clean energy developers, legal experts and government staff.

More than 100 attendees participated in the event, with coordination by Sydney-based development agency RISE Results, with many expressing how grateful they were to meet and discuss their ideas and challenges in person.

Among those attending were representatives from Mi'kmaq communities across Nova Scotia, economic development organizations, Elders, community leaders, youth, government staff, leaders in the nonprofit sector and corporate partners.

They engaged in a series of panel discussions, technical updates, cultural framing and peer-led conversations about partnerships, training and long-term opportunities.

During an EDO roundtable discussion, participants spoke of severe gaps in community-level economic development support, changing and emerging industries, youth training and employment, barriers to entrepreneurship, concerns with corporate partnerships – along with potential solutions to these issues, including opportunities for support.

Experts from a variety of sectors shared insights, anecdotes and answered questions, drawing on their expertise and experience, in sectors that ranged from energy and policy, to tourism and environmental advocacy.

The focus of the symposium shifted forward, by the third day, to policy, joint ventures and future opportunities, with discussion that included regional tourism research, the Mi'kmaw role in energy and mining, joint ventures, procurement and environmental stewardship.

(Continued on Page 8)

The symposium is the product of the combined work of The Economic Development Working Committee, Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn and the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association. More than 60 First Nations representatives were in attendance, helping to ground the event with real-life community experiences with a local focus.

The Economic Development Working Committee is considering its next steps, following on the success of the symposium. Future steps could include more of these kinds of events, or something new, building on the opportunities gained by in-person conversations, and showing up for one another.

Procurement

The Economic Development Working Committee met in Wasoqopa'q First Nation on June 5th, where members in attendance learned about the potential for Indigenous businesses to benefit from the new Nova Scotia Procurement Strategy.

The committee also visited and toured Yarmouth Bar Fisheries to learn about the business and how Glooscap First Nation uses renewable energy to support its fisheries operation.

New Mi'kmaq Co-Chair for Education

The Tripartite Forum and its Education Working Committee are happy to announce the election of their newest co-chair. The newest co-chair to sit at the Education Committee work table is Denise Pictou Maloney.

Denise, who was voted in on October 6th by the Nova Scotia Chiefs, has joined Provincial Co-Chair Melody Martin-Googoo, and Federal Co-Chair Helen Long in their leadership capacity, as the education committee considers upcoming projects and refines its workplan.

Denise is the successor to longtime Co-Chair Ann Denny, who left her position when she retired from her career as Aboriginal Services Coordinator with Cape Breton University in December 2023.

A member of Sipekne'katik First Nation, Denise was raised just outside of Kjiptuk (Halifax) and has strong familial ties to several communities in Mi'kma'ki (Atlantic Canada). Denise was raised with traditional protocols and a deep respect for her inherent connection to land and water. Denise lost her mother at a young age, a loss that had lasting intergenerational impact on her family. Denise advocates for Indigenous inherent Matrilineal rights, inclusion and equity. She has spoken on behalf of her mother at United Nations, civil rights conferences, journalist conferences. Denise has also spoken at colleges and universities throughout Canada and the United States, shining the light of awareness on the injustices of murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). Denise has also participated in work associated with the National Inquiry into MMIWG.

Denise currently works as the Nova Scotia Community College Senior Advisor for Mi'kmaq and Indigenous Initiatives. Previously, she has worked with the Halifax Regional Center for Education (HRCE) for more than a decade. In her most recent role with HRCE, she served as Mi'kmaq Indigenous Student Support Worker for the Halifax Region.

Denise has sat as a circle member of the National Family and Survivors Circle with CIRNAC, providing guidance and advice on, and best practices in engaging families, Survivors, and 2SLGBTQQA+ people in the development of National Action Plan to implement the 231 Calls For Justice, from the final report on the National Inquiry into MMIWG.

UNION OF NOVA SCOTIA MI'KMAQ

The Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq (UNSM) is a Tribal Organization that has been established for more than 50 years. The UNSM came into existence to provide a unified political voice for the Mi'kmaq people of the province in the face of a proposed federal government policy to assimilate Canada's First nations people into mainstream society.

Main Office

90 San'tele'sew Awti, Membertou Place, Suite 201

Membertou, NS B1S 0A5

Tel: 902-539-4107

Website: www.unsm.org

Jewl Stevens, Tripartite Liaison | **Email:** jewlstevens@unsm.org

Lyric Christmas-Johnson, Tripartite **Admin** | Email: lyricchristmas@unsm.org



CONFEDERACY OF MAINLAND MI'KMAQ

The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (CMM) is a Tribal Council incorporated in 1986 as a not-for-profit organization under the Societies Act of Nova Scotia. The mission statement best summarizes the objectives of the organization: "To proactively promote and assist Mi'kmaq communities' initiatives toward self determination and enhancement of community."

