

NORTHERN PROFESSIONAL ACCESS COLLEGE: A BOLD NEW STEP—BUILDING ON SUCCESS

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NORTEP-NORPAC



Northern Professional Access College (NORPAC)
2015

Photography by Carmen Pauls Orthner and Herman Michell
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Note: Some interviews for this document were done in 2006. Since then, some of the circumstances of those interviewed may have changed.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS



Photo (L- R, Back row): Marie Black (MLTC), Lorna Black (NLSD), Ray Biberdorf (Creighton SD), Joey McCallum (NLSD), Barb Flett (Île-à-la Crosse SD, Vice Chair); (Front Row): Tammy Cook-Searson (PAGC), Claire Laroque (Board Chair & NLSD SD); Missing from photo: Clifford Ray (NLSD), Dr. Herman Michell (NORTEP President CEO), Jennifer Malmsten (NORTEP VP Administration), and Ray Smith (NORTEP Faculty Representative), 4 members from NLSD, 2 members from PAGC, 1 member from MLTC, 1 member from Creighton SD, and 1 member from Île-à-la Crosse SD.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NORTEP-NORPAC PROGRAMS - President CEO Introduction

By Dr. Herman Michell



Dr. Herman Michell
President, NORTEP-NORPAC

Greetings! On behalf of the Board of Governors, faculty, staff, and students, I am pleased to introduce the impacts, highlights, and alumni testimonials within our Professional Access College program (PAC). Special thanks to the authors of the document, Dr. Michael Tymchak and Shuana Niessen from the University of Regina, and Carmen Pauls Orthner, from Pen for Hire. The year 2016 will mark 40 years of offering accessible post-secondary education in the North.

The PAC program is delivered using the same model as the TEP program. Students take a variety of courses in 3-week blocks throughout a semester. This makes it easy for visiting professors to come up north for a one-week time period. Students are in class all day long for one course. They learn the same content as if they were on campus in the South. The arts and science courses are meant to ladder into different university programs and career interests. There are arts, sciences, humanities, social science, languages, fine arts, and

psychology courses that are embedded within the TEP program and so it makes innovative sense to offer additional courses in these disciplines so students have options.

Northern communities are diverse. There are diverse in career interests and not everyone wants to leave the region in order to pursue a university education. Quite often new students are undecided career-wise. Taking a variety of arts and science courses in the first year allows them to make a decision. They are exposed to different types of knowledge and role models. Some go into teaching and others have gone on into law, social work, nursing, medicine, dentistry, administration, management, accounting, and other career areas.

At the present time, Aboriginal people are highly under-represented in the pure and applied sciences. There is a need for professionals with a science background in the North particularly in the mining and forestry industries as well as in the health field. Students are able to complete their pre-requisite courses in La Ronge where they do not have to leave their family support systems. Face-to-face instruction is important for those who have academic readiness challenges. The model of delivery allows students intensive contact time with an instructor. Some first year courses use a team teaching approach. Others utilize classroom tutors for extra support. Faculty and visiting professors balance academic rigor with humanistic concerns.

TEP graduates can complete an additional degree (Bachelor of Arts) by taking 30 credit hours in the PAC program. It allows them to train for a teaching specialization for example in Science, Indigenous studies, Aboriginal languages (Cree & Dene), and English. These specializations are critical in northern schools where youth require wide exposure to different types of knowledge and expertise. Indigenous studies and language courses are essential for professionals who work in northern communities.

Northern Indigenous content is integrated into courses. Trappers, hunters, traditional land users, and northern resource people are invited into classrooms creating a rich learning environment. Students can be seen gathering medicines, edible plant foods, snaring rabbits in the winter, learning about ice fishing, animal cycles/habitats, survival skills, and land-based teachings. Northern Indigenous knowledge is given equal space in university courses where appropriate. Students learn about the social, historical, economic, political, and cultural realities of the North, providing them with the necessary background for employability in the region.

Many thanks to the PAC graduates for taking part in sharing their stories. It is clear the program complements the TEP program. The PAC program also meets the diverse needs of Aboriginal communities while producing professionals needed in different sectors of the province as the baby boom generation begins to retire.

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NORTHERN PROFESSIONAL ACCESS COLLEGE (NORPAC): “A BOLD NEW STEP—BUILDING ON SUCCESS”

AN UNEXPECTED TURN

The year is 2006 and we catch a glimpse of people preparing for their day at work. Each of the individuals we visit in our imaginations is intent; each is facing major challenges that day; a lot of responsibility rests on their shoulders. A senior Health Educator plans a workshop presentation for the Northern Health District; a Human Resources Officer with a large mining company, active in the North, looks at a calendar for the month, juggling travel and other meeting responsibilities; the Registrar in a dynamic post-secondary educational college looks over meetings and other tasks scheduled for the day; the CEO of the Northern Health District is pondering budget challenges, and wonders about the potential for opening a new health station in a remote northern community; a Social Worker is preparing to meet a client that morning and is looking over the file; a Nurse drives to the hospital, wondering what new challenges the day will bring; a Dental Therapist is preparing the instruments for work with patients scheduled for treatment; a Provincial Court Judge prepares for a trip to a northern community to preside over court proceedings; a Conservation Officer is meeting with the area manager, discussing a proposed new regulation pertaining to wildlife in a northern area; a Day Care Director is doing a walk-around to ensure that the staff are ready to take in the children for the day; a Water Lab Technician is looking over the samples to be tested, and the deadlines that must be met; an Accountant is pouring over the spreadsheet figures for a local business in the community; and the list goes on.

The range of jobs and responsibilities described in our imaginary scenario above is remarkable, even staggering. And although the sketch is a journey of imagination, the people, the jobs and the responsibilities are not. In real time they were (and are) all graduates of NORTEP or NORPAC. “NORPAC” you might say—what on earth is that? The Northern Professional Access College (“NORPAC”) is in fact what this story is all about.

Fifty years ago, the scenario we have described would have been absolutely unimaginable and, quite simply, beyond anyone’s wildest dreams. In 1977, when the NORTEP program was approved by the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, the number of teachers of northern Aboriginal ancestry could be counted on the fingers of one hand—fewer than 5 at that! In 1979, seven newly certified teachers were added to the Northern Lights School Division roster; all were fully certified with “Standard A” Teaching Certificates—all were (the first) graduates of NORTEP. By 1988, NORTEP had a strong track record and many dozens of teachers were now employed in both provincial school divisions, such as Northern Lights and Ile-a-la Crosse as well as many First Nations Band Schools.

But the scenario we described in the first paragraph didn’t even include teachers, as appropriate and important as it might have been to do so. Instead, we chose to focus on careers outside of teaching. What happened? It’s true that between 1988 and 2006 more than

a hundred teachers would graduate from NORTEP—but how is it possible that all these other professional jobs could have been taken up by northerners—mainly of Aboriginal ancestry—both Métis and First Nations? The answer to this question is the story of NORPAC.

A BOLD STEP

Although there had been many sceptics in the early days, after more than 10 successive graduation groups, it was apparent that NORTEP had been a major success. There were now over 100 graduates; most were still teaching; and most had stayed in the North. The students' program included three-and-one-half years with NORTEP in La Ronge as well as a summer school and semester on-campus at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon or at the University of Regina in Regina. Students proved they were capable in both the northern and southern environments, but it was the northern component that made their success possible and feasible. From the perspective of the need to open professional careers to northern Aboriginal peoples, however, a major hurdle remained: The number of applicants to NORTEP was strong, but it was evident that teaching was not the first preference of some applicants—they were applying to NORTEP because it was the only degree program available in the North that would open the door to a profession.

Dr. Michael Tymchak, the program Director at the time, along with the entire faculty, struggled with the question of how to respond to the situation. Eventually it became clear that a bold step would need to be taken. NORTEP would need to grow beyond teacher education and embrace an option for students to elect another program track that could lead to a variety of other careers. But how, there was no budget and no precedent?

The bold answer was at once innovative and also cost-effective: A new program would be created that was built upon the core of courses that NORTEP already offered. All teacher education programs include what is often referred to as an "Academic" component. 'Academic' here is contrasted with "Professional" (i.e., pertaining to teacher education). The NORTEP program included a wide range of courses in this category, including psychology, biology, English, Cree & Dene, Native studies, mathematics, sociology, and the like. It was decided that there was sufficient capacity in these classes to add more students, thus making the excellent course offerings even more widely accessible. Some additional courses could be offered from time-to-time, and a practicum experience should also be included. The "Northern Professional Access Program" (NORPAC) was born!

The brochure for the New NORTEP in 1989 gave students the option to choose from at least three career tracks. They included Elementary teacher education, of course, by 1989 a full B.Ed. degree program, as well as two new options: Students could now take two years of study that would allow them to pursue either secondary teaching, or another professional career altogether. These new options entailed students beginning their programs of study in La Ronge, but then completing their degrees by taking the one or two more years at one of the universities in the province (or elsewhere). In other words the two years of study with NORPAC was designed to be a bridge, or a springboard to degree completion on-campus and a doorway to many other professions. NORPAC studies in arts and sciences were, therefore, foundational: They empowered students to pursue a wide variety of careers.

JOURNALISM, LAW, NURSING, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, RADIATION TECHNOLOGY AND SO ON

From an institutional and organizational perspective, the advent of NORPAC was achieved on the basis of maximizing efficiency. A relatively small incremental fund was proffered by the Department of Advanced Education to cover modest additional costs. In other ways, too, NORPAC was ahead of its time. Across Canada and elsewhere programs outside of teacher education now boast of offering “Co-op” programs, in engineering for example, and even in Arts & Science. Co-op programs provide an opportunity for students to gain ‘real world’ experience in the workplace, and thus put theory into practice by applying what they have learned in the context of a workplace. They are called “co-op” simply because they involve cooperation between the university and an employer. This was the NORPAC vision.

In keeping with this goal, NORPAC students were assigned to a local employer in a northern community and a special course focussed on the integration of their academic and work experience was included in their program. In order to ensure the partnership worked effectively, every year the students and their supervising employer were brought together for a two-day seminar designed to promote better communication, collaboration and mutual understanding. Students were placed in a variety of workplace settings—from the local Co-op store, to the Band Office, to a local newspaper office, to a government agency, and so on. Typically, NORPAC students took courses for two weeks a month in La Ronge, at the NORTEP Campus, and then spent two weeks a month in their workplace setting. They followed this pattern for three semesters a year: Fall, Winter, and Spring. By following the three-semester model, students were able to earn a full year of credit (30 cr. hrs.), even though they also spent a significant amount of time in a workplace setting.

Eventually, the practicum component had to be discontinued. In a cost-savings measure, the NORTEP program itself ceased being ‘field-based’ and assumed a more traditional format, with students based at the campus in La Ronge rather than travelling back and forth from La Ronge to their home communities. Originally, these travelling costs were assumed by the program, to enable students to take their university studies without relocation from their primary place of residence. Over time, however, it became necessary to draw on this travelling fund simply to maintain core elements of both the NORTEP and the NORPAC programs. By the same token, instead of travelling back and forth from home to La Ronge, students were now based in La Ronge and the provision of adequate student housing became a significant issue.

Once the campus-based program in La Ronge became the norm, it became impractical to identify sufficient employer sites to sustain the NORPAC practica. La Ronge simply did not have a sufficient cadre of employers to offer the range of practicum placements that would be demanded by NORPAC. With two years of programming on the go, if we assume even twelve or fifteen students per year (plus more than one year group!)—it is easy to appreciate that finding twenty to thirty suitable employment placements was simply impossible. Nevertheless, the spirit of NORPAC persisted, and the opportunity to pursue several years of study in La Ronge at the NORTEP campus continued to thrive. Over time, it was even possible for students in certain areas of study, such as Native studies, to undertake a third year and thus, complete a full degree. If necessary, depending on the career direction they

have chosen, NORPAC students can supplement their programs with on-line courses from Northlands College, one of the provincial universities, or the University of Athabasca, while still pursuing their courses primarily at the NORTEP campus.

THE PROGRAM DESIGN

The design of the NORPAC program was ingenious; unlike many program initiatives which ‘stand alone’ and cost a great deal of extra money, NORPAC utilized elements and components of the NORTEP program. The NORTEP courses not specifically dedicated to teacher education were ‘packaged’ to create a very different option for students. So now, courses such as Math 101 or Geol 102, for example, instead of having only NORTEP students enrolled, have both NORTEP and NORPAC students. Let us imagine Mary and Todd, who are enrolled in NORTEP—instead of taking these courses only with other NORTEP students, with the advent of NORPAC, they also have John and Cynthia, two NORPAC students, in the class. In other words, from an administrative perspective, NORPAC maximizes the efficiency of NORTEP’s course offerings. From time-to-time, of course, it makes sense to offer a stand-alone course primarily for NORPAC students, in order to assure students of certain options when they go on campus to finish their degrees. Some specific courses are needed to support the option to choose a career in nursing, for example, and others may be needed to assure students a smooth transition into other arts or science programs at one of the provincial universities.

To illustrate the unique program design, the reader is invited to examine Table 1: “Optimizing Course Offerings,” which shows the courses offered during the Winter Semester of 2014. In the first column, you can see that most of the courses are shared by both NORTEP and NORPAC students. In the second column, we note that only one course (Sociology 112) is included specifically for NORPAC students. Actually, a course like this creates an extra option for NORTEP students, too; but we show it in column two just to say that it is needed in NORPAC but would not likely be offered only for the NORTEP program. In column three, we see courses offered to support the students who choose Nursing (PSY 101, PLSC 214 and Eng 114). Of course, students who want to do Nursing also have all of the courses available in Column 1, but they also need the specific courses identified in the third column. The fourth and final column shows some courses that, for scheduling reasons, are available only to TEP students. Table 1 illustrates very well how effectively the NORPAC program utilizes the courses already scheduled for NORTEP. This is truly course optimization: Not only are NORTEP courses used to create NORPAC, but any extra course added primarily for NORPAC students (such as SOC 112) also creates an additional course option for students in the NORTEP program!

