

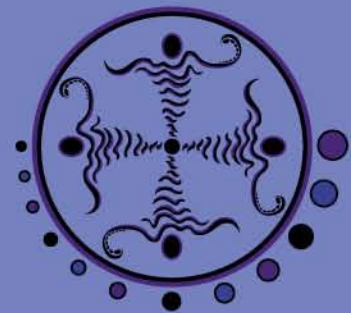


**ABORIGINAL
LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTE, INC.**



ABORIGINAL WOMEN LEADERS: MANITOBA

August 19, 2009



101-1874 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3J 0H2

Phone: (204) 940-1700
Fax: (204) 940-1719
Email: alii1@mts.net
Website: www.alii.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

FORWARD	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vii
Recommendations based on feedback	viii
Objectives Met	viii
Key Factors to Build Upon	viii
Key Priorities.....	ix
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODOLOGY	1
PRESENTATIONS	4
OUTCOMES	5
RECOMMENDATIONS	6
EVALUATION SUMMARY.....	13
CONCLUSION.....	13
TIMEFRAME.....	15

FORWARD

The Aboriginal Leadership Institute, Inc. presents this report, which represents the recommendations and conclusions of the Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba project.

The Aboriginal Leadership Institute, Inc. completed this project over the period of March 20, 2008 to June 19, 2009.

This report in its entirety was carried out under the direction of the Aboriginal Leadership Institute, Inc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special acknowledgement is extended to the Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba Participants:

Councillor Shirley Neepin – Fox Lake Cree Nation
Councillor June Laroque – Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation
Dina Meade – Opaskwayak Cree Nation
Cynthia Francois – Mathias Colomb Cree Nation
Valerie Whyte – Mathias Colomb Cree Nation
Mary Trout – God’s Lake First Nation
Audrey Ouskun – War Lake First Nation
Jennifer Bloomfield – War Lake First Nation
Rose Hart - O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation
Betty Bickell – Sayisi Dene First Nation
Nancy Powderhorn – Sayisi Dene First Nation
Lorraine Cook – Long Plain First Nation
Lindsay Catcheway – Skownan First Nation
Patricia Catcheway – Skownan First Nation
Sheryl Nepinak – Skownan First Nation
Brenda Smoke – Sioux Valley Dakota Nation
Tracy Thomas – Peguis First Nation
Jackie Pommer – Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
Rhonda Garson – Fisher River Cree Nation
Ramona Cook – Birdtail Sioux First Nation

Project Partners:

Status of Women Canada – Women’s Program
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs – First Nations Women’s Council

Special Thanks to:

Elder Doris Pratt – Sioux Valley Dakota Nation
Elder Arnold Fontaine – Sagkeeng First Nation
Chief Deborah Chief – Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
Wendy Whitecloud – Department of Law, University of Manitoba

Facilitators:

Allen Sutherland, White Spotted Horse

Presenters:

Grand Chief Ron Evans
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Chief Deborah Chief
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation

Wendy Whitecloud
Department of Law, University of Manitoba

Commissioner Dennis White Bird
Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba

Jeffrey F. Harris
Lawyer, Myers Weinberg LLP Barristers and Solicitors, Winnipeg

Elder Doris Pratt
Sioux Valley Dakota Nation

Elder Harry Bone
Keeseekoowenin First Nation

Sylvia Maracle
Executive Director - Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres

Dr. Winona Wheeler
Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research

Dr. Tracey Lindberg
Director, Indigenous Studies - Athabasca University

Lynda Highway
Web Developer and Trainer

Allen Sutherland
White Spotted Horse

Rosa Walker
Executive Director – Aboriginal Leadership Institute, Inc.

Ted Fontaine
Chair, Board of Directors – Aboriginal Leadership Institute, Inc.

Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Aboriginal Leadership Institute, Inc. (ALI) is a unique, non-profit organization established to build leadership capacity in Canadian Aboriginal people. ALI is managed and staffed by Aboriginal people and directed by a volunteer board reflecting the diversity of the Aboriginal community. As a non-profit organization, ALI is committed to promoting governance that creates building blocks for strong Aboriginal communities. The Aboriginal Leadership Institute's belief is that in order to achieve our objective that we must respect and promote the positive perspectives of all Aboriginal communities.

