# **Beyond Access to Inclusion:** The Axworthy Years, 2004-2014

## Abstract

For at least a decade now, the University of Winnipeg, an urban institution on Treaty One land in the heart of the Métis Nation, has challenged existing academic models and practices, and has incorporated strategies that address the social divide between **Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in order to more effectively** serve the learning needs of its surrounding community. This paper demonstrates how an inner-city university has used internal policies and programs to help support the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. Seven community learning initiatives were recently evaluated for impact. The paper provides an overview of the positive outcomes of these learning initiatives on a community of underrepresented learners.

## Highlights of the Findings **Evaluated programs had overall approval ratings of more than**

by children & youth, parents & guardians, & schools.

### **Five Best Practices Identified in the Evaluations**

- **Supporting families by providing culturally-relevant and free learning opportunities** to a community of underrepresented learners in all levels of education and, at every possible opportunity, within a wraparound model of free transportation, materials and supplies, and meals or snacks.
- Strengthening community partnerships by hiring Indigenous leaders and role models with authentic relationships to community.
- Building social capital among youth through peer mentoring and role modelling opportunities.
- Encouraging connections of Indigenous youth to education, employment, leadership opportunities, and civic responsibility.

\*Fostering a sense of belonging to the university community in children, youth, and their families by effectively using its resources and infrastructure to extend its reach into the community.







### **Programs evaluated at the Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre:**

**Pow Wow Club** Let's Speak Ojibway to Our Kids **Sacred Seven Healthy Teen Relationships Summer Indigenous Math Leadership Camp Programs evaluated at the Innovative Learning Centre:** Science Kids on Campus (formerly, Eco-Kids on Campus) **Adventure Kids Summer Camp (formerly, Eco-U** Summer Camp) The Model School at the Collegiate High School

> #1 **CULTURALLY-**RELEVANT PROGRAMMING

#5 **FOSTERING A** SENSE OF **BELONGING TO THE** UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

**Five Best** Practices

**#4** CONNECTING **YOUTH TO MULTI-**PRONGED LEARNING **OPORTUNITIES** 

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#2 **STRENGTHENING** COMMUNITY **PARTNERSHIPS** 

#3 **BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL AMONG** YOUTH

# Methods and Sample

- programs.

This study informed our understanding of key guiding principles to positively impact Indigenous educational outcomes:

- knows what it wants and needs.
- institutional priority.
- multigenerational engagement.
- experiences.
- fiscal benefits for society.

In partnership with:



The researchers adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods, including surveys, short answer questionnaires, Likert scale statements, in-person, telephone or family interviews, and many other instruments.

940 evaluation participants in total, including children and youth, parents and guardians, school stakeholders.

The evaluation reports produced 168 pages of findings, outcomes, best practices, and lessons learned in the

# **Conclusions** and

## Recommendations

\* A willingness to listen to and respect the wisdom of the community you are intending to serve. The community

\* A clear university governance model and formal policy framework for community engagement that makes it an

Good fundraising capacity to support low-income students. Culturally relevant programming that encourages

Promoting a clear model of civically engaged youth.

Educational strategies and learning opportunities for youth that include experiential learning, engaging traditional knowledge and cultural teachings, co-curricular activities such as skill-building workshops and employment

The costs of these preventive investments in community programs are vastly outweighed by their far-reaching social and

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