The relationship between the two programs—NORTEP and NORPAC—is symbiotic. In the field of biology, “symbiotic” is used to describe two plant or animal systems that ‘work together’ for the betterment of both; they are dependent upon each other. As currently designed, the two programs, NORTEP and NORPAC are just that: They work together and are dependent upon each other. By working together, they also ensure program efficiency and effectiveness.

Table 1: “Optimizing Course Offerings”

WINTER 2014 (January 6—May 2)			
Year of program: 1			
NORTEP/PAC	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N	TEP-ONLY
CREE 101*	SOC 112**	PSYC 101	KHS 139
CREE 105*		PLSC 214	BIOL 108
DENE 101*		ENG 114 B ***	
DENE 105*			
INDG 201			
A and B*			
BIOL 120*			
DRAM 118			
RLST 100			
EPS 198			
MATH 101			
GEOL 102			
YEAR OF PROGRAM: 2			
NORTEP/PAC	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N	TEP-ONLY
ENG 114.3 A			HLTH 100
NS 270			SC 200
BIOL 312			
NS 262			
INDG 208			
CMPT 100			
YEAR OF PROGRAM: 3			
NORTEP/PAC	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N	TEP-ONLY
NS 350 ✨			EPSE 390
NS 264 ✨			ED 225
NS 370 ✨			EPS 225
WGST 100 ❖			ECUR 370
ENG 202 ✨			ECUR 376
INCC 201 ✨			ECUR 382
SPRING 2014 (May 5—June 27)			
YEAR OF PROGRAM: 1 & 2			
NORTEP/PAC*	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N**	TEP-ONLY
CMPT 100		KIN 275	EPS 100
GEOG 280		CHEM 104	EPSE 258
GEOL 122			

Key Terms:
 NORTEP/PAC = courses taken by both NORTEP & NORPAC students
 PAC - ONLY = courses taken only by NORPAC students
 PAC-N = courses offered specifically for Pre-Nursing courses only
 TEP - only = courses taken only by NORTEP students

Comments – WINTER 2014:

* Courses offered that fit all three programs.

** This course is the only course that is offered specifically for the PAC program.

*** A second course offering that is specifically for the PAC-N program.

✨ Year 3 BOTH courses are also open to some Year 2 PAC and Year 2 TEP students if they have the prerequisites and the timing of the course fits their schedules. Graduates from the TEP program have the option to return to NORTEP/NORPAC and complete these Year 3 PAC courses to obtain a second degree before entering the work force

❖ This course has also been offered for year 1 or 2 students. It is worked into the class schedule where it benefits those students who need the credits for their programs at that time.

EPS 198 – This NORTEP/NORPAC course is offered to those students who need additional assistance with their reading/writing skills.

There are a total of 43 courses offered during the WINTER 2014 semester. NORTEP Year 4 is not displayed in this table; these courses are taken by TEP students only.

Comments – SPRING 2014:

*The courses offered in this column are available to YEAR 1 TEP, and YEAR 1 and 2 PAC students.

**The courses offered in this column are specifically for the PAC-N students.

There are a total of 9 courses offered during the SPRING 2014 semester.

NORTEP Year 3 courses are not displayed in this table; these courses are taken by TEP students only.

PUBLIC POLICY AND NORPAC

NORTEP and NORPAC exist within a larger framework of post-secondary education in the province of Saskatchewan. They make a vital contribution to the province's public policy in the field of post-secondary education within the province. In this realm, NORTEP has demonstrated its value over a long period and the gains in the number of northern Aboriginal teachers in the workforce are evident to all. The gains are also easily documented. But what about NORPAC? Especially in the context of fiscal constraint, the question may be raised - should this 'extra' program continue to be supported?

Although questions about extra programs make sense from the viewpoint of accountability in public policy, from a closer perspective and based on a full understanding of the program's design, it will be evident that NORPAC is not an 'extra' program at all. Rather than being an 'extra', NORPAC is built into the NORTEP program; its course offerings are, for the most part, offerings that would be mounted in any case. In the context of fiscal constraint, therefore, it makes more sense for NORPAC to be celebrated rather than eliminated. NORPAC is in fact a study in 'how to do more with less.' Although NORPAC offers a very valuable additional program option for northern students, it does so by maximizing the efficiency of courses already being offered within another program (i.e., NORTEP). So, while the additional costs are minimized, NORPAC's design ensures that program gains and program alternatives are maximized.

NORPAC AND POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS

NORPAC is decidedly an academic university program. There are other program options and alternatives in northern Saskatchewan. Is there a difference? Before answering this question, it must be said strongly that all options are valuable, and all have an important place to play in the wider world of post-secondary education. NORPAC cannot offer all of the options that students wanting university courses in the North will be seeking. However, it does offer a range of options that are invaluable, especially for students of Aboriginal ancestry.

In this context, it is widely recognized that face-to-face courses are preferable to courses that are technologically mediated, as helpful as the latter may be. And, NORPAC is unique amongst the other alternatives in northern post-secondary education—its courses are all face-to-face, rather than technologically mediated. NORTEP itself—as NORPAC's program home—is a fully-fledged academic unit. By that, we simply mean that there is a library and there are professors on site, as well as professors (hired as Sessional Instructors) who come to La Ronge to teach the courses. Because the instruction is "live and in real time," the professors can adapt their teaching to the specific context and to the individual students. Because they are on site, the professors are also available for consultation and tutorial help after normal course hours. And, just as students on-campus have a resource library to support their studies, NORPAC, too, offers the same kind of help.

The NORTEP-NORPAC library boasts significant holdings that represent an excellent resource for student research. From the outset, NORTEP, and later NORPAC, endeavoured to create a

complete academic environment. The Regional College system in the province has immense value for a province whose population is widely scattered. However, the Colleges do not have the mandate to create fully-fledged academic units. Typically, professors are not resident in the college as faculty, and none of the colleges has a fully operational library.

It is surely vital that students in the northern half of the province, especially those of Aboriginal ancestry, have a full-fledged academic institution available to them. This is precisely the niche that NORTEP and NORPAC fill. The resident and sessional NORTEP and NORPAC professors can mediate a strong northern Aboriginal perspective on culture and language as well as knowledge and understanding. And, they can do so in a face-to-face instructional format that is preferred by students of Aboriginal ancestry. The library, too, can orient its acquisition of materials to suit the specific courses and perspectives being promoted by professors in the program. As one of the founders of NORTEP was quoted to say, "Our goal is to bring together the best of both worlds."¹

TRANSITIONS

Before moving on to the voice of the students, two other aspects of the dynamic environment created by NORTEP and NORPAC must be appreciated. First, just as in other academic and social settings, students (and other citizens) transition from one program to another, from one job setting to another. The NORTEP and NORPAC environments provide for all of these possibilities, not only between the programs, but also for their graduates. Some NORTEP graduates have taught in schools for a number of years and then moved on to positions outside of the educational system. One or two of the persons cited in the first paragraph were, in fact, graduates of NORTEP who transitioned into, for example, health care environments. Alternatively, some people begin working in other environments but are later attracted to school teaching. Within the La Ronge setting, students may begin in NORTEP but then move over to NORPAC, and vice versa; they may do two years with NORPAC and then choose to go into teaching. These transitioning possibilities make the offering of both NORTEP and NORPAC a strong and richer educational environment.

It must also be noted that NORPAC is not itself a single, strongly prescribed program; it is intended to be a bridge, or a springboard. NORPAC is successful if having taken a year in the program, the individual goes on to another program, or a job. If the individual does two years and goes on to another program or a job, that too is success. So, at the end of the day, any student who completes at least one year and goes on to either another program or a job, is a 'graduate' of the program. NORPAC does not 'graduate' students from a prescribed program in the same way that NORTEP does, or a program in dentistry or law. Bridges connect, and NORPAC prepares and thus connects post-secondary students with a job or, perhaps, the opportunity to complete a certificate or full degree program (usually at another institution, i.e., one of the provinces universities or the Saskatchewan Polytechnic). ***Either way, ultimately, NORPAC graduates transition to success.***²

¹ Keith Goulet. (1982). NORTEP video.

² See Table 2: "Transitions to Success/Exit Outcomes," and Table 3: "Success/Destinations".

**Table 2: “Transitions to Success/Exit Outcomes”
(NORPAC 2005-2014)**

Year of Study (Exit After)	Level of Education Achieved	Number of Students
1 yr	Certificate	38
1 yr	Pre-Nursing Certificate*	14
2 yrs	Diploma	19
3 yrs	Recognition	15
3 yrs	Native Studies Degree	14
Total		100

*The Pre-Nursing program began in 2011



**Table 3: “Success/Destinations”
(NORPAC 2005 – 2014)**

FNU = First Nations Univ. SIIT = Saskatchewan Indian Inst. of Tech. UR = Univ. of Regina GDI = Gabriel Dumont Inst. SP = Saskatchewan Polytechnic US = Univ. of Saskatchewan NC = Northlands College ST = SUNTEP U = Campus Unknown NTP = NORTEP/NORPAC UCW = Univ. Canada West * = Program In progress			
Year of Study (Exit After)	Degree (Bachelor of)	Diploma	Certificate
1 yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts, Native Studies (NTP*) Arts, Northern Studies (NC*) Education (NTP*) Education (SP*) Indian Social Work (FNU) Science, Nursing (FNU) (NC) Social Work (US*) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Administration (SIIT) Christian Ministry (Nipawin Bible College) Media Art Production (U) Mining Engineer (NC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Careers Access (NC)
2 yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commerce (US) Education (NTP) Native Studies (NTP*) Science, Biology (US*) Social Work (UR) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing Care Assistant (SP) Office Administration (GDI) Pre-Nursing (NC)
3 yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commerce (UCW*) Education (NTP) General Studies (US*) Native Studies (NTP*) Native Studies, Indian Resource Management (US*) Science, Nursing (NC) (U) Social Work (UR*) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Admin. (U) Dental Hygiene (SP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Nursing (NTP*)
Post-Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education (NTP) Social Work (FNU*) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource Environmental Law (SP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police Studies (SP) Pre-Cadet (RCMP)
Pre-Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts, Native Studies (NTP*) Arts, Northern Studies (NC) Education (NTP)(US*) Science, Nursing (FNU*)(NC*) Social Work* (US) 		

NORTEP-NORPAC: EXPANDING NORTHERN WORLDVIEWS

OBSERVATIONS OF RAY MCKAY

Ray McKay is a born-and-bred northerner. Descended from fur traders and trappers, he was born on a trapline on the Churchill River system. He completed most of his early education in La Ronge, then began his career in the aviation industry. After several years in Alberta—and a nearly completed master's degree in education—McKay returned home to northern Saskatchewan in 1979 to work as Director of Continuing Education for the provincial government.

"To this day I haven't finished that master's thesis," McKay admits. "I always said, 'Well, I'll take a year off,' and it never worked out, because I got really busy with the work." That work included 17 years with Saskatchewan Education, three years as the first Deputy Minister of the Department of Northern Affairs, working with then-Cabinet Minister, Keith Goulet, and 7 years as CEO of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band's business arm, Kitsaki Management.

As Director of Continuing Education, McKay had numerous opportunities to interact with NORTEP, but he also saw its impact first-hand, both as a La Ronge school board member and as a brother, father, and uncle to four TEP grads. His sister, Rita Lowenberg, completed the program; her daughters, Sharon Ross and Anne Calladine, (the school's 2006 valedictorian) are teaching in La Ronge schools. Ray's son, Nolan McKay, studied at PAC before deciding to follow his parents into the teaching profession.

Both as a member of the Northern Education Task Force and as the provincial government's top education official in the North, McKay was uniquely positioned to help when TEP's board of governors saw a need to expand their program offerings beyond the teaching profession.

"When you run a pilot program, you've got to be sure that there will be some clear benefits from that program before you invest a lot of public money into it. But we were so convinced that we already had a vehicle—NORTEP—and when the former Director, Mike Tymchak, decided to pilot NORPAC, I think it was around \$290,000... that I approved here for Mike to run this pilot," McKay recalls. "He was the expert, and he made it work.... Some of the people at the universities didn't even realize we were running this (PAC program)—the different committees, the bureaucracy in the universities that we were supposed to have approval from before it would be sanctioned by the university. In the end, of course, northern people said, 'Yes, we want it, that's what we want. This enriches NORTEP. It was a clear need.... It was the right decision, but I was in the hot seat for a while. But if you don't take risks, you don't get anything done.'"

"We wanted richer offerings for the NORTEP student," he explains. "A liberal arts education program is important, and if you want to go out into the world, that's when you really notice it. Our world is huge now, with the explosion of knowledge, and the communication ability we have, and the travel and so on." As a child growing up in northern Saskatchewan, he says, he barely knew what a telephone was; today, his grandchildren are playing games on-line with kids on the other side of the world.

TEP and PAC have played a key role in expanding northerners' worldview, while also assisting them in keeping pace with the changes in their world. By educating northerners and then sending them back into the schools to teach, "it's accelerated educational development so much more in the North," McKay says. As Chief John Snow, of the Stony tribe in Alberta, used to say, 'We want the best of both worlds. We want the best of the white man's culture, mainstream culture, but we want to retain the best of our culture as well—we want to retain the language, we want to retain some of our customs, but in order to live in this world, we have to be educated, and get the benefits of the best that society has to offer to have a good life.' He was a visionary man." This is the same bi-cultural vision spoken of by Keith Goulet, the original architect of NORTEP.

NORPAC BROADENING CAREER OPTIONS

NORPAC was created in 1989 as part of an initiative called the "New NORTEP." The idea of a "Professional Access College" was certainly bold and visionary at the time, especially when very little new funding was made available to support the program expansion. The results speak for themselves. Between 1989 and 2003 there were 184 graduates; by 1998, 60 had completed degrees and another 52 had completed various certificate and diploma programs. The careers that have been accessed by NORPAC graduates are truly impressive: Dental Therapy, Social Work, Accounting, Law, Nursing, and Management (including Banks, Health Districts and Early Childhood Centers) to name only a few.

The accomplishments of NORPAC graduates speak volumes about the need for the program to be formally recognized and fully funded. The creation of NORPAC not only expanded the range of career options for northerners, but it also strengthened the Board's main focus as well—teacher education. After almost 40 years of NORTEP and 27 years of NORPAC, the range of careers and examples of leadership that have emerged from amongst the NORTEP and NORPAC graduates is little short of astonishing.