This project designed and delivered a (1) one-year initiative, which addressed the issue of increasing the representation of Aboriginal women in positions of leadership. This project targeted the growth of (20) twenty women over a (12) twelve-month period. The project delivered a series of activities, which includes: Mentorship, research, policy development, recommendations, leadership advancement through capacity building, acquisition of current resource materials, disseminate through interactive means and educational sessions on getting women involved in leadership roles with an emphasis on community development.

The initiative addresses the causes of the under representation of women in positions of influence, on tribal and band councils, management boards and boards of directors of Aboriginal organizations. Women were provided with a forum to present their perspectives and facilitated discussions as they addressed leadership opportunities of how leadership impacts community development.

This Initiative worked to improve the status of Aboriginal women by increasing women's decision making within organizations regardless of their leadership position. The approach of AWL: MB initiative is an empowerment approach – an opportunity for women to discuss, focus on issues related to community capacity and their own leadership roles within their communities.

The aim of AWL: MB is to assist in the removal of barriers to Aboriginal women entering leadership arenas. Many Aboriginal communities are working hard to heal from the effects of historical and current conditions of oppression and racism. We believe this can be influenced by women changing the presence and practices of the leadership pool in Manitoba, by encouraging networking and by women taking a more active role in understanding how governments and leadership function.

This initiative shares information that promotes the effective use of government systems, programs and ideologies. It promotes the notion of altruism and the sharing of resources that will continue on into the future.

As a result of the facilitated discussions held, several recommendations are presented for future consideration. Highlights of the recommendations are listed below, with further expanded explanation listed in a later section of this report.

Recommendations based on feedback include:

- Continuation of the Aboriginal Women Leaders initiative in Manitoba or another province in Canada
- Continued application of the Mentorship model
- Create an alumni of past participants
- Continued inclusion and participation to regional and national conferences and forums to explore deeper challenges and solutions
- Resource and information sharing to continue with all Aboriginal communities across Canada
- Continued topics relating to governance, capacity building and overall women leadership need to be a priority.

Objectives Met:

The goals of this project was to strengthen leadership skills for Aboriginal women to take on leadership roles and to empower Aboriginal women through knowledge about key issues impacting their lives and the lives of their families, community capacity and community self-help. The following objectives were met:

- Facilitated capacity building
- Development of a forum for one-on-one and group mentorship to share knowledge
- Shared resources and information in a group setting
- Development of a mentorship model
- Development of a curriculum, selection and orientation of leadership team
- Development of the www.aboriginalwomenleaders.com website and chat room
- Team members promoted as session leaders
- Recommendations for the future in relation to Aboriginal Women Leaders initiative

Key Factors to Build Upon:

In completing the Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba project, several focal points were recognized and were significant to the success of the overall project. We draw upon these factors as we move forward towards the improvement of the status of Aboriginal women by increasing women's decision making within organizations regardless of their leadership position. These factors include but are not limited to:

- Increasing knowledge of leadership, capacity and governance.
- Providing and sharing resource information and tools to ensure continued or future success for Aboriginal women leaders
- Continue working towards future Aboriginal women involvement in governance

Key Priorities:

The Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba initiative is an important step to generating gender equality in areas of leadership. The (20) twenty Aboriginal women leaders in Manitoba that participated in the 1-year initiative can continue to move forward into the forefront of decision-making bodies to ensure adequate representation of women's priorities and concerns and build upon existing initiatives and available resources, recommendations and can address future needs and priorities.

Specific areas identified as priorities include, women must be made aware of their potential, which can make change within their communities by taking on leadership roles. It is well known that that the vast majority of the leadership in Aboriginal governance is male. Women have been largely restricted to working administrative levels. This work has offered little opportunity for women to advance into positions that are concerned with policy, legislation and programming. Statistically, women are at a high risk of being involved in: family violence (spousal and child), alcohol and drug dependency, prostitution, sex trade, long term welfare dependency, gangs, sexual and physical abuse and inadequate or unsafe housing. Women in positions of power will ensure that the diversity of women is represented in legislatures that generate positive action in their community.

The partnership with ALI, Aboriginal communities and with Status of Women Canada is seen as a key priority. The AWL: MB participants felt that capacity building is a priority for Aboriginal women and their communities and by having the women participants act as mentors during the next group of (20) twenty Aboriginal women participants, it was a key to proactive and positive steps forward in terms of equal gender representation in Aboriginal self-governance.

