

PRESS RELEASE: Dr. Jocelyne Robinson joins the Verna J Kirkness Education Foundation as Program Director.



November 7 2018, Vancouver, BC, CANADA



The Verna J Kirkness Education Foundation is pleased to announce that Dr. Jocelyne Robinson has joined the Foundation as Program Director. She will have a broad range of duties with the Foundation focused on the delivery and expansion of the Program to First Nation, Metis and Inuit students across Canada.

“Her skills and interests are an excellent fit with the mission of the Foundation,” said Tony C L Williams, Chair of the Board of Directors “Dr. Robinson’s work experience, academic training and lived experiences as an Indigenous scholar, educator, artist, and mother have centered on creating highly reflexive critical inquiry.”

Dr Robinson is a member of the Timiskaming First Nation in Quebec. Her Algonquin Anishinaabe name is Kokomisminan Dibik-kakizis Nésaywin (Grandmother Moon’s Breath). She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Emily Carr University, and a Masters in First Nations Curriculum in Education from Simon Fraser University. She graduated with a Doctor of

Philosophy in Education in the Cross Faculty Inquiry (“CFI”) Department in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia (“UBC”).

Her PhD thesis and various scholarly research and teaching experiences all converge on how to bring together Indigenous and Western knowledge systems. She has achieved this through innovative art and teaching approaches so that science education may become more meaningful to Indigenous students and further enhance education for all students. She has extensive experience in Indigenous education and as an artist.

About the Verna J. Kirkness Education Foundation

The Foundation was established in 2008 with the primary goals to increase the number of First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) students graduating in science, engineering and medicine to develop young role models who will influence other students to complete Grade 12 and pursue post-secondary studies. It achieves these goals by bringing Grade 11 FNMI students to a University campus for one week where they live in residence, meet with Elders at Aboriginal student centres, and do independent research with faculty mentors and their research groups.

The Foundation's namesake, Dr. Verna J. Kirkness, has been a leader in the field of Indigenous education since the 1950s. Her active involvement in the Program has been a major factor in its growth and success. To date, over 400 FNMI students have completed the Verna J. Kirkness Science and Engineering Education Program and are proud to be recognized as Kirkness scholars. In Georgina Balfour's words, a 2012 Kirkness scholar from Norway House MB, "the Program allowed me to gain a great amount of knowledge and experience which is going to help me push forward in furthering my education into a science field."

The Program started at the University of Manitoba in 2008 and expanded to include the University of Saskatchewan in 2014 and UBC in 2015. In 2019, the Program will be offered at those Universities and six additional Universities: Kwantlen Polytechnic University, the University of Victoria, the First Nations University of Canada, the University of Calgary, the University of Alberta, and the University of Ottawa. A total of 150 students will be accepted into the Program in 2019.

For more information about the Foundation please visit <http://www.vernakirkness.org/>.

For information about supporting the Foundation please contact Tony C.L. Williams, Chair of the Board of Directors tony.williams@vernjkirkness.org or Dr. Ron Woznow, Executive Director ron.woznow@vernjkirkness.org.