The careers, made possible by NORPAC, together with those created by NORTEP, represent a world of salaried employment, responsibility, and leadership opportunities for northern Aboriginal people—in a wide variety of fields and vocations—unheard of in 1976 when NORTEP first began. "Now we're offering up to 3 years of arts and science, and enabling people to get their (professional) start here," says former Director, Elie Fleury. "There's a greater opportunity to become more aware of what's out there and pursue those (career options)... They feel more at home in that environment."

Increased salaried employment means increased spending, increased demand for goods and services, and increased quality of life, for the students, professionals, and communities. Also, there are indirect benefits of increased quality of life, which in turn lower socio-economic costs.

In the next section we let NORPAC graduates speak for themselves. Their stories illustrate the rich tapestry of dreams and possibilities that have become real life for these northerners.

NORPAC GRADUATE SUCCESS STORIES



Graduate Profile: Don Bird
La Ronge
NORPAC, 1992-93

Boat operator, fish plant worker, probation officer, mountie, mining office manager, crown prosecutor and now, provincial court judge—as northern Saskatchewan’s economic base has evolved, so has Don Bird’s career. And, he credits his alma mater, NORPAC, with being both at the forefront of the changes to the North’s socio-economic climate, and at the same time deeply responsive to the impact of those changes.

Growing up in the North in the 1960s—although he is a member of the Montreal Lake Cree Nation, Bird was born and raised in La Ronge—Bird quickly learned from his peers that an advanced level of education was not important. With employment in the region still focused on traditional, natural resource-based pursuits such as trapping, commercial fishing, line-cutting, prospecting, and firefighting, “book learning” was almost beside the point, and even a high school education was seen as a waste of time when there were important hands-on skills to be learned.

“What happened to me (over the course of my career) was that I was adapting to the changes in the North,” Bird says. “As times changed, we began to realize...we’ve got to focus on post-secondary training, in the trades, and just (on) education in general.”

In the 1970s, when the provincial government created the Department of Northern Saskatchewan (DNS) and relocated many government services—and jobs—to the North, attitudes toward education began to change, and the expansion of the uranium industry in the late 1970s and early 1980s changed things even more. NORTEP had brought university education to the North, and northern elementary and high school students were being taught by local teachers.

In 1989, with the creation of NORPAC, suddenly northerners had the option to receive university-level training for a broader range of professional careers right in their own backyard. For Bird, by this point the manager for Cameco Corporation’s northern office, the opportunity to pursue a long-held dream of acquiring a university degree was too good to resist. After considering his background as a probation officer and as an RCMP officer, Bird decided that becoming a lawyer was a logical step. The College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan was willing to accept him, as long as he proved he could successfully carry a full load of classes for a year, and for that he turned to NORPAC.

“What I appreciated so much about NORPAC was that I was able to take all my [first-year] classes right in my home community,” Bird says. “It made a huge impact, in the sense that had

it not been for NORPAC, then I would have had to move to Saskatoon [right at the beginning of his university studies]. It would have been much more difficult to achieve what I did, with the whole relocation aspect that the northern students would have had to do before NORPAC. Entering university is a nerve-wracking experience at best. So being that I was able to access that (education) in my home community made that transition so much easier.”

As the first member of his immediate family to attend university, Bird had no experience to draw on in terms of what university is like and, as for many northern students, moving away to attend school would have meant that all the support systems he relied on were suddenly miles and miles away. He had been through that once, having been schooled at the Timber Bay Children’s Home for Grades 1 through 4, and knew too well the pain of dislocation and separation that happens during those many months away from friends, family members, and the familiar comforts of home.

He also had vivid recollections of another problem he encountered at Timber Bay: having to attend classes taught exclusively in English when he understood only Cree. “I remember how difficult and embarrassing that was. I had to get one of the older boys to interpret for me. And that stuck with me. It was a real struggle—not only can’t I converse with anyone, when I’m handed a textbook, I can’t read it. It was incredibly difficult.”

At NORPAC, Bird found the schooling environment radically different. Not only was he studying in his home community, but also he was surrounded by staff and visiting professors—who respected his cultural background and were genuinely interested in seeing him succeed—and by fellow students who spoke his first language.

“We were able to use our language in the (classroom and study) settings. There were lots of us who spoke Cree...and that’s one of the big things about retaining a language, is being able to use it. Otherwise it gets more and more difficult, the longer a person stays away from it.”

Bird has brought that respect for his own language and culture—fostered again at NORPAC, where Cree, Dene and Native Studies are all part of the curriculum—into his legal career. After his year at PAC in 1992-93, he enrolled in the 2-month Native Law program, and then started law school in the fall of 1993. After graduating, he worked for the provincial government, helping to negotiate policing agreements with Saskatchewan First Nations, before articling and moving into work as a Crown prosecutor. Since 2000, Bird has worked as the prosecutor with Judge Gerry Morin’s Cree court party in north eastern Saskatchewan, and in the fall of 2006, as a newly appointed judge, Bird headed up the formation of an Aboriginal court party for the northwest.

“With the Aboriginal court, the people can come in and converse in the language of their choice, which I think is tremendous, because that’s what they’re comfortable in,” he says.

For Bird, NORPAC was a chance to start the university education he wanted in an environment of support and respect, which is the same set of values he carries into the court settings in which he presides. His court offers the same level of professionalism as any other provincial

court, just as NORPAC offers the same quality of education as any of the province's other universities. "When I got to the College of Law, it was a smooth transition," Bird says. "We (as PAC students) couldn't have asked for a better education."

"I am a tremendous supporter of NORPAC, just seeing the benefits that the North has had from their programs," he says. "I was born and raised in the North. I knew what it was like before, and I actually witnessed the advent of NORPAC and the tremendous impact it's had on the North. As an example, look at all the teachers we have that speak the language. Looking now at the court system—we have the Cree court, and now we have an Aboriginal court that's being set up. The next thing I'm sure would be a Dene court. It would be tremendous.... They say that when a people lose their language, they lose their culture with it. You don't want to do that."

That NORPAC has created a culture of its own, building on the strengths of northern Saskatchewan—values such as being loyal to your family and supporting and relying on one another, forming partnerships, being adaptable and even taking a few risks when the "usual way of doing things" just isn't working—and compensating for years of being browbeaten, deprived of services, and racially and geographically divided, is reiterated in many of the stories of its graduates.

"When you put a bunch of northern people together in one room, there's a difference in the expectations and the behaviours... as opposed to being one northern person in a room full of southern people. It lends to support systems," says Chief Roy Cheechum, of Clearwater River Dene Nation, "You have the Cree-speaking and the Dene-speaking people working together and learning together, and that helps with cultural exchange and cultural awareness—maybe a [level of] awareness that wouldn't otherwise happen in a different setting."

"You're able to interact with people from all over the North, something that I never had a chance to do [growing up] here," agrees Cumberland House Cree Nation Vice-Principal and native studies teacher, Celia Deschambeault. "When I went there (NORPAC), I felt that I belonged there—and if you feel that you're a part of something like that, you'll do well."

This culture is very important in addressing institutional and personal barriers. Prior to 1979 few, if any, pupils in northern Saskatchewan could identify a certified teacher, a principal or a vice-principal, a director of education or assistant director, who had grown up in their northern community. The impact on northern children's career aspirations was obvious: How could a child believe that he/she could enter the teaching profession when no one from their community had ever done such a thing?

Patterns of non-participation of this kind created a "systemic" barrier for First Nations and Métis children in northern Saskatchewan. With so few First Nation and Métis teachers to identify with, it is hardly surprising that the children would have difficulty seeing themselves in a professional career such as teaching. Doubtless, the barrier extended beyond career aspiration to the whole experience of school: How could the school be understood as "for me" if children could not see themselves in either the curriculum or in the ranks of teachers?



**Graduate Profile: Naomi Carriere
Cumberland House
NORPAC, 1994-95**

First she was a NORPAC student, then a NORPAC instructor from 2006 to 2011. While an instructor, she also achieved her Master's of Biology degree, studying the woodland caribou as a species at risk in North Central Saskatchewan. Now she is a Ph.D. student in the School of Environment and Sustainability & Indigenous Land Management Institute at the University of Saskatchewan, as well as an instructor with the U of S.

Twelve years after she last sat in a desk at Mistasinik Place as a first-year NORPAC student, Naomi Carriere came back to NORTEP-NORPAC, teaching the very subject that she discovered a passion for that year, through a co-op work placement: biology.

Although NORPAC wasn't offering biology courses back in 1994-95, the co-op model—in which PAC students were matched up with an employer to do field work in the specialty of their choice—was still in place, and Carriere, then fresh out of high school, spent a week every month working with wildlife biologist, Tim Trottier, on a project in her hometown of Cumberland House.

"That was one of the best experiences that I've had, and one of the most critical in terms of really focusing me on the biology aspect (of her academic studies)," says Carriere. She then worked with Trottier, well-known for his work on preserving woodland caribou habitat, again, this time on the final project for her master's degree. She spent the summer and early fall of 2006 in the La Ronge area, collecting local knowledge on woodland caribou population distribution within the Lac La Ronge Indian Band's traditional territory, and completed the final analysis and writing in 2007.

"Because I respected Tim so much as a biologist and I knew he's really respected in the community, by the people (whom she would be interviewing), that was the key [reason] why I contacted him. So the co-op that I had was really influential on me, and I don't know how things would have worked if I didn't have that contact," Carriere says. "He's been one of the key people that has helped me through this whole process with my master's. It goes all the way around to back when I was in NORPAC.... If they really want to get a good sense of where they're going and what they want to do, a good co-op is one of the best things that any student can have." As a biology instructor at NORPAC, Carriere hoped that her course would inspire other young northerners to pursue a career in biology or another, natural science—an area where Aboriginal people are under-represented.

"The fact that I'm [taught] there is a really positive experience for me, because the PAC program gave me a lot of opportunities, and so I'm hoping that through teaching biology, it gives someone that has the potential (to pursue a career in the sciences) that opportunity to succeed as well."

During the research-gathering phase for her master's degree, Carriere deliberately chose a pair of NORTEP students as her field assistants. She taught her assistants about the connections between northern Aboriginal cultures, about their reliance on and respect for the natural environment. She instructed them on the natural sciences, such as biology, and impressed upon them the unique privilege they have as teachers to pass what they have learned on to the next generation. "One of the best ways to do that (honour the elders' knowledge) is to influence the youth," she says. "It's a huge responsibility."

Over the course of her academic work, Carriere has faced some frustrations and setbacks, including disinterested, intimidating, or even overtly hostile professors, high tuition, and living costs, and fellow students angling competitively for scholarship money at the expense of friendship or even a good study group. "When I was in the PAC program, I never had to deal with any of those experiences," Carriere says. "None of them."

She credits both her family—especially strong role models such as her mother, Freda Carriere, who completed a diploma in drafting, another traditionally male occupation, and her uncle, Franklin Carriere, a long-time provincial civil servant who is also a renowned King Trapper—and her experience at NORPAC in providing her with a reference point from which to draw strength.

"Being an Aboriginal, being a woman, and being in science—it's almost like you're a target," she says. "If they go through NORPAC and get a small inkling of that (being believed in), it helps.... Sometimes that's all you need, is just someone to say, 'You can do it,' to counteract the negatives."





Graduate Profile: Kylie Janvier
La Loche
NORPAC, 1997-98

When Kylie Janvier enrolled as a NORPAC student in 1997, the health centre in her home community, La Loche, was long past overdue for renovation, and the staff were stressed and overworked. Even so, Janvier was convinced that someday, she would come back and help provide the level of medical care her hometown deserved.

The new La Loche Health Centre—a gleaming, beautifully equipped building—opened in the fall of 2001, with newly graduated licensed practical nurse (LPN) Kylie Janvier as part of the staff.

“To come back here and work was important for me, to do something for the community, because this is home,” Janvier says, her words occasionally interrupted by intercom calls for a doctor or another medical professional. “We always have a nursing shortage here, so that’s another thing that made me decide to come back. Plus I figured there would be good experience here.”

She’s certainly had plenty of experience—in her short career, Janvier has worked for La Loche’s medical clinic and the health centre’s acute, long-term and emergency units. Before she returned to her registered nurse (RN) studies at the University of Saskatchewan in the fall of 2006, her time was split between working as a home-care nurse and serving as an assessment clerk for the Kids First North pre- and post-natal intervention program—essentially, helping those least able to care for themselves, at both ends of the age spectrum. Since coming to work in La Loche, Janvier has been able to offer a unique service to her patients. “There’s a big language barrier here (between medical staff and clients), with elderly (people) especially, and as someone who speaks Dene, it’s been easy to do my job and communicate with them,” she says. “They like it a lot. They’ve told me they appreciate it.”

NORPAC gave Janvier her first formal exposure to the health-care field, through its field practicum program. One week a month, Janvier returned home to La Loche, where she worked alongside one of the local public health nurses, getting consents for immunizations, weighing and measuring babies, assisting with bike safety rodeos, and doing health presentations to schoolchildren.

At NORPAC, Janvier was able to complete her first year of arts and sciences courses, getting used to the university environment and meeting people from outside La Loche for the first time. She appreciated the smaller classes, which facilitated getting one-on-one time with her professors—“You get a better understanding of what you’re being taught,” she says—and the student funding she received, which lessened the financial burden when she went on to Prince Albert’s SIAST campus to complete her LPN diploma and, in 2004-05, the beginning of her RN studies in Saskatoon. In both cases, she has been able to apply her NORPAC credits toward the longer programs.



**Graduate Profile: Gail Gardiner-Lafleur
Beauval
NORPAC, class of 1994; NORTEP, class of 2002**

"It's all about relationship," for Gail Gardiner-Lafleur. "If you are going to lead, your relationships with people are very important."

Gardiner-Lafleur is currently enjoying her seventh year as vice principal and teacher in Beauval, the small northern community in which she grew up. Her journey to this place in her career has meant losses and gains when it comes to relationships. Still, Gardiner-Lafleur wouldn't change a thing. "I learned so much [at NORTEP-NORPAC]," she says.