INTRODUCTION:

The Aboriginal Leadership Institute's goal over the past nine years has been to increase educational opportunities that will encourage leaders to acquire more understanding of the issues related to leadership and governance.

The purpose of this project was to see the design and delivery of a 1-year project, which empowers Aboriginal women through mentorship, research, policy development and leadership advancement through capacity building.

AWL: MB engaged participants and gave them the opportunity to identify their leadership skills and become part of a growing pool of women leaders in Manitoba. They explored How To's of governance and politics, knowing their community and its issues, process and procedure, understanding community development and its impact on women, and mentorship. In total, fifteen (15) communities from various parts of Manitoba participated in AWL: MB project and twenty (20) women, ten (10) from the north and ten (10) from the south from various Aboriginal communities in Manitoba participated in the 1-year initiative. This was accomplished through successful dialogue for women leaders to discuss and focus on issues related to capacity building and their own leadership roles within their communities.

METHODOLOGY:

The methodology consisted of a mixed-methods approach, employing a variety of techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of governance topics and ensure crossover of knowledge and skills were maximized.

The methods employed for this project included:

- **Recruitment, Selection and Orientation of Leadership Team**
(20) Women from Manitoba Aboriginal communities have been recruited and selected for the Leadership Team (appendix a). (10) Women from the North and (10) Women from the South (see map of communities appendix b).

Prior to acceptance into the AWL: MB program a call for Aboriginal women leaders was initiated throughout Manitoba with letters to communities (appendix c), an overview of selection criteria (appendix d), and poster (appendix e).

Interested employers with their recommendations of women leaders in their organization and community had to sign an agreement (appendix f) to commit and support their employee in completing the training sessions and meetings. Participants then signed an agreement with ALI, Inc. to commit their time and energy into the AWL: MB program (appendix g).

On September 23rd, 2008 (20) AWL: MB participants met to engage in a roundtable discussion on Aboriginal women leadership issues in their communities (appendix h). The women were provided with a forum to present their perspectives as they addressed leadership opportunities and facilitated discussions of how leadership impacts community development (appendix i). AWL: MB participants were welcomed to the program by ALI, inc. Executive Director, Rosa Walker and the Chair-Board of Directors, Ted Fontaine in a AWL: MB Kick-off event (appendix j). Aboriginal women in leadership roles were invited to make speeches to the group about the importance of empowerment and the removal of barriers to Aboriginal women entering leadership arenas.

- **A Needs Assessment has been developed to determine the current skill level and the skill requirements of all (20) women**
(20) Women participants were given the Needs Assessment to complete and return to our office, where it was reviewed to customize the appropriate curriculum for each AWL: MB participant (appendix k).
- **Developed a curriculum to teach Aboriginal women the skills of leadership and remove fear and intimidation**
The 2008 / 2009 Course Calendar sessions were established. Spaces were reserved for team participants (appendix l). Team Participants were individually matched with a customized curriculum based upon the outcome of their needs assessment. Customized modules were designed with input from participants and their home communities. Capacity development sessions focused on areas where participants have identified the skills that they most find to be lacking.
- **Developed a Mentorship Model**
Development and Application of a Mentorship Model (appendix m) has been created with input from the AMC: First Nations Women's Committee and the team participants. ALI has an impressive network of resources, programs and partners from which participants benefited and learned from (appendix n). ALI, Inc and AWL: MB participants met to discuss the Mentorship Model at the September 23rd, 2008 Kick-off event and May 28th, 2009 roundtable discussion (appendix o). Some of the areas covered included: creating a formal mentorship system and communication tool among team participants (see appendix i). This

enabled team participants to share information, mentor and support one another throughout the AWL: MB program.

➤ **Developed web-based information on issues concerning Aboriginal Women's Leadership**

Upon researching existing Women's Internet websites, there were no websites that focused on Aboriginal women leadership. Therefore, an Aboriginal Women's Leadership website has been developed www.aboriginalwomenleaders.com that features a chat room, discussion forum and site visitors can meet the 2008/09 Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba participants by reading their bio and viewing their photo. Women leaders can utilize the website to share information, resources and information on Women's leadership issues (appendix p).

➤ **A 2-day planning, networking and capacity development meeting focused on getting the women involved in leadership roles. A facilitated learning session designed to build leadership capacity.**

ALI, Inc and AMC Reps held the first planning meeting on April 2nd 2008 to discuss program development and priorities (appendix q).

