

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2016 Shingwauk Gathering and Conference to be held July 29th – 31st

(SAULT STE. MARIE, ON – July 11, 2016): The Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association (CSAA), the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC), and partners will be hosting the fifth annual Shingwauk Gathering and Conference from July 29th – 31st at Algoma University. This year's theme is "Fulfilling the Vision". The event will open with the lighting of the sacred fire at 4:00pm on Friday July 29, 2016. Chris Fontaine, Eddy Robertson, and Dr. Christianne V. Stephens will delivery keynote speeches on Friday, July 31st from 2:00pm – 4:00pm.

The annual Shingwauk Gathering and Conference continues the tradition of Survivor gatherings that began with the 1981 reunion. The conference provides Survivors with the opportunity to gather together with each other, family members, and the wider community to engage in past and current issues affecting Survivors and Aboriginal peoples in a conference-like setting.

The CSAA and SRSC have developed a compelling line-up of presentations and workshops focused on fulfilling Chief Shingwauk's vision of cross-cultural education and responding to the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada's Calls to Action. This year's event will include residential school tours, discussions, exercises and workshops, free youth and children's programming, as well as ~~three keynote addresses~~ presentations from Christopher Lafontaine, Eddy Robertson, and Christianne V. Stephens.

Dr. Christianne V. Stephens is a medical anthropologist who specializes in the anthropology of health and Indigenous health. She has conducted ethnographic fieldwork and served as a collaborator on a number of community health projects at Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN) for the past 15 years. Stephens' research examines various aspects of Aboriginal community health and well-being, including the social determinants of health, historical trauma, and environmental health. She is the Principal Investigator on the Walpole Island First Nation Body Mapping Study and has been working closely with Walpole Island community partners for the past several years to bring this project to fruition.

Eddy Robinson is an Anishinaabe Muskegowuk Cree of the Missanabie Cree First Nation, and was born and raised in Toronto. Over the past 25 years, Robinson has worked at the frontline of social services and advocates for Indigenous communities locally, provincially and nationally. He has evolved into a noted Anishinaabe artist, musician, educator, facilitator, trainer, and speaker. He's involved with numerous local district school boards, colleges, universities, corporate institutions, and several Indigenous/Aboriginal organizations and currently travels across the country as a speaker.

Survivors and their families from around Ontario, including the Missanabie Cree First Nation, Chapleau First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, and Garden River First Nation will make the trek to Sault Ste. Marie and the University to continue the work of sharing, healing, and learning. Many First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and non-Aboriginal peoples from as far north as the James Bay region, as far south as Walpole Island, and as far east as the Kanesatake and Kahnawake First Nations in Quebec will also make the trip to participate.

The conference is open to the public and free of cost. Those interested in attending can register online at www.shingwauk.org or email ShingwaukDG@algomau.ca or call 704.949.2301, Ext. 4623.

About Algoma University

Algoma University was established in 1965 and is located in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Algoma University is a small, undergraduate, teaching-focused university that places an emphasis on serving the needs of Northern Ontario. Algoma University offers a wide range of degrees spanning the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines. As a partner with Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig, Algoma University has a special mission to cultivate cross-cultural learning between Aboriginal populations and other communities. Algoma University also offers satellite programming in Brampton and Timmins. For more information, please visit www.algomau.ca.

Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association

The Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association (CSAA) was created following the first Residential School Reunion held at Algoma University in the summer of 1981. The Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC) was established as a joint initiative between Algoma University and the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association. It has a mission of sharing, healing, and learning. The Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre has a national reputation as a leader in education about Residential Schools and hosts one of the most significant archival collections anywhere in relation to residential schools.

About the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre

The Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre is a cross-cultural research and educational development project of Algoma University, the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association, and the National Residential School Survivor Society. Shortly after the closure in 1970 of the Shingwauk Indian Residential School, and in the early years of Algoma University College's relocation to the present site, Residential School Survivors connected to the Shingwauk School, their families and communities, and their allies were catalysts in the growing Healing Movement, culminating in the introduction of the original Shingwauk Project in 1979 and the 1981 Shingwauk Reunion. From these watershed events began the decades-long work of collecting, organizing and displaying photographs and other Residential School materials, conducting research, and educating the public that led to the establishment of the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and the Shingwauk Project, now known as the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, respectively.

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