After finishing her NORPAC program in 1994, Gardiner-Lafleur began taking courses through Northlands College, but with a two-year-old child she needed more support and decided to move back home to Beauval where she found work as a teacher assistant at Valley View School (the same school in which she currently works). Through working with students who weren't fitting into the "normal" classroom, she developed a vision for herself as a teacher.

After three years working as a TA, she decided to go to NORTEP. She says, "I needed to do this. I didn't want to feel stuck in Beauval; I knew I could contribute more by going to NORTEP." Gardiner-Lafleur felt empowered with her decision to go. "Choosing on my own, what I wanted to do; this was one of the first steps of freedom," says Gardiner-Lafleur.

"If I didn't have the support of classmates at NORTEP, I would have returned home. The staff was also supportive, offering assistance and resources....We became a family!"

At NORTEP, Gardiner-Lafleur found the support of friends and staff enough to help her get through the program and the life difficulties that came her way while a student. "If I didn't have the support of classmates at NORTEP, I would have returned home. The staff was also supportive, offering assistance and resources....We became

a family!" Gardiner-Lafleur's immediate family was also a great support. She knows the importance of family relationships in life. She had learned from her mother that "family is the glue that keeps you together through hard times."

After graduating from NORTEP, Gardiner-Lafleur worked for the Churchill Learning Centre for a couple of years. However, she didn't feel that she was finished with her education. She decided to go to university, this time in the South. Again, this wasn't easy, as a single mom with children, but Gardiner-Lafleur knew she would regret it if she didn't. Gardiner-Lafleur says, "I needed to know what university was like, how to be in a bigger building and drink coffee." Her experience in the South was "way different," she says. "You could get lost in the crowd." However, her determination and foundation from NORTEP saw her through. She says.

“For me it was good [to go to the U of S] because I had a good basis from NORTEP and my parents. If I went there my first year I might not have.”

When she finished her Arts degree, Gardiner-Lafleur was hired with the Northern Lights School Division as a teacher. In her classroom, she works hard to establish a safe learning environment, which means she helps her students deal with relational issues when they arise. “I try not to let problems fester in the classroom; I help the students repair and work on relationships. I say, ‘instead of being upset about it, how can we make it better.’ I help them engage in difficult conversations.”

Gardiner-Lafleur’s philosophy of education has been shaped by the authentic learning in her own life. “When we were growing up,” she says, “my family was in to fishing, snaring, blueberry picking, and small game hunting. I got very excited about these [activities]. Now, I take the kids out of the school building for walks in nature and around the community, and they talk and engage with me.” Gardiner-Lafleur began to use these outdoor experiences to teach her lessons. She would call her parents and tell them what the lesson would be, and ask them where she should go with the lesson. They would tell her to look for it in specific locations. In this way, learning became authentic and practical, and relationships grew. “I’m still in contact with these kids; they still remember the lessons. They will say, ‘remember the bugs?’” Gardiner-Lafleur says, “That’s real learning, and that was the way I learned with my parents and family members. When I went to NORTEP, that was how NORTEP was, too, very practical, more engaging. Real.”

In 2007, Gardiner-Lafleur decided, yet again, to go back to school. She took on the challenge of completing her Master’s of Education in Curriculum Development through the community-based program offered at NORTEP in partnership with the University of Regina. “I was going to La Ronge on weekends, working full-time during the week, a single parent again, with a newborn baby.” Again, her family helped her through. “My auntie stayed with me in La Ronge and Beauval, to help with my kids,” Gardiner-Lafleur explains.

When she completed her Masters in 2009, Gardiner-Lafleur began a new career in administration, taking on a principal’s position in Cold Bay. But this meant she was away from her own children too much. She then applied to transfer to Beauval, also applying for an administrative position that opened up in Beauval at the same time. She returned to Beauval as a half time vice principal and half time teacher. Now she feels she has the perfect mix, “I like that I get to engage with students and be a leader, demonstrating leadership skills for students. I hear both sides, staff and students, and try to figure out how we can improve,” she says.

With so much experience in life and in education, Gardiner-Lafleur has a lot of wisdom to offer her students. “I’ve been in school all my life,” Gardiner-Lafleur says. “I use my personal narratives to help teach and lead. My stories become teaching opportunities.” She tells students, “If I can make a difference, you can make a difference.”



**Graduate Profile: Nick Daigneault
Beauval
NORPAC, class of 2001**

Nick Daigneault figured things out early. He is a university graduate (NORPAC science program, 2001), a Saskatchewan Job Futures Aboriginal Role Model (2003), a gifted singer and keyboardist, and a proud Métis square dancer, and he's spent 5 years working in the information technology (IT) industry—all this without leaving northern Saskatchewan.

A native of Beauval, Daigneault had a fair number of role models himself when it came to pursuing post-secondary education. His father, former Beauval Mayor, Joe Daigneault, graduated from NORTEP in 1995 and now serves as western regional director for Northlands College. Of his sisters, Rachel has taught in Lac La Ronge Indian Band schools in La Ronge and Sucker River since completing NORTEP training, Vicky pursued a career in social work after a year at PAC, and Mya is now a PAC student as well, hoping to go into dental therapy. Brother Valmore, now Daigneault's colleague at Keewatin Career Development Corporation (KCDC)—the non-profit company that has pioneered northern Saskatchewan's growth in the IT industry over the last 9 years—is the only "odd man out" when it comes to formal post-secondary education.

"I knew I wanted to get involved with computers, but I didn't know how," Daigneault says of the process that led him to PAC. "I could get involved in the engineering aspect, the software design, the gaming/graphic design. I pictured this (studying in La Ronge) more as an introduction, more of a way to see where my path is going to go."

Through PAC courses in calculus and programming languages (such as Java), Daigneault gained the professional skills he would require, and he also picked up on a common thread amongst NORPAC students: the sense of being in a familiar environment, amongst family. "You realize really quick [at NORPAC] that you have mutual friends. You're like, 'Hey, you're so-and-so's sister'... Everybody just clicks," he says. "You find out quickly, 'Hey, we're all cousins!'"

Those 2 years at PAC cracked Daigneault's shell—he insists that he used to be terribly shy—and they were also critical in bringing him into contact with the people who would shape his professional life.

Through a PAC assignment on establishing career goals, Daigneault was directed to teacher Ted Green, who was looking for someone to develop a website to educate teachers on the use of information technology. This became Daigneault's PAC field assignment. After the volunteer work was done, KCDC hired him to finish the site—and after he graduated, he became one of KCDC's first hires for their new \$4.5-million Headwaters Project, a federally funded initiative to bring technology infrastructure into northern Saskatchewan.

"It (NORPAC) is kind of a networking tool, because all those instructors have footholds [in the workforce]...and they know people who know people," Daigneault says. "Sometimes it's just

that simple—getting you into contact with the right people... and then the ball gets rolling and all of a sudden you find yourself in your job that you've always wanted."

In his first two years at KCDC, Daigneault advanced from a junior tech doing basic website design and setting up school computer labs, to doing more advanced website design both for in-house projects and outside clients. He also assisted Green and Debbie Mielke (his Grade 5 teacher in Beauval) with the technical side of creating Masinahikana School—an on-line high school program designed to support northern students who had either dropped out of traditional schools or had no access to high school classes in their home communities. Then, in 2003, Daigneault's job began to shift again, toward becoming a trainer for young Aboriginal people interested in working as computer technicians. He is now KCDC's lead instructor for the Cisco Information Technology Essentials program, which leads students to entry-level certifications in the computer industry. "It's been a really long haul. We have to be jacks of all trades to really keep up with a technology company such as this one," Daigneault says.

The irony of it all is that through pursuing his chosen field, he has ended up in an area he never expected: teaching. And it may just lead him right back to NORTEP-NORPAC, this time completing his Bachelor of Education with a focus on computer science—the same field but, as he puts it, "with an instructor flair to it.... That's just how it all clicked together."

While he was always confident with the academic side of things, "everything (else) intimidated me, and part of that was the city—I felt like this tiny, going to a city, and I knew I might be so in my shell that it would cause me to fail," Daigneault says. I know I wouldn't feel that way now—I know I would tackle it—but sometimes you need an in-between," he adds. Within the strongly supportive environment at NORPAC, "you gain that confidence. You're not shy to say, 'I don't understand.'"

Because of the funding provided for NORPAC students, Daigneault felt free to take courses that interested him, without the fear of wasting precious student loan money. It really gives you time to think," he says. "And at the same time you're getting educated."

Daigneault says. "There are so many paths... (and) when you come to an institute like this, you actually become aware of all these different options. There are so many opportunities, especially here in the North—you've just got to be able to see them."

BUILDING COMMUNITY AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

While northern communities are geographically isolated from the South—and, because the region is sparsely populated, northerners from different regions have little opportunity for contact with one another. However, within the NORPAC environment, northerners find a support system and a sense of familiarity and comfort that stand in sharp contrast to the isolation they often find on-campus in larger mainstream universities and within their isolated northern communities. Many graduates speak to the value of the NORTEP-NORPAC relationships in their professional lives.

To create and sustain this supportive school culture, NORTEP-NORPAC has had to make a judgment call—to negotiate—the criteria for its student body. Given the historic exclusion of Aboriginals from the design of mainstream university programs, it is doubtful that a program that was distinctively Aboriginal could have been created if the emphasis, and student selection, in the first decade had not been Aboriginal by conscious design. NORTEP-NORPAC's policy has been a study in patient determination and focus, rather than ideological rhetoric. By selecting northerners, with preference to Cree and Dene speakers, NORTEP-NORPAC has created a graduate population of whom more than 90% are of Aboriginal ancestry. This proportion represents an affirmative action direction for the North, without being totally exclusive.

By adopting 'northern' as a key criterion for admission, rather than ancestry, and by preferring speakers of Aboriginal languages, NORTEP-NORPAC has steered a course that is weighted towards change. It has been developmental in that the 'northern' and 'language' criteria yielded a student body that for many years consisted exclusively of First Nation and Métis persons.

In time, however, other northerners were admitted (without changing the criteria). By waiting until the early 1990s before non-Aboriginals were admitted, NORTEP-NORPAC was able to establish an academic learning culture that honoured and was distinctively centered upon the languages, culture, and history of First Nation and Métis peoples. Once this identity was strong and clear, NORTEP-NORPAC's admission of non-Aboriginal northerners became a statement of confidence and strength, reflecting the traditional values of generosity and sharing that are so conspicuous amongst northern Aboriginal peoples. The fact that 91% of the NORTEP-NORPAC graduates are of Aboriginal ancestry—a higher proportion than the northern population in general—reflects both a determination to effect change and, at the same time, the recognition that northerners are working together towards common goals. Ultimately, non-Aboriginals, by sharing in the distinctive NORTEP-NORPAC program, themselves became part of the change process.

Celia Deschambeault—who teaches Native studies classes in addition to her administrative duties at the Cumberland House Cree Nation's Nisto Awasisak School—says that she struggled with having a non-Native instructor teaching Native studies classes during her time at the University of Saskatchewan. The instructor was essentially speaking from an outside perspective as opposed to someone from that culture teaching others who are also part of that culture more about who they are.

"With my experience here teaching Native studies, whenever I bring up a topic that might be offensive toward them, I let them know that they might find it troubling, but to keep in mind that it's somebody else's view, it's not our view," she says. "I think if they have people teaching them [these subjects], who know the language and know the background, it's a lot easier for the students to relate to."

Despite the frustrations that Aboriginal university students such as Deschambeault and his own daughter Jackie have with their classes, NORTEP-NORPAC board member, Frank Durocher, feels that even the fact that native studies and other similar courses are now offered at southern universities is a sign of progress—and of NORTEP-NORPAC’s impact. “Everybody’s playing catch-up,” Durocher says. “All those programs are starting to fall in place now in the universities.”



**Graduate Profile: Barb Finlayson
La Ronge
NORPAC, class of 2004**

When Barb Finlayson’s son Jordan looks back on his junior high years, he won’t remember his mom calling from another part of the house to make sure he was doing his homework—he’ll remember them seated at the table, working on their studies together.

“[We] would be sitting around doing our homework, fighting over the computer,” laughs Finlayson. “Whoever’s assignment came due first, they would get first [dibs] on the computer.”

“That was really influential,” she adds in a more serious tone. “It helped him see that yes, he could go on to university. Yes, someone he knows can get their degree. It helped him to open his eyes and broadened the world a bit more for him.”

In 2006, Finlayson currently co-owned a home-based business. Her studies of First Nations and Métis experience have helped her to appreciate her own history,

Finlayson’s experience with NORPAC began around 1993-94, when she was working for the school as a secretary. Watching students as they passed by her desk from September through April each year, Finlayson was intrigued by the changes she inevitably saw. “When they first come in there, they’re shy and calm, and they’re not really sure what they’re doing,” she says. “By the end of the fourth year, they’re just full of confidence, and they can just take on the world. All the knowledge from the different courses—you can just see it in them. They’re changed people.”

Curious about the transformations, Finlayson enrolled in PAC in 1996, in hopes of seeing such a change in herself. “When I first started, I wasn’t sure if I could do it,” she admits. “I’m sure [other] people have those doubts that stop you from doing things.” Over time, however, she began to notice “the change”: “I felt more confident,” she says. “It’s made a big difference.... NORPAC has helped me a lot. It gave me the confidence that yes, I could do more.”

Finlayson is glad that the option exists for their son to get his university training so close to home, just like they did. “It (NORPAC) broadened everyone’s (educational) horizons, in that you didn’t have to leave town—your home is here, your family’s here—so you could get your education.... It’s not something way out there that’s unreachable.”

Through their training, NORTEP-NORPAC grads emerge with a healthy self-image, fostered by a sense that they are right in thinking that their dreams have value, and so do they—and they pass that attitude on to others in their families, their schools and other workplaces, and their communities. “It’s hard to measure [the school’s] impact, but it’s endless,” says NORTEP-NORPAC Board Chair, Bruce Ruelling. “Education doesn’t make you more intelligent, it makes you more aware....The intelligence level has not gone up, but the abilities and the tools have increased—because education is a tool. It’s a very valuable tool, and more and more people are seeing that.”