On September 23rd, 2008 (20) AWL: MB participants met to engage in a roundtable discussion on Aboriginal women leadership issues in their communities (see appendix h). The women were provided with a forum to present their perspectives as they addressed leadership opportunities and facilitated discussion on how leadership impacts community development (appendix h). AWL: MB participants were welcomed to the program by ALI, inc. Executive Director, Rosa Walker and the Chair-Board of Directors, Ted Fontaine in a AWL: MB Kick-off event. Aboriginal women in leadership roles were invited to make speeches to the group about the importance of empowerment and the removal of barriers to Aboriginal women entering leadership arenas.

➤ **Inclusion and participation in regional and national conferences**

Women were selected to attend various conferences based on their needs assessments. The breakdown is as follows:

- (11) Women attended the *Governance: Best Practices in Manitoba first Nations Communities* Forum in Winnipeg, MB
- (4) Women attended the *Inclusion Works '09* Conference in Vancouver, BC
- (2) Women attended *Vision Quest* Conference in Winnipeg, MB
- (4) Women attended the *2009 National CED* Conference in Winnipeg, MB
- (2) Women attended the *United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues* in New York, NY

- **Team members will be promoted as session leaders and participants on issues of Aboriginal women and leadership at conferences, workshop and seminars**
(4) Women from Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba has been recruited as facilitators and attended train the trainer sessions “Bringing the Best Forward”.
- (2) Women have co-facilitated training sessions to date.

PRESENTATIONS:

Women Leader Speakers and experts were invited to talk about their respective expertise in various areas of governance, particularly relating to ideas and initiatives around Aboriginal women in leadership. Following all presentations given, there was a question and answer period between presenters and the women participants. Below is a list of presenters with presentation topics; presenter biographies are listed as appendices:

- Title: **Manitoba Treaties**
Presented By: Commissioner Dennis Whitebird
Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM)
- Title: **Canada and First Nations Historical timelines**
Presented By: Allen Sutherland (White Spotted Horse),
Skownan First Nation
- Title: **The Legal Perspective of the Treaties in Canada**
Presented By: Jeffrey F. Harris
Myers Weinberg LLP Barristers and Solicitors,
Winnipeg
- Title: **Language as Nationhood**
Presented By: Elder Doris Pratt, Sioux Valley Dakota Nation
- Title: **A Dakota Perspective on Treaties, Women’s Leadership and Governance**
Presented By: Wendy Whitecloud
Director, Academic Support Program
Faculty of Law, University of Manitoba
- Title: **7 Principles of Nationhood**
Presented By: Elder Harry Bone
Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba
- Title: **First Nation Women and Colonialism**
Presented By: Dr. Winona Wheeler
Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and
Research, Athabasca University

- Title: **Steps to success, role modeling and leadership in today's day of Technology and Professional Development for First Nation Women**

Presented By: Sylvia Maracle
Executive Director
Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres

- Title: **Indigenous Law, Indigenous Governance and Indigenous Women**

Presented by: Tracey Lindberg
Director, Indigenous Education
Associate Professor, Indigenous Studies
Athabasca University

OUTCOMES:

Curriculum developed based on twenty (20) individual needs assessments to teach Aboriginal women skills of leadership and remove fear and intimidation (Individual Curriculum - appendix r).

Website developed with the focus on Aboriginal Women Leaders: Manitoba to share information on issues concerning Aboriginal Women's Leadership.

Chat room developed for online formal & informal discussion and for those interested in women's leadership issues.

Manitoba Provincial Network developed of Aboriginal women leaders, interested organizations and individuals.

Development and delivery of customized leadership modules. Aboriginal women leader participants exposed to customized Calendar sessions and national conferences.

Mentorship Model developed

Four (4) women from communities replaced AWL: MB participants in their jobs while away on training. Community replacements were given the opportunity to work in a leadership role in their community (appendix s)

Developed a two (2) day planning, networking and capacity development meeting focused on getting women involved in leadership roles. A facilitated learning session designed to build leadership capacity.

Advisory meetings with Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs-First Nations Women Chiefs Council (appendices t and u)

Development and delivery of the AWL: MB Graduation Gala Reception with invited guests of participants, community leaders and special guest speakers (appendix v). The event took place at the Winnipeg Art Gallery in Winnipeg, MB and all guests were provided with highlights of sessions

completed (appendix w). Empowering comments of best wishes motivated this excellent group of Aboriginal women leaders as they return to their communities with their new skills learned.

