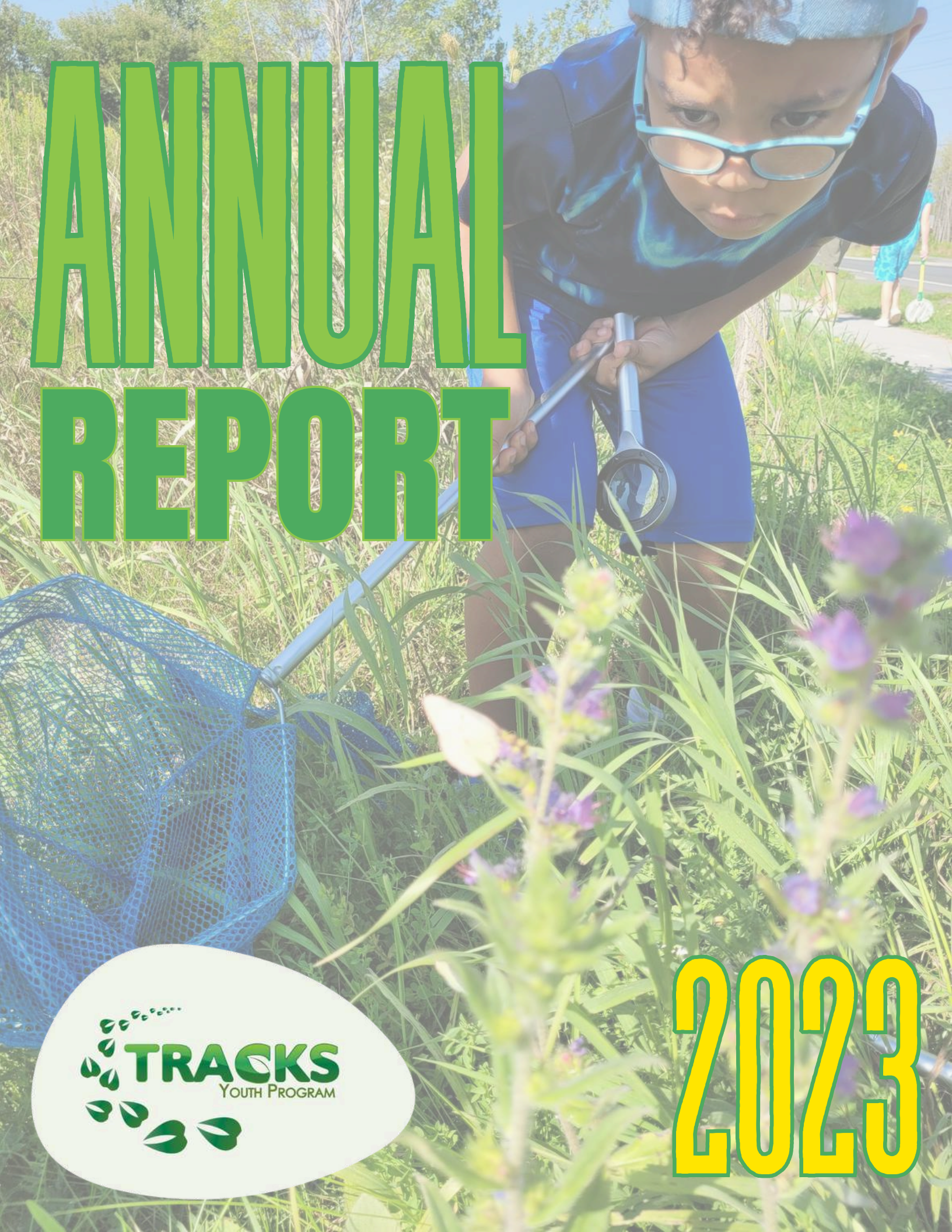


ANNUAL REPORT



2023

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MESSAGE FROM THE TRACKS TEAM

Aaniin!