**Graduate Profile: Allen Morrow
La Ronge
NORPAC, class of 2004**

Much has changed for Allen Morrow since finishing his education at NORPAC. “Before going [to NORPAC], I was shy and had low self-esteem; I was unable to express myself,” says Morrow. Along with his confidence, Morrow had almost lost his first language when in his early school years he was disciplined for speaking Cree, and later, at the age of 13, placed in a non-Cree speaking foster home in Prince Albert. Morrow’s confidence in his ability to learn was also shaken when he was put in a ‘special’ class at school. Morrow says, “Really, we weren’t special. We had a different way of learning. We weren’t stupid!” With these negative experiences, Morrow quit high school in Grade 10. When he moved to La Ronge at 18, Morrow began speaking with Elders, who taught him to speak Cree again. As he began searching for a career path, Morrow also finished his General Education diploma. Art was his hobby, but it didn’t provide a consistent living. Morrow decided to apply for the university program at NORPAC.

As an artist, Morrow had learned to express himself through his art, but his education at NORPAC freed him to express himself in words. “Once I was in classes and with other students, I was able to open up, to the point that now in my current job, I am able to speak in front of a judge and other people. I was able to find myself and find a different world,” says Morrow. Though Morrow found his studies at NORPAC, “overwhelming and intense,” he was able to get through. He attributes his success to the “passion of the instructors and staff at NORTEP-NORPAC,” to “taking the advice of instructors to conscientiously attend class,” and to “the support of peers and study groups.”

Morrow now works as a community justice worker and speaks before a judge and court on behalf of others. He is positioned to speak on behalf of others, something his education at NORPAC has done for him. “I love helping people, using my education to help those who can’t necessarily speak for themselves in court,” he says. Morrow’s ability to speak Cree is a great advantage in his work because some of the clients are Cree speakers, and he is able to come to an understanding of their circumstance, and to explain their situation to a judge. Coming from the North is also an advantage because, in his words, “I’ve lived up in the North, and I understand the lifestyle and the hardships [clients] have gone through.”

Though art remains his life passion, education and learning continue to be part of Morrow's plans. "Understanding life," says Morrow, "is about coming into understanding of who I am." This is why Morrow thinks that the residential school stories and history need to be written about and included in school curriculum, so that "people can understand more about themselves and why it happened, and why they are the way they are," says Morrow, whose own immediate family was impacted by residential schooling.

Morrow's love for education was rekindled through his NORPAC experience. "There is so much to learn," he says. He would like to take psychology and sociology courses to assist him in his work. He also still wants to finish the Bachelor of Education program through NORTEP and he has applied to return. He considers his current job an education, too: "It is like taking a class every day. I have to learn to listen, and learn when to speak and what to say in court. But if I didn't go to NORPAC, I wouldn't have been able to do this." And, if NORPAC hadn't been located in the North, Morrow says he wouldn't even have gone to university.

NORPAC has had an impact on the preservation and promotion of northern Saskatchewan's languages and traditional cultures. When NORTEP was formed, the children entering northern schools were Cree- or Dene-speaking, but the teachers who greeted them spoke neither language. The emergence of teacher candidates who were speakers has helped to stem the tide of acculturation that threatens Aboriginal languages. NORTEP-NORPAC has attempted to enable access to the beneficial aspects of the "dominant" society, while preserving and affirming Aboriginal language and culture. Keith Goulet describes this "bi-cultural" philosophy best when he described NORTEP-NORPAC's attempt to "draw on the best from both cultures." This entails preserving the language and culture in the context of envisioning and creating a new North.

Now, Cree and Dene language classes are offered both at NORPAC and in local schools; cultural days and elder visits are commonplace, and educational partnerships have been developed to pass on traditional land-based skills and create new language curriculum materials. Some communities have even developed Cree and Dene immersion programs. "We do offer Division 4 Cree language classes for one semester, and more and more students are taking advantage of that," says La Ronge Principal, Ken Gray.



Artwork by Allen Morrow



**Graduate Profile: Tammy Robinson
(nee Couillonneur)
Cole Bay
NORPAC, class of 2005**

Originally from the tiny hamlet of Cole Bay, 45 minutes west of Beauval, Robinson relocated to La Ronge in 1994 to take classes at NORPAC. Although she wanted to pursue a university education, the idea of moving to a city was intimidating, and NORPAC offered a model unlike any other post-secondary institution: Students would take 2 weeks of classes, “and then would have the week to go back to their home community to work in a field placement,” Robinson recalls.

From 1994 to 1996, Robinson took classes from NORPAC, which offered her two years of university classes that could lead into a wide range of professions.

In 1999, after floating a few trial balloons career-wise (including earning an Office Education diploma from Northlands College, a response to good experiences during her administration work placements through PAC), getting married and having her first child, Robinson saw an opening for an executive secretary position at NORTEP-NORPAC, and jumped at it. She got the call the next day.

But the siren call of education hadn’t let go of Robinson yet, and soon after starting work at the school—including a shift to the job of Registrar, she began taking credit classes through PAC, and in 2005 she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree. In 2006, she began work on her Bachelor of Education degree part-time while working full-time, this time through NORTEP. While getting her education through NORTEP-NORPAC has allowed Robinson to stay in familiar surroundings—one of the strengths of the program for northerners—it has also opened her eyes to new possibilities.

“It helped me realize there’s so much more out there,” Robinson says. “I wanted to be part of the workforce. That’s what drove me to come to NORPAC and to pursue post-secondary education.”

The PAC experience not only gave Robinson an education and an opportunity to pursue a career outside Cole Bay, but also it built up her communication skills and her self-confidence.

As part of the Registrar’s position, she was able to take on a very public role, representing the school at career fairs and travelling across the North to promote TEP and PAC’s programs. “When I started recruiting for NORTEP-NORPAC, it made a huge difference to tell them where I’m actually from, because they are amazed by the progress. Students would approach me after my presentation, saying, ‘Wow, I think I can do that,’” Robinson adds. “[My experience shows them] there are more opportunities out there.”

In 2010, Robinson began serving as Coordinator of Student Services at NORTEP-NORPAC. In this role, she works closely with the Registrar to develop and oversee NORTEP-NORPAC programs. Since taking on this position, Robinson has worked to restructure Student Services, moving both the Recruitment/Academic Support Officer and the Bookstore/Registration Clerk positions to the Student Services area in order to integrate supports to serve students. Her role involves academic advising, program counseling, personal and professional counseling support, teaching courses, and participating in many internal and external committees.

In 2012, Robinson completed her Bachelor of Education degree with Distinction from the University of Saskatchewan. She now instructs the University of Regina course EPS 116 (Communication Skills). She began to co-instruct this course with Penny Carriere, who was her first instructor in this same course in 1994 when Robinson first began the NORPAC Program. Teaching alongside Penny is what she considers a marker of success. "It is one of my greatest accomplishments to date. This is truly a goal that I have strived for personally," she says. This accomplishment causes Robinson to believe "anything is possible and achieving your aspirations is closer than you think!" Robinson also co-instructs INCC 201.3 (Dynamics of Community Involvement) with Deborah Gibson-Dingwall, who was also instrumental in her life, helping her to persevere through her studies.

Robinson is now enrolled in the Master's of Northern Governance of Development with the International Northern Governance Development Program, a project-based program offered through a partnership between the University of Saskatchewan and Northlands College. The courses are offered through distance education, which allows her to study at home without excessive travel. However, the cohort did embark on a 10-day trip to Norway in March 2015, visiting Oslo, Kirkenes, and a few surrounding communities, learning about the economy, culture, and business developments. With many new possibilities beginning to take shape, Robinson is aware that it was NORPAC that helped shaped her foundation.





**Graduate Profile: Shawna Laliberte
Beauval
NORPAC, class of 2007**

It is said that home is where the heart is, and that is true for Shawna Laliberte. She knows where she belongs—once she’s got her education finished, that is.

“This is where I’m from, and I’m more comfortable with my people,” says Laliberte, a 20-year-old aspiring social worker from Beauval. “I know the history here, so it will help [me] to understand better where they’re coming from, because I know.”

Just weeks after completing her second year at NORPAC, with her third year and pending graduation with her Bachelor of Arts degree still ahead for the fall, Laliberte was anxious to share her experiences. She had heard from others in her chosen field—Indian social work—that PAC offers a solid educational grounding for their profession. That, combined with the student funding option, convinced her to try the program in La Ronge. “I had other [educational] options; I just chose NORPAC because of the funding, but if it wasn’t available, I probably still would have went on [to university],” she says.

Unlike some early grads, Laliberte had strong support at home for pursuing a post-secondary education, with several older siblings having already gone to university. “My mother wanted me to go,” Laliberte says.

Despite many changes to the program over years, Laliberte found herself in much the same environment as students who started in 1976. “It’s very comforting to go there,” she says. “You don’t feel like an outcast or anything—it made you feel as if you were at home, and you kind of form your own family there.... It’s more of a northern Aboriginal school, and because of that I can really relate to it.”

The Aboriginal content at NORPAC—especially in the curriculum—has been important to Laliberte, because it has given her a much better understanding of her own people’s history, native languages, and culture. She has also appreciated the staff and faculty’s respect for and understanding of northern Aboriginal people—something not always evident amongst non-northern teachers at her high school, some of whom seemed convinced that the “Indian princess” and other stereotypes seen in movies were, in fact, reality.

Even though those biases still exist, Laliberte knows that northern education today is far different from the experiences of earlier generations. “There are many teachers that I admire from NORTEP-NORPAC, because now they’re educated and they’re really teaching it (Aboriginal history and culture) now. I think that’s really good,” she says. “Aboriginals have a right to know those things.”

Amongst her peers, post-secondary education is increasingly seen as the norm—either as a way to get out of the comfortable yet sometimes limiting “rut” of home, or, as in Laliberte’s case, as a way to give back to her home community. “More and more people are starting to realize they can’t just sit there forever. A lot of people are starting to move now—they want to graduate and get out,” she says. “There are not many jobs here, as compared to in a city... [and] they’re starting to see how many different options there are out there.”

For herself, though, Beauval will continue to be home—even with a university education. “I just found a love for the North and the people, and I know it—it’s just my home,” she says. “I want to help my own people out.”

Update: Shawna Laliberte-Corrigan currently works as a Social Worker with Valley View Community School in Beauval.



Graduate Profile: Sylvia Besskaystare
Wollaston Lake
NORPAC, class of 2009

One word that might best describe Sylvia Besskaystare is “ambitious.” A strong determination to succeed has helped Besskaystare push past the obstacles that might otherwise have held her back. After Besskaystare completed high school, and after three years working as a teacher’s assistant, she knew she needed to do something beyond her home community. “I wanted to do something more for myself, and my child, something beyond Wollaston Lake.” In order to do so, Besskaystare knew she had to further her education. “I needed to make a better living and get an education. I knew I could do more...I didn’t want to feel stuck.”

Knowing education was the key to her success, Besskaystare decided to move to La Ronge to do a degree through NORTEP-NORPAC. With the support and structure there, Besskaystare was able to move past obstacles such as housing, finances, language and culture, childcare, and class size. NORPAC housing saved her from the expense of high southern rents. NORPAC faculty supported Besskaystare with one-on-one instruction: “I especially valued the one-on-one time.” This support was essential for learning to research and write essays in her second language. “My first language is Dene, which sometimes made it difficult for writing papers [in English].” NORTEP’s structure with one week in classes and one week out to do assignments enabled Besskaystare to keep up with her assignments, while taking care of her child. Besskaystare was also able to place her infant in the local childcare centre. NORPAC’s small class sizes were familiar because she had come from a small community. “I enjoyed taking classes at NORTEP. When you are in a class with say 100 students [comparing NORTEP to a southern university], you just sat in the theatre and listened—there was no interaction,” she says.

With all of this in place, "I got an education, gained more knowledge and experience, and met great people from different communities who were in the same boat, struggling to get past our obstacles to continue our education," says Besskkaystare.

As hoped, her studies at NORPAC opened up opportunities for other programs. After graduating, Besskkaystare decided to go to Brandon University, but there she realized the program was not suitable for her, so she returned home to Wollaston Lake. Now Besskkaystare is working as a Child Family Service Worker, and she is in her third year of a Social Work degree, which she is taking online through the University of Regina. In her work, she enjoys helping families to come up with strategies to work around their own obstacles. She feels especially suited to this work because she grew up in the North. "I always wanted to come back after I took my education, to work with the people here. I am familiar with the struggles; I'm from this town." Besskkaystare has had many struggles of her own, having lost her parents early, and having struggled past many obstacles in her own life. She is now in the process of creating her own family, with three kids of her own.

More education is on the horizon for Besskkaystare as she concludes her social work degree. She is hoping to go further, to finish her master's degree in social work. Besskkaystare wants to demonstrate for her children the value of education. "I want to impact my own children, set an example for them to have a better life."





**Graduate Profile: Jenny Wolverine
Patuanak
NORPAC, class of 2010**

When Jenny Wolverine graduated high school, she decided to move to Saskatoon to attend the University of Saskatchewan. However, she found living in Saskatoon a struggle, with the higher expenses and the effort and coordination it took to accomplish daily tasks. "It took more planning and organizing, like A to Z rather than A to B," she says.

Wolverine explains, "As a mom, it was already a challenging time." Beyond the financial strain and coordination of studies and home life, Wolverine found the cultural differences in the South overwhelming. Thus, after one semester, Wolverine returned home.

Attempting to find her path, Wolverine took a job worthiness program and achieved safety tickets. She started working in the mining industry. However, she found that the mining industry did not support a family life. "I didn't want to work in the mines all my life, with being away from home, plus I had started a family," says Wolverine.

Instead, Wolverine chose to go to NORPAC. She wanted a different experience than she had in the South. "I didn't want a culture clash...I wanted to be in a similar situation to home; NORPAC was closer to home," she says.

Home was her support system, her family. Wolverine comes from a large family. "Being away from family gets lonely. My family was quite supportive, especially my dad who pushed me through my grade schools years, making sure things were done." At NORPAC, she found that the new friends she met became extended family. "I remember how close everyone was. We weren't a number; everyone had a name," she says.