Determined commitment, resources and level of expertise required for successful networking meetings.

Development and delivery of a Final Report that outlines recommendations based on the information and knowledge gained from all project objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

General feedback received from the Aboriginal women leaders: Manitoba participants and based on the research and discussion comments gathered thus far, is outlined below:

- Continue the development of online resources on the AWL website www.aboriginalwomenleaders.com. Resources will contain materials that Aboriginal women leader participants have shared at meetings, which include good governance practices. Make it accessible to all communities.
- Continue a partnership between ALI, Status of Women Canada and Aboriginal community organizations, which will create a process that allows communities to create good governance structures and networking opportunities for Aboriginal women.
- Continue the process for research and product development of resource materials for Aboriginal women and all others to share as a resource.
- Continue the development of AWL with a self-inventory to create a vision statement and mandate and strategic plan for participants.
- Continue development and application of the mentorship model. Include pioneer AWL: MB participants as mentors to the next group of Aboriginal women leaders.
- Develop and maintain a record of AWL alumni as an online resource.

Three (3) roundtable-facilitated discussions were conducted exclusively with participants of AWL: MB. Session #1 took place at the kick-off event September 23, 2009, which focused on Aboriginal women leadership issues, expected outcomes, governance and communication. Session #2 took place May 27th, 2009, which focused on Manitoba treaties. Session #3 took place May 28th, 2009, which focused on a mentorship model. Experts, who represent Aboriginal communities of Manitoba, facilitated these sessions.

In an effort to maximize participation and elicit as much information as possible the participants were provided with discussion topics focused on Aboriginal women leadership issues. These recommendations are from individuals who are experienced and knowledgeable about their communities.

SESSION #1

What is your perspective on leadership opportunities in your community?

- There's a need for youth mentorship programs and youth conferences
- New First Nations have more opportunities for growth
- There have been only (2) women political leadership roles in my community. There is a high percentage of women directors. The political leadership needs to be balanced.
- Women need to be leaders in the home, teaching culture and exposing their children to what a leader looks like.
- Communities are beginning to utilize their post secondary students. The leadership in communities needs to be educated from post secondary institutions
- Some communities have Junior Chief and Councils for youth, there should be more
- Some communities have a Women's Group. However, most women don't utilize this opportunity in communities
- Women leaders are educators and give guidance. This needs to be done with the 0 – 5 year olds in the community.
- Peguis First Nation has the biggest band claim in Canada. This is a good example of a community "thinking beyond the box".
- Become active in communities on boards, advisory committees, coaches and elder councils.
- Become involved in sports and recreation activities in the community.
- Attend workshops and community meetings.

What are the issues and challenges you face in leadership roles and what are the implications?

- What defines a leader can be contradicting. Does a leader lead by talk? Or does a leader lead by being humble and take the time to learn by listening.
- Too many leaders don't follow through with promises. They speak of good changes and work, but no action is ever done.

- Leaders need to put all of the (7) teachings into practice.
- “Politics and dirty politics” are challenges. The leadership is controlled rather than betterment for the entire community.
- There are barriers for community members. Leadership needs to listen to what the members of community have to say and implement.
- Leaders are those who stand out in a crowd. Therefore, also become targets for being criticized and ridiculed.
- There are obstacles, but obstacles make you stronger to achieve your goals.

What are your expectations of the AWL: MB program?

- Share with fellow women leaders
- Bond with fellow women leaders
- Build and become a network of support
- Relate to each other, camaraderie
- Build trust with fellow women leaders
- Build confidence
- Develop a group of women leaders with strong voices
- Develop good listening skills
- Build lasting relationships with fellow women leaders
- Build qualities of leadership
- Gain valuable knowledge
- Gain experience
- Build a sense of pride
- Build communication skills and networks
- Opportunity to learn how to make visual presentations
- Learn how to facilitate and public speaking skills
- Valuable training sessions

In terms of women’s leadership, what speakers would you be interested in hearing?

