

A photograph of a man and three children on a boat. The man, on the left, is wearing a grey hoodie and a black cap with sunglasses. He is holding a fishing net. Three children are standing next to him, each holding a fish. The child on the far right is wearing a yellow life vest. The boat is on the water, and the background shows a clear sky and the horizon.

# 2022 Impact Report



**TRUE NORTH AID**

Dedicated to providing practical humanitarian support to northern  
and remote Indigenous communities.





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# Letter from the Director

As I reflect on this past year, I want to begin by saying thank you for joining us on the journey. Through your support, you helped send more than 110,000 pounds of aid which included more than 750 bed sets, 2,000 backpacks, and warm winter clothing distributed to more than 50 northern Indigenous communities throughout Canada. A milestone was reached through our Moon-Time Sisters Project which has now sent more than 2 million menstrual products.

This past year, we launched the Community Initiatives Program which supported more than 33 Indigenous-led projects aimed at creating positive community-centered change. Examples include a Doula program providing critical care items for moms and infants, traditional on-the-land programs supporting youth and culture, food banks, breakfast programs and so much more. Reconciliation programs provided support for those struggling with intergenerational trauma within the community that has resulted in a pattern of substance abuse stemming from the residential school system.

The Indigenous Youth Opportunities Program saw eight Indigenous youth with an entrepreneurial spirit graduate the program and step out toward their dreams. Once again after a two year pause due to covid, Hockey Cares saw another successful exchange between youth from Attawapiskat and Oakville. They learned from one another, played hockey together and built valuable relationships.

These are just a few of the many highlights in 2022, all made possible through your partnership and generous giving. Your support goes beyond providing for basic physical needs. It's also about hope, justice, dignity and self-respect so those we serve can achieve their dreams!

With deep gratitude,

Kenneth Smid  
Executive Director



Photos: (Le





## Our Mission

As a Canadian registered charity, our mandate is to provide practical humanitarian assistance through initiatives established on eight foundational stones of support. These include self-determination, reconciliation, water, food, health, housing, culture and education.

With significant barriers in accessing goods and services in remote communities and striking inequities in health and wellness outcomes, income, food, and housing, there is much work to be done. The issues facing Indigenous communities in Canada are complex and the result of a culmination of events and actions that have transpired over the past 150 years. True North Aid believes that the right to self-governance and self-determination is key to addressing these inequalities and closing the poverty gap.

All our activities are designed to help inspire and empower Indigenous peoples to pursue their dreams and, in turn, empower their communities. Through reconciliation and educational activities, we raise awareness and promote an understanding of the tragic legacy of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in Canada, and where we find ourselves in today. As we do, attitudes and prejudices change and we open doors to a broader discussion and understanding of the options that are available.

## Stones of Support





# Your Impact at a Glance

100+  
Communities  
Served in 2022

6087+ People  
Supported in  
2022

Total Pounds  
of Aid Shipped  
in 2022:  
**114, 555**

Moon Time  
Sisters  
Products  
Reached:  
Over 2 Million

**34**  
Community-  
Led Initiatives  
Supported



*"...working with True North Aid  
empowers us to meet our  
community's needs in the way we  
like best to operate: nimble, direct,  
simple, and loving."*

*- Jess, Bella Bella, British Columbia*





# Your Impact at a Glance



*"Please continue to do amazing things. Our communities are growing because of your programs."*

*- Rebecca, Birch Narrows, Saskatchewan*





# Community Initiatives



The True North Aid Community Initiatives program is a multi-tiered funding program supporting Indigenous-led projects in northern and remote communities in Canada that aim to create positive and impactful community-centred change. We believe that Indigenous self-determination and self-governance are key to addressing inequities and social justice initiatives. True North Aid provides support toward projects that empower communities with holistic and sustainable projects focused on, but not limited to:

- The advancement of education, cultural revitalization, and community-building
- Reclaiming plant/food sovereignty
- Addressing housing inequities
- The promotion of holistic physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being
- Equitable access to essential resources

**34**  
**Community-  
Led Initiatives  
Supported in  
2022**



## Program Highlights

### **CAMP Music Program**

Providing both traditional and non-traditional instruments to youth in northern Saskatchewan communities

### **Traditional Moosehide Tanning**

Bringing families together through traditional moosehide tanning workshops in Fort McCleod, Northwest Territories

### **Awaken The Canoes**

Supporting youth and families on their tribal journeys by canoe on the Salish Sea in British Columbia

### **Youth Empowerment Summer Camps**

Encouraging at-risk youth from northern Saskatchewan to come together and experience their culture, kinship and new experiences throughout the summer

### **Indigenous Languages Conference**

Providing tools for educators to continue to support Indigenous Languages in classrooms across Saskatchewan





# Program Highlights



## Misipawistik Doula Program

The Enhancement for Prenatal Doula Program in Misipawistik Cree Nation gives expecting and postpartum mothers the necessary support to thrive within their community. They also help to provide essentials for both the mother and baby, such as maxi pads, hair care products, breast pumps, Enfamil milk, diapers, bottles, blankets, and much more. This program recently facilitated a summer camp in late June for families to register and participate in workshops, which included dreamcatcher, fleece blankets, and wooden sign making. With these initiatives, the Doula Program aims to foster kinship, life skills, and revitalized birthing knowledge and cultural traditions. The Doula Program will continue to provide essential items for mother and baby and hold more workshops in the upcoming months.