Attending NORPAC as a mom was challenging, "But I had the support of my spouse who took time off work and moved to La Ronge to care for our daughter," she says. Wolverine appreciated the schedule of classes at NORPAC, which she says, "allowed me to do the work and catch up with family." She explains that the schedule at NORPAC is unusual with one week of intensive study in one class followed by a reading week, in which students do the reading and work for the class. Then they take another one-week course, which is followed by another reading week, and so forth.

After graduating from NORPAC, Wolverine went back to work for Cameco. At first, she moved to the Saskatoon office as a post-secondary counsellor because there was no employment or housing for small families available in the North. But, she returned to the North in 2012, when a position as a community relations liaison opened up. Wolverine says, "This was always my plan [to go back home]. Basically, I wanted to give back to the community after they invested in my education." Wolverine feels that being from the North is an advantage in her career. "I lived here all my life; I am familiar with the 'ins and outs' of living on a reserve, in a small

community...I understand more. Being from the North makes me more approachable and gives me more connections."

What Wolverine enjoys about her job is that she is helping the community. She is involved with employment and recruitment, and serves as a connection between community members and Cameco inquiries. Wolverine appreciates what her NORPAC education did for her: "It raised my level of confidence and qualified me for my current position." Wolverine says she would definitely choose to go to NORPAC again if she had to do it over again, only she would go directly there rather than going south for her university education.

For now, Wolverine's plans are focused on her current job. "I plan to move further in my work at the corporate office, climb up the ladder, to have more influence in what happens in my community," she says. She considers the possibility of returning to NORTEP, as well. "I only have one and a half years to become a teacher," she says. Wolverine also plans to send her daughter to NORTEP-NORPAC



Graduate Profile: Caitlin Lee
La Ronge
NORPAC, class of 2011

Like many students, when Caitlin Lee graduated from high school, she didn't really know what she wanted to do. As a northern student, Lee had access to funding for a northern institution, and she wanted to remain close to home. She knew that with the NORPAC degree in Native studies she could "possibly go into social work or addictions counselling." With this in mind, she decided to go to NORPAC. Lee's uncertainty isn't unique; many students choose to go NORPAC or NORTEP as a stepping stone, to move them into post-secondary education while they are still unsure about what direction to take. "These programs," says Lee, "are good because they give hope to people who don't know what they can do outside of high school."

As a student at NORPAC, Lee enjoyed her classes. One in particular that she remembers was a Native Studies Literature course instructed by Markus Reiner. "I really liked that he gave us different books to read on Native cultures. We read certain chapters and analyzed every little thing. He got the entire class involved [in discussion]; everybody had their own opinions, and when you hear from someone else, you think, 'Oh, yeah! I never really thought of it that way before.'" Lee found the instructors at NORPAC "very helpful." She says, "I would rather go to NORPAC than [a large university]. The classes there are too big. I like to be personal with my teachers. I know they help on big campuses as well, but the smaller class helps me learn better." Lee also enjoyed the support of other students. "I got to know who they were, and we helped each other if we had issues with studies; if a teacher wasn't available, we could go to our classmates," says Lee.

NORPAC ended up being a necessary step for Lee to figure out her direction. After graduating from NORPAC, she remembered her interest in the environment and decided to go to Prince

Albert to take a 2-year diploma in Resource and Environmental Law. "I grew up big into fishing, grew up around resources officers, and remember hearing their stories about how much they loved their jobs." Lee was able to use transfer credits from her NORPAC program to complete the diploma. She is now working seasonally as a conservation officer with the Ministry of Environment, and living in Saskatoon. "I went south because that is where the job took me. I will go wherever the work is available." Lee hopes, eventually, to get a full-time position as a conservation officer, which she feels is a good field to go into, but she says, "if that doesn't work out, I'll look into fisheries or mining, as a consultant." Either way, she feels she has found her career path.

"The biggest impact [of NORPAC] of course is human resource development for northern people," Ray McKay, former Director of Continuing Education says. "Without the funding, without the supports built into the program, it would have been very difficult." NORTEP helped people to become professionals, "and then go back and use their expertise to help their own people," says McKay.

Living in a region that is geographically isolated from the larger population centres, northerners face socio-economic challenges that are foreign to people in those centres. Distance also makes it easier for governments to ignore northern needs, which is why McKay feels it is so important that the NORPAC board of governors is made up of northern elected officials who can negotiate with their counterparts in the provincial and federal governments. "You're out of sight, out of mind, and they (government) always want to treat you like they do everyone else in the country" when it comes to budgets, McKay says.

NORPAC has also brought a wage economy to the North, in that instead of northerners paying people from the South to provide services and then having them leave, the wages now stay in the North. "That should be true of all professions,"

With salaries staying in the community, "it helps [local] families raise their standard of living," agrees Chief, Roy Cheechum, whose Band, Clearwater River Dene Nation, is located just south of La Loche, a community with a high rate of unemployment. "[Graduates] bring a paycheque to their family, [and] their community, that they wouldn't otherwise have had," Cheechum explains.

Clearly, one of the most effective means of addressing poverty is through human resource development that creates access to wage and salaried careers. Moreover, given the recognized tendency for large urban populations to drain resources from rural, less populous, and more remote areas, an intervention strategy worthy of consideration must be aimed not merely at economic development, but at development that is likely to be retained by the remote area (i.e., northern Saskatchewan). In this regard, nothing is more likely to have a beneficial impact than human resource development, especially when it can be demonstrated that the human resource has a distinct tendency to remain in the North. NORPAC represents precisely this sort of intervention strategy!



**Graduate Profile: Danielle Debruyne
La Ronge
NORPAC years 2005-2008, 2014**

For many women, pursuing an education during their childbearing years can be difficult with the interruptions and distractions that come with children. However, with appropriate supports, encouragement, and accessible education, these disruptions don't have to become obstacles to success.

Such was the case for Danielle Debruyne, who began her studies at NORPAC in 2005 but in her final year, with just one course left to complete, gave birth to her first child five weeks prematurely. Debruyne then turned her focus to the care of her child, and worked part-time, rather than completing her program. "Education wasn't first as a young parent," she says. In 2013, Debruyne began her current full-time position as a Career Services Training Coordinator with Northern Career Quest. Her employer made finishing her degree a requirement of her employment, offering the funding for her to do so. With funding support, Debruyne was able to return to NORPAC in 2014 to finish her Bachelor of Arts degree while working to support herself and her two children.

Initially, Debruyne chose to attend NORPAC because it was located in the North. "I wanted to stay in the North," she says. "It's home! The lake is here and you can just step away from the chaos. Here I see the people I know and grew up with." Debruyne also felt "scared away" of the university environment. "If there wasn't a NORPAC program, I wouldn't have been able to overcome the barrier of going to a university," she says. At NORPAC, Debruyne says, "I enjoyed the small group [of students]. We became a family. There, I wasn't afraid to ask questions or elaborate on what I thought."

Life and work balance is important to Debruyne, and this value guided her as she chose her career path. "I had an older sister working in the mining industry, but I could see that though it was good money, with good time off, [that career] wouldn't work for me with a child." After leaving NORPAC, Debruyne says, "I fell into an employment counsellor position with Gabriel Dumont Institute, even though I didn't have a lot of training in the labour market." However, Debruyne's involvement on the board of the Kikinahk Friendship Centre allowed her to make some strong connections in the community, which helped her in her role.

This role as an employment counsellor was a first step in the career direction that Debruyne is now passionate about. Her current role with Northern Career Quest allows her to assist others with their career paths. "I love being able to assist individuals who live in northern Saskatchewan, helping them to overcome their barriers." Debruyne feels that being from the North helps her in her work as a training coordinator. "Growing up in the North, gives me a strong tie to the North, and I have an understanding of the financial barriers that say a single mother of three kids has," she says. "You don't want people to experience what you've experienced. As a single parent, I have a lot of compassion for people. Everybody wants to better their lives, and some have no other means of training."

As for her plans, Debruyne says, "I like the field I'm in now... Hopefully, I get to stick around and continue to assist Aboriginal individuals to gain long term employment. I don't have concrete plans, but I know [my future position] will be something like job coaching or assisting individuals in their career paths."



Graduate Profile: Allan Adam
Uranium City
NORPAC, class of 2012

"It's never too late!" says Allan Adam, who in his early 50s decided to go to university. "I thought I would be the oldest, but still there was one older than me." Adam says. He had already achieved much in his life, so his goal was, as he says, "basically [to get] letters behind my name."

Even though living in Regina, Adam decided to take his degree at NORPAC. Going back north for his education meant that the Band would help pay his tuition and textbooks. But there were other reasons Adam wanted to go to NORPAC. He is from Fond du Lac Denesuline First Nation and he grew up in Uranium City. His adult career took him to northern locations, including La Ronge, Yellowknife, and the North West Territories. Adam was missing "camping and fishing and the way northerners work together." NORPAC also appealed to Adam because of its competitive edge, which he says was combined with the support of the instructors there. Adam says, "I am competitive in nature. When I was young, I was an athlete... Competition helps me get better: That is what university is about! 'What can I do to catch up to others, and move past them?'" But NORPAC was also about helping others to improve: "I liked to help out other Dene students with their studies," he says.

At the stage Adam was at in his career as radio broadcaster-turned-politician, he was accustomed to a certain income, which becoming a full-time student wouldn't provide. Thus, he had to wait until his partner found a job in the North and then, once relocated, Adam worked as a sessional Dene language instructor at NORTEP-NORPAC. As well, he and his partner set up an online language service (www.allanadam.com) called First Language Speaking Project Inc., which included language services for Dene, Cree, and other First Nations languages.

Adam found that his work as a broadcaster gave him transferable skills for his studies at NORPAC. "Coming from media, everything is regimented. I put that frame of mind into my studies. If I had a paper due in May, I started it in January." In keeping with his competitive nature, Adam liked to take on challenging topics, such as one memorable paper in which he wrote about metaphysics combined with Indigenous knowledge, documenting Elders' testimonies and stories from his own life. His regimented routine allowed him to work as a sessional, help other students, develop and volunteer his time in language service, and still focus his attention on his studies.

NORPAC's value, says Adam, has to do with its attitude towards culture. Students are able to retain their cultures and languages while attending university. Adam recalls walking down the halls and hearing young people talking in their own languages about their fishing and hunting trips. "It is important that language be a part of our education, that history [be taught] from our perspective," says Adam. NORPAC graduates, such as nurses and lawyers, go out into the community and are able to contribute to the northern economy, cultures, and languages. Adam, himself, has also thought about becoming a lawyer. "I wanted to get into law after I was done my degree, but I didn't--but maybe I still will," he says.

But for now, Adam has many projects on which he is working. He will continue his work as a sessional language instructor at NORTEP-NORPAC, and as a consultant for language and translation services. He is excited about his new business in which he is involved in project management. "I'm trying to get more of our people working in trades," he says. His new company has just developed a partnership with an Aboriginal company from Alberta, and he is looking at work with other companies who need help hiring qualified Aboriginal people. Adam's vision is broad, as he considers the possibilities across provinces. His recent election to the University of Saskatchewan senate will also help him to further his vision for Aboriginal languages and cultures, especially Dene, as the university develops curriculum and Indigenous knowledge into its programs. Adam says, "NORTEP-NORPAC also contributes to this goal because of its instructors and attitudes towards language and culture." Adam is also sitting on the Board of Directors with APTN for his second 3-year term. All of this keeps him busy doing what he loves.

As Adam looks back on his life, he does not attribute his success to luck: "I got married at 20, had kids right away, and got a good job right away. People think it's luck, but it's not." Adam advises, "When opportunities arise, run with them."





Graduate Profile: Jenna Johnson
La Ronge
NORPAC, class of 2012

Jenna Johnson hasn't had a lot of time since graduating to develop her career, but she has still managed to complete her Social Work degree from the University of Regina since graduating from NORPAC in 2012.

While a student at NORPAC, Johnson secured a position with the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, and this position has supported her through her education in both La Ronge and Regina. She is currently employed with SLGA in a new position as Customer Experience Analyst. And though social work is still her passion, Johnson enjoys her current position, "I enjoy having the opportunity to combine both my education as well as my years of experience with SLGA."

Johnson recalls her time at NORPAC with a sense of fondness, "I had a good experience at NORPAC. I feel as though I got a well-rounded education from some really great instructors who truly cared about each individual student."

One aspect of NORPAC that Johnson found beneficial was the size of her classes. "The small class sizes were extremely beneficial because instructors were always readily available.... The smaller class sizes helped me to gain some confidence in the classroom before moving on to larger classes in Regina," she says. Johnson says she wouldn't do anything differently, now that she has gone South to complete her social work degree. "I would still choose to attend NORPAC because it helped prepare me for what was to come while living and studying in Regina," she says.

Growing up in the North has given Johnson valuable exposure to Indigenous language and culture, which was something she valued highly in her K-12 experience. When her family moved east to Manitoba temporarily, she was disappointed that there wasn't the same emphasis. "Basic Indigenous history was included in parts of my education [there], but language and culture certainly were not." Cultural content at NORPAC was something Johnson valued in her education. "Had it not been for living in the North and attending NORPAC, I would not have had half of the knowledge and education I had regarding Indigenous peoples."

Returning to the North and beginning a career in social work are part of Johnson's plans. "I love living in the North because there are so many diverse people and places to explore," she says. I plan to work in the social work field in the near future, while raising a family. I would certainly like to live in the North again at some point in my life. However, until then, I will continue to visit and spend much of my free time up North, enjoying all that it has to offer!"

EPILOGUE

“STEPPING INTO THE FUTURE”

The interviews you have just read illustrate and confirm the “bold new step” that was taken when NORPAC was created. Building on the non-education courses that already existed within the NORTEP program, NORPAC found a way to offer northerners a choice of careers outside of teacher education without imposing a major financial burden on its institutional budget. By adding only a few additional courses above-and-beyond those already existing within the teacher education program, NORPAC students were able to take steps toward professional careers that were, otherwise, largely closed to Aboriginal people in the North.

The picture on our cover says it all—there is a stone path leading to a dock (a sight only too familiar to northerners)—and from the dock a canoe could take one to many destinations on the lake. By the same process, NORPAC students have followed the path to an educational dock from which they could launch canoes of further education enroute to an exciting career. The graduate profiles speak eloquently, however, to the fact that it was NORPAC that got them to the dock and gave them paddles needed for the exciting journey that lay ahead.