- Mae Louise Campbell, Elder
- Katherine Whitecloud, AFN Regional Chief
- Tina Keeper - politician, actor, social activist
- Tina Leveque – Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
- Verna J. Kirkness – Peguis First Nation
- Buffy St. Marie – Activist, singer, songwriter
- Carol Crowe - Environmental Educator
- A good speaker that covers diverse topics of culture, governance and politics. “A gourmet buffet of topics covered”.
- Spiritual Advisors and Pipe Carriers

What would be the best mode of communication for team members and other interested women in leadership to engage in formal and informal discussions on women leadership issues i.e., chat room, conference calls, etc.?

- Email
- Newsletter

- Chat room: A few women are unfamiliar with this method of communication.
- Fax/Phone
- Community Visits
- Training Sessions in the community. There are facilities to accommodate this.
- Each AWL: MB member should prepare and make a presentation of their home community. This allows women to introduce not only themselves but their community as well. This empowers women with practice in public speaking and presentation skills.
- Exchange Business Cards.

SESSION #2

What are some initiatives that TRCM should focus on in the upcoming year?

- Preservation of treaties Bill C31 – discrimination towards women.
- Spread the word more, not just to the leaders. Bring presentations right to the community.
- Bring information to younger generations – the youth
- Look at technology to educate others. Have Elders document and share information. Our leaders (i.e. AMC) sometimes can't say anything because they are afraid of attacking their own people.
- Northern communities need attention, especially the youth to know history and what's going on. Especially history of their specific community.
- Commissioner should focus on children's rights. INAC documents determine who we are (i.e., Status Cards, BillC31) and how they exercise their right as an Indian. Treaty teaching should be in schools/curriculum. There's no history in schools, community history. However, Christopher Columbus is still in schoolbooks.
- Talk to educate kids. Son forgot textbook and he downloaded his textbook on website. Kids are smart. TRCM should work with schools in First Nations.
- Make TRCM age appropriate for all kids. 0-5 and 5-12, etc. Even educators / staff don't know their history. How does treaties impact them? Their communities? Their history. Technology is good but look at person sitting next to you (grandparent, parent, elders, etc) for informative resources.
- TRCM should go straight to the community, instead of coming to Winnipeg all the time. Some people are not comfortable coming to Winnipeg.
- Youth in the city – Urban Indians. Bring culture and treaty to these youth. Using Modern Media. Culture is needed in these youth, no confidence in urban youth. Youth are critical and should have one drop in centre for youth?
- Margaret Meade quote, "Small group is only needed to make change. Make small steps, make a hockey rink but what are you going to do with it? Make something for the kids to do".
- TRCM made strides and in a mammoth undertaking, these breakthrough initiatives are easy and always criticized. Written sentences can be misinterpreted in so many ways. Canadians and the

populations need to see this and learn about Indians history. Know why the crown pushed to reserves and brainwashed. The mainstream Canadians should know that their ancestor signed treaties and they need to learn so much more about them. It's time for us to have a voice. We have to be that vocal. TRCM has done a lot and should teach educators to teach students to question treaties.

- TRCM should focus on identity to empower children and communities. Suicides and family violence, etc. How we think of ourselves is very important and there are protocols of a treaty pipe. Are we going to wear our business suits or wear our cultural traditional skirts? Youth and elder forums for youth to teach their identities, spirit names, clans, protocols, etc... youth need to be motivated to make positive changes and action (i.e., create funding opportunities and build youth drop in centers.)
- TRCM can facilitate these sessions in First Nation communities and in the non-Aboriginal community. At Lower Fort Gary when you walk in it says treaty #1 on the wall in huge text. Continue to produce this type of material and bring it to the people.
- The TRCM commercial is good thing and only saw it on APTN. Would like to see it more and hit the masses like in school. They need more staff and money to do more of this important work.
- Kids are out of the circle; they need to be a part of these things. A circle connects everyone, infants all the way to an elder; we tend to put them to the side. We need balance, more hands on are needed, and we learn better when elders teach me.
- More sessions and sharing circles to talk about treaties. The answer is in us, TRCM doesn't have the answers, they facilitate.
- A school in a community had "TRCM" poster up and schools had to take down and said we are not all treaty people!

What are the main challenges that presently face your First Nation in terms of understanding the treaties?