Main Office

PO Box 1590 (52 Legends Avenue)

Truro, NS B6L 0A3

Tel: 902-895-6385

Fax: 902-893-1520

Toll Free: 1-877-892-2424

Website: www.cmmns.ca



The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq

Sam Trites, Tripartite Liaison | Email: sam.trites@cmmns.com

Brad Sullivan, Tripartite Project Fund Coordinator | Email: brad.sullivan@cmmns.com

Sam Macdonald, Tripartite Communications | Email: sam.macdonald@cmmns.com

Chloe Faulkner, Tripartite Admin | Email: chloe.faulkner@cmmns.com

NOVA SCOTIA NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Nova Scotia Native Women's Association is a provincial Indigenous organization incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act that develops and delivers programs promoting equal opportunity for Indigenous women, 2SLGBTQQIA people and their families.

Main Office

16 Tower Road,

Millbrook, NS B6L 1V7

Tel: 902-893-7402

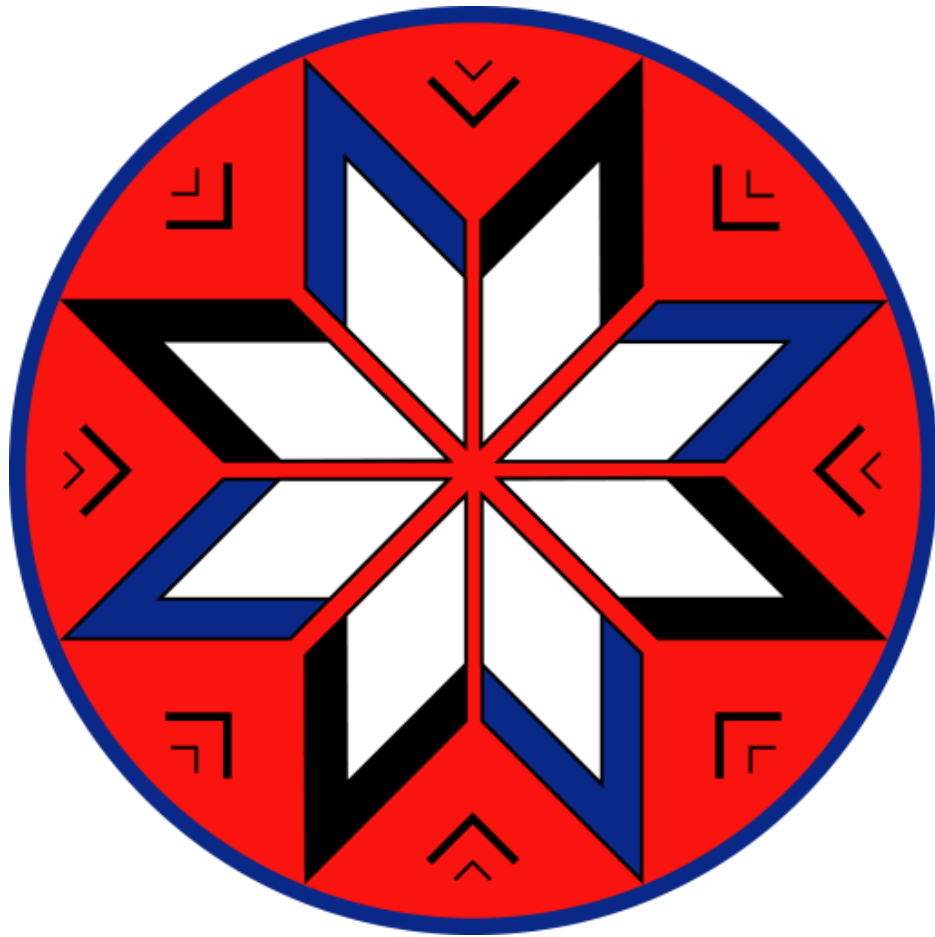
Website: www.nsnwa.ca

Dawn McDonald, Executive Director | Email: tripartite@nsnwa.net.

Joanne Cope, Tripartite Liaison | Email: tripartiteliaison@nsnwa.net.



NOVA SCOTIA NATIVE
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION



MI'KMAQ • NOVA SCOTIA • CANADA
Tripartite Forum

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR
TRIPARTITE FORUM INFO, RECENT
NEWS AND MEETING SCHEDULES**



www.tripartiteforum.ca