In this publication, we hope we have demonstrated just how rich and meaningful this journey has been for many students. Whether they have become qualified as accountants, nurses, social workers, employment counsellors, journalists, lawyers, judges, officials in a mining company, or some other career of choice—they have all fulfilled a dream. And this fulfilment has had an impact on the hearts and minds of northern youth like ripple waves in the wake of a canoe moving swiftly through the water. So the step NORPAC students have taken into the future has had significance not only for themselves, but for succeeding generations of students as well.

We hope you have found these stories and interviews inspiring. Doubtless they provide both vision and motivation for northern youth who ponder their own futures. And, hopefully, they speak to educational policy makers, too. It was, after all, policy makers who took a risk to create NORTEP almost 40 years ago. A decade later a further risk was taken to create NORPAC and its professional career options outside of teacher education. What will the future hold?

Hopefully, NORPAC can be expanded so that more choices are made available, and a longer sequence of courses and programs made accessible within the NORTEP-NORPAC family. The graduate profiles we have read provide convincing evidence of the fact that a solid start within NORPAC can, and has, launched its northern Aboriginal graduates into exciting career journeys. These journeys have, in turn, been translated into jobs and professional positions that serve both the North and the larger society.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: NORPAC 2005-2014: SUMMARY - SEPTEMBER COUNTS

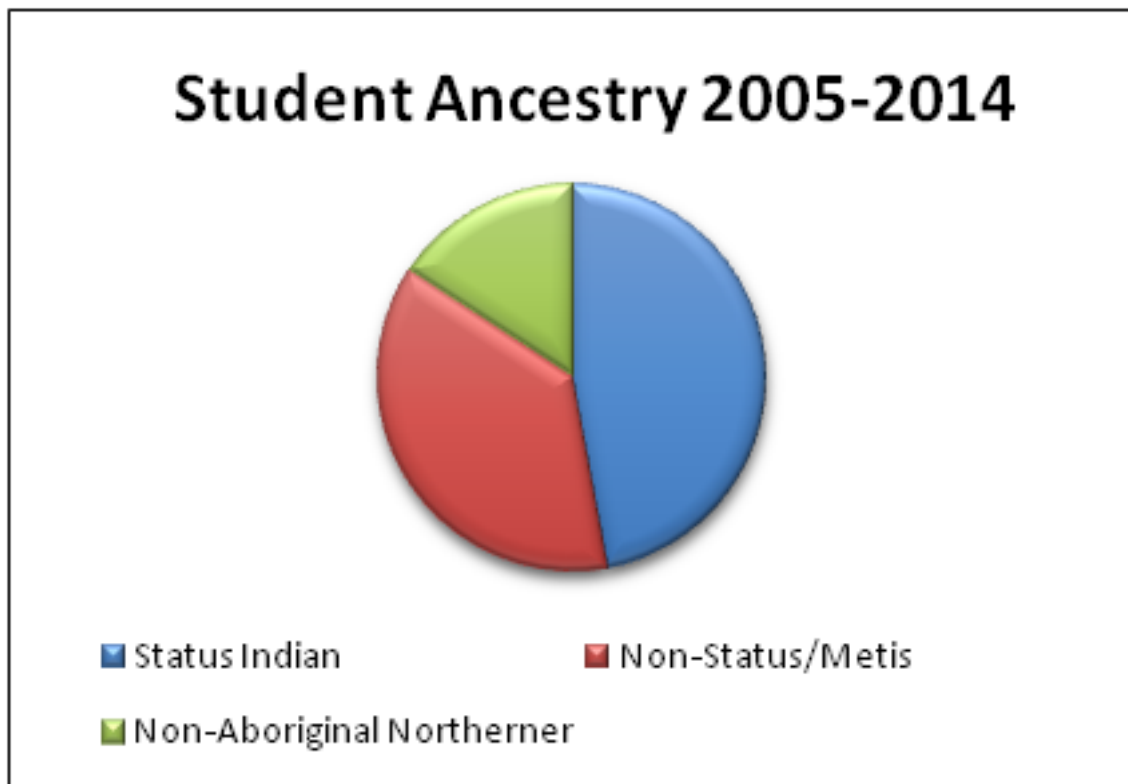
The data in what follows is derived from the list of students submitted annually to the Ministry of Advanced Education, effective September 30th (of a given year). For the complete list of students, see 7. NORPAC 2005-2014: Year-Community-Ancestry. The students from this list were tracked to determine the exit outcomes that are shown. These graduates were then contacted to determine their successes—further education and/or employment.

Total number of students 2005 -14 = 172

Aboriginal Ancestry

Status Indian	= 81 students
Non-Status Indian/Métis	= 64 students
Northerner*	= 27 students

*This term is being used for a student who qualifies for provincial funding and does not self-identify as Status Indian, Non-Status Indian or Métis.



APPENDIX II: NORPAC 2005-2014: TRANSITIONS TO SUCCESS/EXIT OUTCOMES

Year of Study (Exit After)	Level of Education Achieved	Number of Students
1 yr	Certificate	38
2 yrs	Diploma	19
3 yrs	Recognition	15
3 yrs	Native Studies Degree	14
1 yr	Pre-Nursing Certificate*	14

*The Pre-Nursing program began in 2011

Program transfers within NORTEP/NORPAC

Transfers to TEP = 12
 Transfers to Pre-Nursing = 5
 Transfers to PAC from TEP = 20
 (8 are returning B. Ed. graduates)
 Transfers to PAC from Pre-Nursing = 4

APPENDIX III: NORPAC 2005-2014: RETENTION

Total number enrolled =172
 Total number completed 1 yr or more of studies =100
 Retention =58.1%

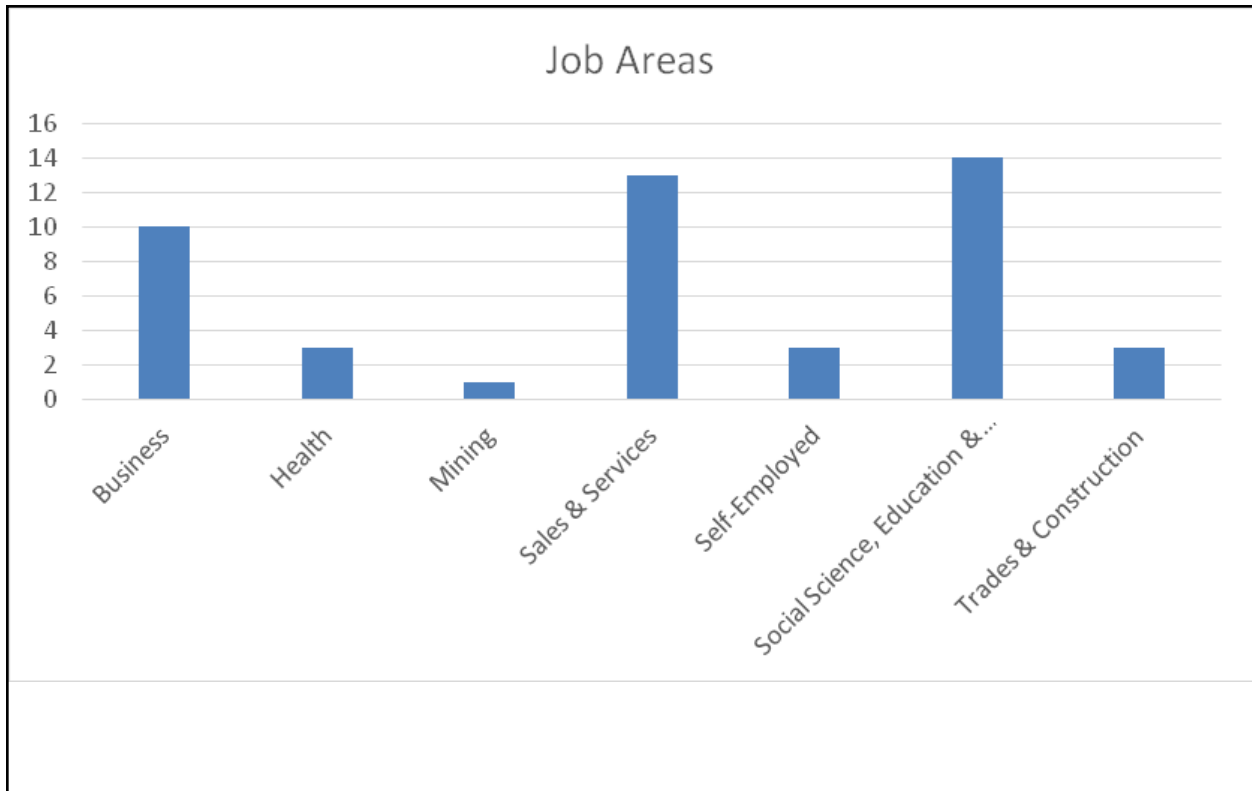
APPENDIX IV: NORPAC 2005-2014: SUCCESS/DESTINATIONS

FNU = First Nations Univ.	SIIT = Saskatchewan Indian Inst. of Tech.	UR = Univ. of Regina
GDI = Gabriel Dumont Inst.	SP = Saskatchewan Polytechnic	US = Univ. of Saskatchewan
NC = Northlands College	ST = SUNTEP	U = Campus Unknown
NTP = NORTEP/NORPAC	UCW = Univ. Canada West	* = Program In progress

Year of Study (Exit After)	Degree (Bachelor of)	Diploma	Certificate
1 yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts, Native Studies (NTP*) • Arts, Northern Studies (NC*) • Education (NTP*) • Education (SP*) • Indian Social Work (FNU) • Science, Nursing (FNU) (NC) • Social Work (US*) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Administration (SIIT) • Christian Ministry (Nipawin Bible College) • Media Art Production (U) • Mining Engineer (NC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Careers Access (NC)
2 yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commerce (US) • Education (NTP) • Native Studies (NTP*) • Science, Biology (US*) • Social Work (UR) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing Care Assistant (SP) • Office Administration (GDI) • Pre-Nursing (NC)
3 yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commerce (UCW*) • Education (NTP) • General Studies (US*) • Native Studies (NTP*) • Native Studies, Indian Resource Management (US*) • Science, Nursing (NC) (U) • Social Work (UR*) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Admin. (U) • Dental Hygiene (SP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Nursing (NTP*)
Post-Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (NTP) • Social Work (FNU*) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource Environmental Law (SP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Studies (SP) • Pre-Cadet (RCMP)
Pre-Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts, Native Studies (NTP*) • Arts, Northern Studies (NC) • Education (NTP)(US*) • Science, Nursing (FNU*)(NC*) • Social Work* (US) 		

APPENDIX V: NORPAC 2005-2014: CAREER CHOICES

The following chart illustrates career choices made by NORPAC graduates. The careers are defined as: Trades & Construction; Business; Sales & Service; Social Sciences, Education & Government; Mining; Health; Self-Employed. On the following page is a detailed list of careers for each job area.



APPENDIX VI: NORPAC 2005-2014: GRADUATES—CAREERS/EMPLOYMENT

Business

Accounting Clerk (NORTEP)
Clerk (Cameco)
Community Liaison Representative (Cameco)
Computer Technician (KCDC)
Customer Service Representative (CIBC)
Document Control Administrator
Executive Admin. Assistant (NORTEP)
Receptionist (MBC Radio)
Office Manager (Victim Services)

Health

Dental Therapist
Registered Nurse

Mining

Raise Bore Operator

Sales & Services

911 Dispatcher
Aerial Observer (Fire Cache)
Cashier
Child Care Worker (Women's Shelter)
Child Protection Worker
Conservation Officer
Crisis Worker
Educational Assistant
Faculty Member (NORTEP/PAC)
Gas Station Attendant
General Labourer (SPMC)
Legal Assistant
Meat Department Attendant
Passenger Check-in Agent
Probation Officer
Radio Dispatcher (Northern Air Operations)
Server
Service Provider (Young Offenders)

Sessional Instructor (NORTEP/PAC)
Teacher
Women's Innovation Employment
Coordinator
Youth Home Worker
Youth Intervention Programming

Self-Employed

Child Care
Consulting
Media Production

Self-Employed

Child Care
Consulting
Media Production

Social Science, Education, Government

Post-Secondary Counsellor
Recreation Coordinator for Community Living
Recruiter (NORTEP/PAC)

Trades & Construction

Apprenticing Power Linesman
Heavy Equipment Operator
Senior Project Coordinator Estimator

N.B. Employers are indicated in brackets after job title when known

APPENDIX VII: NORPAC 2005-2014: YEAR AND COMMUNITY

Year	Student Name	Community
2005	Morgan Baxter-Smith*	Air Ronge
Total = 17	Shawn Bonneau*	Beauval
Completed = 13	Riley Bouvier*	Ile-a-la-Crosse
	Amy Buffin	Beauval
	Beverly Charles	La Ronge
	Susan Charles*	La Ronge
	Jessica Gardiner	Jans Bay
	Giselle Gaudet*	La Ronge
	Kristen Herman*	La Loche
	Lacey Laliberte*	Buffalo Narrows
	Farris Lemaigre*	Clearwater River
	Priscilla Merasty	Pelican Narrows
	Sarah Natomagan*	Pinehouse Lake
	Shaylene Natomagan	Pinehouse Lake
	Davin Pelly*	Cumberland House
	Chris Schafer*	La Ronge
	Melanie Wozniak*	Ile-a-la-Crosse