## Wapaw Canoe Program

This canoe program, ran in Pelican Narrows SK, integrated traditional, cultural and physical activities and teachings, to enlighten and educate community members.

With the use of the grant funds, the community was able to hire a certified canoe trainer, who was a great asset to the students. The canoes were used by the students for training for the Indigenous Summer Games, which happened at the end of July, and for recreational use by the community for the remainder of the year!





# Supplies to Thrive

Many First Nation communities, hamlets, and towns across northern Canada face significant barriers to accessing essential goods and services. Often situated in remote areas that are only accessible by plane, barge, or a long drive from major city centres, communities are forced to pay exorbitant prices for food and other goods such as backpacks, beds, and warm clothing. At True North Aid, we believe that where you live should not determine the quality of life you are afforded to. Through our Supplies to Thrive Program, we ship quality goods to northern and remote communities so that families are not forced to choose between spending their money on groceries marked at high prices and warm boots and clothing for their children.

Our annual "Back to School Program" provided 16 communities with over 2000 backpacks with school supplies!

## Program Highlight A Good Night's Sleep

38  
communities  
supported

Living in a remote community means that shipping costs are exorbitant, and new mattresses are difficult to access. Fulfilling these bed requests helped to ensure that children, parents, Elders, and other individuals living in remote communities had a good night's sleep. This not only positively impacted their physical and mental health, but also a sense of hope.

759  
bed sets  
delivered!

Each set included;  
a mattress,  
bedframe, blankets,  
mattress protector,  
pillows and sheets

in partnership with

**silk&  
snow**





# Reconciliation



## Highlights



## Hockey Cares

Hockey Cares returned in 2022 after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 30 youths from both Attawapiskat and Oakville, Ontario, took part in a cross-cultural exchange to learn from one another and join in together for the love of hockey!

*" We were received warmly from our friends that we made during the summer and the entire Attawapiskat community. The elders were kind enough to share their knowledge about the relationship between the Indigenous community and mother earth, wildlife, and our responsibility to each other.*

*Experiencing some components of the culture included being in a winter camp, preparing wild game, cooking, and feasting on a traditional goose and dumpling lunch. We were able to bond with our Attawapiskat peers through activities such as playing hockey and basketball, dancing, games, and just hanging out together and talking.*

*This was one of the best experiences we have ever had, building new friendships that will last a very long time. "*

*Charlotte, Hockey Cares participant from Oakville, ON*





# Other Highlights from 2022

## Settler Education & Reconciliation

In 2022, True North Aid continued to provide settler education sessions through the lens of Reconciliation. These events included the Reconciliation Walk, which took place at Little Cataraqui Conservation Area in Kingston, the online Settler Discussion Series and Becoming Kin Retreat. These programs will continue into 2023 and be featured in various cities across the country.



Katie Kooman, Reconciliation Coordinator, with guest speakers Patty Krawec, Alexis Shotwell at Becoming Kin Retreat

## Building Our Strengths

This program brought together non-Indigenous health care works with Indigenous community members to attend fishing trips and educational seminars on Inuit traditions and culture.



## #WeSeeYou Trip The Ballantyne Project

Youth from the remote community of Fort Chipewyan First Nation in Alberta visited Vancouver to experience the sights, sounds and educational opportunities awaiting them.







## Indigenous Youth Opportunities Program

This program supports Indigenous Youth who desire to lead mental health and wellness programs within their communities. By providing micro-grants to each youth participant, True North Aid helped to empower youth to express and articulate their wellness journeys through interest-based activities, ranging from the arts, music, and sports to traditional, cultural, and land-based healing strategies.

Throughout the year, each youth was provided mentorship opportunities, and we are happy to announce that all seven youths in the program graduated the program with a celebratory ceremony at the McMichael Art Gallery in Toronto on June 21, 2022.



## Moon Time Sisters

Founded by Métis woman Nicole White, Moon Time Sisters has been providing menstrual products to northern communities across the country for over 5 years. This year, they achieved their goal of 2 million products collected, and were the recipients of \$250,000 from Shoppers Drug Mart and Joe Fresh!





## Board of Directors

Scott Harris, *Chairman*

Bob Langlois, *Vice-President*

Ally Cooper, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Kim Sigurdson, *Director*

Steve Kataquapit, *Director*

Valerie Vickery, *Director*

## Indigenous Advisory

Norman McCallum

Christine Lefebvre

Kerry Spence

Leo Atlookan

Lynda Gerow

Dwight Ballantyne



## Staff

Kenneth Smid, National Director

Marilyn Shuart, Finance Manager

Amanda Stolk, Outreach Manager

Bethany Soricetti, Finance Administrator

Katie Koopman, Reconciliation Coordinator



Thank you to  
our generous  
supporters  
and partners.  
You make  
it possible.





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# TRUE NORTH AID

Dedicated to providing practical  
humanitarian support to northern  
and remote Indigenous  
communities.



True North Aid is a  
Registered Canadian Charity -  
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