- Not being fully aware and not buying into a contemporary situation. Don't get caught up in the past. We need capacity and education about the treaties and understand the process. Treaty education needs to reflect its varying audience.
- Understanding treaties; an in depth understanding
- What are our treaty rights?
- Land claims with TLE, granny is 100 yrs old and says in community don't sign anything you don't understand.
- Clarity needed, what is a treaty? What's the history and understand how it'll affect our kids. How does it affect everyone as a Canadian?
- Lack of awareness, teach at a really young age. Teach in non-aboriginal schools
- Dakota communities struggle to understand. Urban Centers ensure that city understands that.
- Would like to explain treaties to non aboriginal people
- I've been on reserve my whole life and it took me to leave my community to learn what TRCM is and about treaties.
- The Challenge is to learn how to exercise our inherit right to our treaty rights. Our health care system is really sad. Education is below

average. Give elders some respect as does mainstream society gives to its nurses.

- Week leadership is a challenge. Matter of survival.
- Didn't know all of Canada is treaty land. But, I get it now how we are all treaty.
- Leadership needs to understand it. Talk to the community about it.
- Add specifics

What do you believe are some myths of the treaties that we can dispel, in order to develop more formidable relationships with First Nation and Non-First Nation communities?

- Promises were made and are going to be taken away or eliminated!
- Where exactly does the education part of learning the treaties end?
- The education myth was that education only meant a school and not post-secondary schooling.
- Treaties for First Nations means First Nations get free stuff (myth) Lazy Indians, life on welfare.
- "INDIAN" opposed to First Nation person
- Non-First Nation want a treaty card if we are all treaty people
- Myth that the treaties were a good agreement.
- Treaties took the children away – in regards to residential schools – education part of treaties our ancestors did not know what they signed for in regards to IRS.
- Aboriginal women don't have a voice. They always put their heads down. "Women are nothing." Women are life givers and should be honored.
- "There's another Indian driving a brand new vehicle that they got for free".
- All those treaties were an agreement to purchase the land - our exchange.
- Tax dollars don't benefit First Nation people – some First Nation people understand this.
- In regards to IRS section 6(1) and 6(2) for children – discrimination.
- To keep status in children – pressure child to marry another First Nation person.
- Alien in non-aboriginal communities different on east coast as opposed to Manitoba where there is a higher population of Indians.
- Signed a document on purpose to give our land and rights away. This myth must be dispelled. Welfare is not our treaty right. Government created a branch of addicts to rely on handouts and not earn our own way and self-empowerment.
- Indian act is not a treaty right. Welfare department is not a treaty right. These are merely government policies.
- Must equip all Canadians with the facts

In future TRCM workshops, are there areas that should be explored more broadly in relation to treaties and treaty relations? Any areas that should be shortened?

- I belong to Treaty #6 – visual learning is good. Too wordy gets me lost. Want to know what my rights are and misconceptions. Right here, right now, lets deal with the present.
- Understanding, treaties are agreements and not contracts. Communities need to know that.
- Learning about treaty #2, because that's where I'm from. Workshops for communities to teach about their own treaty land would resolve some issues in communities.
- Don't like the word "Aboriginal" call us what we call ourselves traditionally. Elders are bringing us back. Nationhood
- TRCM needs to define Nationhood – Nation to Nation.

SESSION #3

Roundtable Discussion on a Mentorship Model

- Create a vision statement and mandate. A strategic plan for participants and identify participant strengths and weaknesses. Take a self-inventory and be respectful and provide world-class mentorship.
- AWL: MB participants are already mentors, we set the bar.
- Encourage our families to get educated and take steps to improve life. Encourage others to sit on committees on volunteer basis
- Youth mentorship program in our community. Youth get placed in organizations in the community and mentored.
- A PowerPoint presentation should be made from our first year as pioneers of AWL
- Youth mentorship, implement junior chief and councils (i.e. Fisher River Cree Nation)
- Develop a peer mentorship group comprised of senior management in communities
- Continue networking among AWL: MB and make presentations to the next group of twenty (20). We don't always have the people in our community for support
- Looking forward to using the website
- We are a small community, traveling to Winnipeg is difficult. We need to encourage the next group of twenty (20) throughout the AWL: MB process and support them so they are ready for what lay ahead
- Vision, goals and mission statements should be planned throughout the year
- Develop a booklet of community profiles, services and information of all participant communities.
- Panel of AWL grads from the North and panel from the South to encourage and empower the next group of twenty (20) AWL participants
- Buddy up with a new group member for support

EVALUATION SUMMARY:

As a necessary and very important project component, an evaluation was conducted to gain relevant information and feedback from participants.

