



## Dr. JESSIE SAULTEAUX RESOURCE CENTRE

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Report from: The Dr. Jessie Sauiteaux Resource Centre to the Diaconal gathering

Greetings friends!

We pray that this gathering will bring success, hope and strength to all who are present.

We currently have two diaconal students in our theological program with another anticipated. Adeline Samson Harvey will be commissioned at the All Native Circle Conference meeting in July in Wasakasing, Ontario. Adeline is from the community of Hobbema, Alberta and is a Cree woman. She has spent most of her ministry in her community, working as a community mental health worker in the area of Suicide Prevention.

Delores Bouchie is a Ojibway woman, who has been in the program for three years and lives in the northern Manitoba isolated community of Berens River on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. Delores shares full-time ministry with her husband Roy. Delores spends much of her ministry work with youth and children in her community.

The men and women in our five year theological program travel from Alberta, Saskatchewan, northern Manitoba and northwestern Ontario and are currently from five different tribal and language groups.

We celebrate the fact that Dr. Jessie Sauiteaux Centre honors both Christian and Aboriginal Traditional spiritualities. There are only a few places in the world where it is safe to practice such pluralism. Folks from numerous interfaith communities come to visit the centre from all over the world and to exchange cross-cultural understanding and dialogue. The diversity of our students and the life experience and wisdom that they bring from their communities is also a celebration. We are gifted to have numerous elders from various tribal nations that are part of our ministry at DJSRC.

It has been a challenge for us as a community-based program to be recognized as having an equally valuable place alongside academic schools in delivering theological education. There is often a misunderstanding amongst the wider church that our graduating students must work in Aboriginal ministries. Upon graduation, our students are able to offer ministry anywhere in the United Church of Canada and not just in Aboriginal communities. It is a challenge to constantly be addressing these issues. Increasing requests over the past two years to provide cross-cultural education to the wider church without a person being hired to focus on that particular piece of work, has been a struggle in terms of time and staff energy.

It is a concern for us as it is for many across the Diaconal network when we see outreach ministries having their funding cut and that ministry eventually being deleted.

It has taken a long time to build up the trunk of the tree. As we see new branches appearing, we hope and pray that blossoms will appear and flourish, providing fruit across the land for many years to come.

*Blessings to all a warm strength for the journey  
melody in a hollow - Mrs. Keeper of the Circle*

*Heidi Paupankis  
elder in residence*