*Indicates student achieved 1 year or more of study

Year		Student Name	Community
2006		Kayle Brown	La Ronge
Total	= 23	Chad Burnouf	Beauval
Completed	= 17	Melaney Caron	Buffalo Narrows
		Jenna Clark	La Ronge
		Melissa Cook*	La Ronge
		Trevor Custer*	Deschambeault Lake
		Amber Ericson*	Buffalo Narrows
		Brittany Favel	Ile-a-la-Crosse
		Jenny Favel*	Ile-a-la-Crosse
		Pearl Gardiner	Green Lake
		Ida Johnson*	La Ronge
		Billie Laliberte*	Beauval
		Janna Laliberte*	Beauval
		Joshua McDermott*	La Ronge
		Genevieve McKay*	Cumberland House
		Dayna Merasty*	La Loche
		Kayla Merasty*	La Loche
		Lindsey Morrison	Dillon
		James Olsen	La Ronge
		Janice Sanderson*	La Ronge
		Pierette Settee*	Cumberland House
2007		Yolanda Adam*	La Ronge
Total	= 13	Steven Ballantyne	Pelican Narrows
Completed	= 7	Marlee Durocher*	Buffalo Narrows
		Patricia Greenleaf	Cumberland House
		Verna Iron*	Pinehouse Lake
		Caylah McLoud	Air Ronge
		Mindy McLeod*	Stanley Mission
		Joanne Natomagan*	Pinehouse Lake
		Reyna Natmogan*	Pinehouse Lake
		Shantelle Natomagan	Pinehouse Lake
		Arianne Nimetz*	La Ronge
		Brad Schafer	La Ronge
		Roxanne Sewap	Deschambault Lake

*Indicates student achieved 1 year or more of study

Year	Student Name	Community
2008	Dennis Bird	La Ronge
Total = 22	Joey Bird	La Ronge
Completed = 13	Flora Charles*	La Ronge
	Kristen L. Charles*	La Ronge
	Danielle Corrigan	Ile-a-la-Crosse
	Roseanne Dery*	La Ronge
	Katelynn Kimbley	Beauval
	Angel Laliberte	Green Lake
	Caitlyn Lee*	La Ronge
	Agnes McLeod	Stanley Mission
	Georgette McLeod*	Grandmother's Bay
	Joanna McLeod	Stanley Mission
	Kimberley Nagyl*	La Ronge
	Britta Neumann*	La Ronge
	Kari Petit*	Buffalo Narrows
	Honey Bernatchez (Ratt)*	Sucker River
	Jane Roberts	La Ronge
	Norma Roy*	Beauval
	Tiffany Sinclair*	Green Lake
	Megan Tkach*	La Ronge
	Susan Wasylenchuk	La Ronge
	Leah Wolkosky*	La Ronge
2009	Allan Adam*	Prince Albert
Total = 14	Jimmy Favel	Ile-a-la-Crosse
Completed = 9	Prestin Fleming	Stanley Mission
	Danika Haugen*	La Ronge
	Jenna Johnson*	La Ronge
	Yen Ly*	La Ronge
	Linda Mahoney	La Ronge
	Jasmine McCallum*	Buffalo Narrows
	Jordan McKay*	La Ronge
	Desiree Morin	Green Lake
	Stephanie Natomagan	Pinehouse Lake
	Vince Natomagan*	Pinehouse Lake
	Vernon Okemau*	Southend
	Chris Ross*	La Ronge

Year	Student Name	Community
2010	Dallas Apesis	Patuanak
Total = 17	Raquel Chaboyer (Carriere)*	Cumberland House
Completed = 7	Taylor Cowan	Air Ronge
	Elliot Desjarlais	Air Ronge
	Darren Hansen*	Buffalo Narrows
	Roberta Jobb*	Pelican Narrows
	Mindy Maggrah	La Ronge
	Aron McKay	La Ronge
	Terrilyn McKay*	Pelican Narrows
	Denise McKenzie (McLeod)*	Stanley Mission
	Susan McKenzie	Stanley Mission
	Daniel Mirasty	Air Ronge
	Katie Morin	Buffalo Narrows
	Aleksandr Olson*	La Ronge
	Monica Sierzycki*	La Ronge
	Tiffany Thompson	La Ronge
	Shelly Tsannie	Wollaston Lake

*Indicates student achieved 1 year or more of study

Year	Student Name	Community
2011	Kally Apesis	Patuanak
Total = 11	Dene Cheechum-Uhrich*	La Loche
Completed = 8	Stephen Clarke*	Buffalo Narrows
	Olivia Custer*	Pelican Narrows
	Nicole Helary*	La Ronge
	Jordan Klein*	La Loche
	Felicia Maurer*	Stanley Mission
	Ashley McLeod*	Stanley Mission
	Nicole Morin	Ile-a-la-Crosse
	Desiree Schafer*	La Ronge
	Scott Schooley	La Ronge
Pre-Nursing	Natalie Carriere	Cumberland House
Total = 13	Valdene Chaboyer*	Cumberland House
Completed = 6	Natasha Cook-Bird	La Ronge
	Ladawn Deschambeault*	Cumberland House
	Marilyn Linklater	Creighton
	Laura Maurice	Patuanak
	Aaron McKenzie*	La Ronge
	Denise McLeod (McKenzie)*	Stanley Mission
	Tamara McLeod*	Stanley Mission
	Kristy Mirasty*	Stanley Mission
	Gaylynn Ray*	Green Lake
	Danya Schooley*	La Ronge
	Michelle Thompson	La Ronge

Year	Student Name	Community
2012	Chelsea Bird	Southend
Total = 11	Dylan Cook	Cumberland House
Completed = 5	Kevin Courage*	La Ronge
	Rielle Desjarlais	La Ronge
	Farrin Janvier	La Loche
	Shaedan Klein*	La Loche
	Gabrielle Marsh (Natomagan)*	Pinehouse Lake
	Esther Ratt	La Ronge
	Desirae Roy	La Ronge
	Shae Shatilla*	Buffalo Narrows
	Alexis St. Pierre*	La Loche
Pre-Nursing	Melissa Eldridge*	Beauval
Total = 10	Billiejean Gauthier	Beauval
Completed = 6	Chelsea Glasser*	Buffalo Narrows
	Laura Laliberte	Cumberland House
	Joanna Lariviere*	Stanley Mission
	Kimberely McCallum*	Canoe Narrows
	Tammy McKenzie	Cumberland House
	Rosie Naytowhow*	Montreal Lake
	Georgina Shaw*	Cumberland House
	Vanessa Woytowich	La Ronge

*Indicates student achieved 1 year or more of study

Year	Student Name	Community
2013	Louise Apesis*	Patuanak
Total = 11	Amy Herman*	Patuanak
Completed = 9	Trina McKenzie-Roberts*	Stanley Mission
	Janice McLeod*	Stanley Mission
	Thurman Mercredi*	Fond du Lac
	Kolan Montgrand	La Loche
	Taylor Natomagan*	Pinehouse Lake
	Derek Sanderson*	Air Ronge
	Brianna Santana*	La Ronge
	Renita Swan*	La Ronge
	Sasha Toulejour*	La Loche
Pre-Nursing	Carmelita Ballantyne	Pelican Narrows
Total = 10	Eileen Charles*	La Ronge
Completed = 7	Sunshyne Charles*	La Ronge
	Tiffany Dorion	Cumberland House
	Laura Hrdlicka*	La Ronge
	Rolanda Laliberte*	Sandy Bay
	Lisa (Caroline) Lee	Sucker River
	Debbie McLeod*	Stanley Mission
	Farrah Natomagan*	Pinehouse Lake
	Vanessa Searson*	Air Ronge

APPENDIX VIII: NORPAC 2005-2014: OPTIMIZING COURSE OFFERINGS

WINTER 2014 (January 6—May 2)			
YEAR OF PROGRAM: 1			
NORTEP/PAC	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N	TEP-ONLY
CREE 101*	SOC 112**	PSYC 101	KHS 139
CREE 105*		PLSC 214	BIOL 108
DENE 101*		ENG 114 B ***	
DENE 105*			
INDG 201 A and B			
BIOL 120*			
DRAM 118			
RLST 100			
EPS 198			
MATH 101			
GEOL 102			
YEAR OF PROGRAM: 2			
NORTEP/PAC	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N	TEP-ONLY
ENG 114.3 A			HLTH 100
NS 270			SC 200
BIOL 312			
NS 262			
INDG 208			
CMPT 100			
YEAR OF PROGRAM: 3			
NORTEP/PAC	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N	TEP-ONLY
NS 350 ✂			EPSE 390
NS 264 ✂			ED 225
NS 370 ✂			EPS 225
WGST 100 ❖			ECUR 370
ENG 202 ✂			ECUR 376
INCC 201 ✂			ECUR 382
SPRING 2014 (May 5—June 27)			
YEAR OF PROGRAM: 1 & 2			
NORTEP/PAC*	PAC-ONLY	PAC-N**	TEP-ONLY
CMPT 100		KIN 275	EPS 100
GEOG 280		CHEM 104	EPSE 258
GEOL 122			

Key Terms:

NORTEP/PAC = courses taken by both NORTEP & NORPAC students
 PAC - ONLY = courses taken only by NORPAC students
 PAC-N = courses offered specifically for Pre-Nursing courses only
 TEP - only = courses taken only by NORTEP students

Comments – WINTER 2014:

* Courses offered that fit all three programs.
 ** This course is the only course that is offered specifically for the PAC program.
 *** A second course offering that is specifically for the PAC-N program.
 ✂ Year 3 BOTH courses are also open to some Year 2 PAC and Year 2 TEP students if they have the prerequisites and the timing of the course fits their schedules. Graduates from the TEP program have the option to return to NORTEP/NORPAC and complete these Year 3 PAC courses to obtain a second degree before entering the work force
 ❖ This course has also been offered for year 1 or 2 students. It is worked into the class schedule where it benefits those students who need the credits for their programs at that time.
EPS 198 – This NORTEP/NORPAC course is offered to those students who need additional assistance with their reading/writing skills.
There are a total of 43 courses offered during the WINTER 2014 semester. NORTEP Year 4 is not displayed in this table; these courses are taken by TEP students only.

Comments – SPRING 2014:

*The courses offered in this column are available to YEAR 1 TEP, and YEAR 1 and 2 PAC students.
 **The courses offered in this column are specifically for the PAC-N students.
There are a total of 9 courses offered during the SPRING 2014 semester. NORTEP Year 3 courses are not displayed in this table; these courses are taken by TEP students only.

Categories and Symbols

Grads	= graduated from NORTEP ("Standard A" 1979 - 86 and B.Ed. 1987 – 2005)
Teacher	= have been, or are teaching
Admin/Consult	= Principal, Vice-P, Consultant, Curriculum Developer
Significant	= Non-teaching position
Other Careers	= agency/company as named
Employment	= participated in workforce subsequent to graduation
+ /+2	= at least 1 went directly into school administration (not counted in 'teacher' column)
+2	= at least 2 went directly into school administration (not counted in 'teacher' column)

NORPAC (HISTORIC)

APPENDIX IX: NORPAC OUTCOMES—AS OF 2005 (HISTORIC)

NORPAC Outcomes—As of 2005

YEARS	ADMITTED	GRAD	DEGREE	CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA	EMPLOYMENT/ CAREER
1989 – 2003	256	184			
1989 – 1998	157	115	60	52	118

POST-NORPAC CAREERS

Sample Careers

- Aboriginal Human Resource Coordinator
- Accounting
- Addictions Worker (DCRE, Gov't of Sask.)
- Administration
- Artist
- Chemical Technician
- Clerical
- Conservation Officer
- Contractor (Log Home Builder)
- Corrections Officer
- Cree Language Consultant
- Dental Therapy
- Director (Day Care)
- Director (Health)
- Disabilities Worker
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Exec. Assistant to Chief
- Guidance Counselor
- Hydro Operator (Sask Power)
- Information Technology
(Web Designer, SASKTEL, Programmer, KCDC)
- Law (Lawyer, Judge)
- Loans Officer (Credit Union)
- Maintenance Worker
- Management (Construction)
- Manager (Bank)
- Manager (CAMECO)
- Manager (Early Childhood Centre)
- Manager (Health District)
- Manager (Housing)
- Manager (La Ronge Clinic)
- Manager (Radio Station)
- Mental Health Therapist
- Mines (Mill Worker, Mine Clerk, Miner)
- Minister
- Native Arts Consultant/Cultural Worker
- Nursing
- Parole Officer/Justice
- Principal
- Radiation Technologist
- RCMP
- Recreation Coordinator
- Registrar (NORTEP-NORPAC)
- SERM Crew Leader
- Social Work
- Teacher
- Treasurer (Métis Nation)
- Water Lab Technician
- Welfare Worker
- Youth Coordinator

**NORPAC: Destinations to Further Study/Training
1989 – 2003**

U OF S	U OF R	OTHER UNIVERSITIES	NORTHLANDS SIAST	SIFC FNUC	NORTEP	OTHER
64 (2-ITEP) (26-NORTEP)	28 (15-FNUC)	2-U of M 2-Minot	31	16	26	2-Dumont 3-SIIT 2-RCMP
Examples of Programs						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching • Native Studies • Admin. • Political Studies • Nursing • Aborig. Justice • Law • Science • Pre-Degree • Biology • English Lit. • Commerce • Physiotherapy • Sociology • International Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin. • Social Work • Special Ed. • Certif. • Corrections • Human Justice • Object Orient. • Software Tech • Bio-Chemistry • Indigenous Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Work • Law • Teaching • Master of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec. Leisure • Management • Nursing • Bus. Admin. • Business Software Appl. • Nursing • Early Child. Dev. • Eco-Tourism • Security Guard • Rad. Tech. • Chem. Tech. • Lab Tech. • Geo. Tech. • Power Engrn. • Integrated Res. Mngment • Hairdressing • Fire Comptroll. • Computer clerk • Prof. Cooking • EMT • Office Ed. • Med. Transcr. Rpr. • Forestry • Chef 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus. Admin. • Dental Therapy • Nursing • Cree Linguist • Aboriginal Justice • Social Work • Indian Soc. Work • INCA (Indian Communic.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Res. Mngmnt • Nursing • RCMP • Business Admin

COMMUNITIES OF ORIGIN
Students Admitted to NORPAC
(1989 – 2003)

Beauval	20
Black Lake	2
Buffalo Narrows	12
Canoe Lake	2
Cole Bay	4
Creighton/Denare Beach	5
Cumberland House	31
Deschambeault Lake	5
Dillon	3
Fond du Lac	2
Green Lake	12
Île-à-la Crosse	23
Jans Bay	3
La Loche	19
La Ronge	63
Montreal Lake	3
Patuanak	3
Pelican Narrows	2
Pinehouse	11
Sandy Bay	6
Southend	9
Stanley Mission	13
Waterhen	1
Weyakwin	2

TOTAL 256

