

Cash available for Indigenous adult education

MARISELA AMADOR
THE EASTERN DOOR

Tuesday at the Kahnawake Business Complex, representatives for the First Nations Adult Education School Council (FNAESC) announced six new bursaries to be awarded this year to adult students from across Quebec.

"Today we launch a call to all our adult learners to apply for six bursaries, totalling \$4,000," said Fabien Lamothe on his first official day as the new president of FNAESC.

Lamothe explained that two new corporate sponsors - MNP and Desjardins - will offer \$1,000 each to adult learners who show a commitment to learning and promoting their Indigenous language.

Following UNESCO's promotion of 2019 as International Year of Indigenous Languages, adult student applicants will be asked to answer essay questions or to submit a video essay. One English student and one French will receive the bursaries in the fall.

Additionally, two \$500 bursaries from the Aboriginal



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Fabien Lamothe and Rola Helou, the president, and executive director of (FNAESC) respectively, explained that they wanted to give adult learners the opportunity to earn a bursary to help them achieve their goals.

Savings Corporation of Canada (ABSCAN) will be awarded to students who complete their Attestation of Collegial Studies (ACS) in Housing Management in November. Through this program, which is also supported by FNAESC, 18 adult students have obtained their ACS, and nine others will graduate in the fall.

"Finally, the school council is proud to sponsor two local bursaries in memory of student Catherine Pinette and trustee Kevin John Papatie," said Lamothe.

Martin Adam, Kitei Amik Regional Adult Education Center director from Lac Simon, spoke about Papatie's life and his commitment to helping people of all ages attain their educational goals.

"Kevin John was a school council representative. He was also an advisor to his community and a source of motivation and perseverance for many," said Adam. "His life tragically ended in a car accident. The bursary shall be awarded to a student who embodies the same qualities that Kevin John represented. He was also a really good friend of mine."

Pinette was a mother of six who had just submitted her final exam in order to receive her high school diploma, when she and two of her children were killed in a car accident.

"She was a student that changed my life," said Denis Dionne, director of the Ushatmak Mani-Utenam Regional Education Center director in Uashat. "She had the community at heart. The bursary shall be awarded to a student who, like Catherine, demonstrates perseverance, ambition, determination, and a desire to do things well while always maintaining a positive attitude."

Dionne became visibly emotional when he spoke of Pinette.

The local regional adult education centre opened its doors in Kahnawake in 2012, and has assisted over 1,700 adult learners from across many Indigenous communities in Quebec.

Rola Helou, executive director of FNAESC, said, "We support all the centres that offer adult education, which is why these bursaries are great news."

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IKEA work site shut down

PAUL GRAIF
THE EASTERN DOOR

It's been almost two weeks and 20 Ironworkers from Kahnawake are still hoping to return to the Ikea construction site along Highway 30 in Beauharnois.

They, along with about 80 other workers from Local 711, were informed on Monday, May 13 that they were being laid off by CNC Mechanical, the sub-contractor of Shaeffer from Germany.

Dustin Hemlock is one of the workers. "I have no problems with Ikea itself. It's just the Schaffer company who is giving us a really hard time about this," he said.

"The problem is this company Schaeffer with its attitude," said Sylvain Boivin, who is the Business Agent with Local 711. "We have filed over 30 grievances with them for different things, including not respecting the agreement, and harassment."

Boivin says he has tried to meet with the company and foreman on several occasions to try and settle things.

Calls to the foreman have not been returned. Ikea Canada's Public Relations Manager Kristin Newbigging issued a written statement to *The Eastern Door*.

"The difference was that we

worked a lot better for CNC Mechanical. Everything went more smoothly," said Hemlock. "The company before, the Schaffer company, didn't like that we were doing so well. They didn't run any cranes all winter. We came back to work and right away we didn't have any problems doing anything. And all we ever did was have problems with this other company."

Walter Jay Goodleaf is another one of the workers from Kahnawake.

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Ikea Canada's Public Relations Manager Kristin Newbigging issued a written statement to *The Eastern Door*.

"We respect the rights of unionized workers on the construction site and we are in communication with our third-party contractor in efforts to address the concerns," the statement read.

Most Kahnawake Ironworkers are used to booming out, leaving home for weeks at a time to work in their specialized trade. The Ikea work was a dream job for many of them.

"That's why I want to work there. It's a 20-minute drive," Goodleaf said. "I'm home every night, home with my family every night. Weekends, if I want to work Saturdays then I can."

Instead Goodleaf, Hemlock and the workers from their union are still heading out to the worksite, but in this case it is to picket and protest.

"It sucks because it affects everybody," Hemlock said. "If we lose this fight it's going to affect every other trade because they are trying to bring in non-union companies. And Quebec is the last place that is strong with the unions."

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