In summary, the participants felt that they were provided with relevant instrumental training, resources and tools that they could take back to their respective communities and utilize in a proactive manner.

Comments from the participants included the fact that they felt that the AWL: MB program was valuable in experience and lessons learned and enjoyed the culmination and style of the information disseminated. Further, the group was encouraged by the fact that their issues and concerns were being heard and reported on.

The consistent comments on evaluations were that these types of Aboriginal women leadership programs must continue, including teaching and sharing of information at the community levels. Improve service with on-line training, provide more train the trainer sessions, allow more open discussion among AWL participants, and more public speaking opportunities.

The positive attributes of the AWL: MB program included: sharing and discussing similarities between communities in a round table setting, bringing Aboriginal women leaders from various communities together thus, ensuring representation and information was shared at all levels, participants took home resource materials and lessons learned to continue building capacity in the community.

CONCLUSION:

The Aboriginal Leadership Institute's goal was to strengthen leadership skills for Aboriginal women to take on leadership roles. This project met the following deliverables:

Recruitment, Selection and Orientation of Leadership Team comprised of 20 women completed. 3 community replacements were in effect in communities.

Capacity development sessions focussed on areas where participants had identified the skills that they most find to be lacking. A *Needs Assessment* has been developed and participants completed one individually. This determined their individual skill level and skill requirements

A curriculum has been developed to teach participants the skills of leadership and remove fear and intimidation.

Participants were individually matched with a customized curriculum based on their needs assessment. Customized modules were designed with input from participants.

Capacity development sessions focussed on areas where participants had identified the skills that they most found to be lacking.

A 2-day planning, networking and capacity development meeting focused on getting women involved in leadership roles. A facilitated learning session designed to build leadership capacity.

On September 23rd, 2008 (20) AWL: MB participants met to engage in a roundtable discussion on Aboriginal women leadership issues in their communities. The women were provided with a forum to present their perspectives as they addressed leadership opportunities and facilitated discussions of how leadership impacts community development. AWL: MB participants were welcomed to the program by ALI, inc. Executive Director, Rosa Walker and the Chair-Board of Directors, Ted Fontaine in a AWL: MB Kick-off event. Aboriginal women in leadership roles were invited to make speeches to the group about the importance of empowerment and the removal of barriers to Aboriginal women entering leadership arenas.

Development and Application of a Mentorship Model

Research, inclusion and participation in regional and national conferences

Three (3) participants had been promoted as session leaders on issues of Aboriginal women and leadership at conferences, workshops and seminars.

Development of Resource Materials

Research into existing Women's Internet websites was conducted and there were no Women's Leadership websites that focused on Aboriginal women leadership. Therefore, development of web-based information on issues concerning Aboriginal Women's Leadership was established.

A www.aboriginalwomenleaders.com website was developed and has been prepared as a tool for the participants and a valuable resource to the community at large.

The website currently features a Women's Leadership website and chat room with a discussion forum in the early stages of design. It is our goal to have participants engage in discussions with other members via this online forum. Participants can share resources and information in women's leadership issues.

Development of a Provincial network

A communication tool was developed and distributed to the leadership team. The communication tool is a way to share information, mentor and support one another throughout the AWL: MB program.

Provincial report creation, production and distribution to team members and other interested parties

Organized and retained resource speakers in the field of governance, leadership and Aboriginal women leadership to present different perspectives and options.

The participants have attained a level of competencies on the subject matter and will be available for future reference to work on Aboriginal women leadership development processes.

Aboriginal communities will benefit from further development of the Aboriginal women leadership processes and will serve as guiding principles for ways to improve openness and equality. It will better define how the community wishes to conduct itself as it continues to move towards sovereignty.

Representatives of various Aboriginal communities in Manitoba and beyond its borders have indicated there should be continued training conducted in all subject matters relating to governance and leadership, and should be conducted within the community itself and by Aboriginal people when possible

Conducted evaluations at each session to include feedback, recommendations and overall comments.

Common themes in each of the recommendations, is that a priority must be given to building capacity. Secondly, that communities work together to create and support women leaders, frameworks and models and share them with each other – particularly around the areas of mentorship, community planning, training and good governance practices.

TIMEFRAME:

This project was covered over a fifteen-month timeframe from March 20, 2008 to June 19, 2009 with the final report being developed and delivered by June 19, 2009.