It is always fun to look back and reflect on everything that has been accomplished each year at TRACKS, and 2023 is no different! It is a privilege to share our 2023 Annual Report which includes highlights from many exciting programs that TRACKS carried out during a year of growth and change. In these pages, you will see highlights of many tried and true TRACKS programs, as well as some new and exciting initiatives! You will also see us report on TRACKS activities in a new way: differentiating between School Programs, Youth Programs and Camp Programs. This is a new model for program delivery at TRACKS that we are excited to share!

In 2023, we had one of our busiest ever seasons offering school workshops for students and teachers. Of course, TRACKS is well known for our dynamic, hands-on school workshops. However, this year we were proud to deliver more free digital literacy workshops than ever before! Our summer season was equally busy; between camps on campus, camps in First Nations, team building events, and our Oshkwazin Trailblazer program, it truly was non-stop! One of the many exciting milestones of our summer in 2023 was the pilot of our accreditation partnership with Actua Academy. In an exciting first for TRACKS, we were extremely proud to be able offer our Trailblazer staff a high school credit for their employment with us, adding yet another incentive to joining TRACKS as a Trailblazer!

In short, 2023 was yet another inspiring year at TRACKS. We have so many people and partnerships to thank for this success. First and foremost, we are incredibly grateful to our Steering Team, Advisory Circle, Core Staff and Seasonal Staff. These individuals (as well as the placement students and volunteers we have the pleasure to host!) are the spark behind every single program and event that TRACKS delivers, and they are the inspiring faces that engage youth through our programming day in and day out. We also owe a debt of gratitude to our funders, donors, and sponsors. Without likeminded, conscientious funders and supporters TRACKS simply could not do what we do. We cannot express our gratitude enough to those who continue to choose to support TRACKS. Chi-miigwech!

Thank you for reading! I hope you enjoy reflecting on 2023 with TRACKS as much as we have!

Baamaapi!

ABOUT TRACKS








TRACKS is an experiential program hosted by Trent University within the Indigenous Environmental Studies and Sciences Program (IESS), and operates in collaboration with founding partner organization Kawartha World Issues Centre (KWIC) and the First Peoples House of Learning (FPHL).



PURPOSE STATEMENT

TRACKS facilitates dynamic, land-based youth programming that braids multiple scientific approaches by centering Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

PROGRAM INTENTIONS

-  To offer youth opportunities to actively engage with a multitude of worldviews to further understand and develop their personal skills, gifts, and tools.
-  To contribute to hands-on InSTEAM (Indigenous Science Technology Engineering Art and Math) learning opportunities from the elementary to post-secondary level.
-  To facilitate spaces where intergenerational knowledge can be shared and mentoring relationships can be nurtured.
-  To provide spaces where youth can be empowered to build relationships, learn together, and grow as leaders while honouring their diverse identities and backgrounds.
-  To encourage youth to deepen reciprocal relationships within their environments and embody understandings of their responsibilities to the land.
-  To collaborate with Indigenous Peoples, school boards and community organizations to strengthen relationships and activate culturally responsive learning opportunities.
-  To foster meaningful employment and volunteer experiences for young people interested in land-centric and InSTEAM work

TRACKS

STEERING TEAM

The Steering Team provides advice and direction to TRACKS to support the delivery and development of TRACKS School Programs, Camp Programs and Youth Programs, as well as to ensure long-term trust and continuity in the leadership of the program.

Chris Furgal (Co-Director, Indigenous Environmental Studies and Sciences Program)

Sam Rockbrune (Executive Director, Kawartha World Issues Centre)

Kelli Marshall (Indigenous Enrolment Advisor, First Peoples House of Learning)

MIIGWECH!

We would like to share a special note of gratitude to **Sam Rockbrune and KWIC** for providing extra leadership support to TRACKS in 2023 as our program underwent various leadership transitions. Throughout this time, KWIC provided interim leadership support in the form of dedicated Executive Director hours. By providing these dedicated hours, Sam and the KWIC Board allowed TRACKS the organizational leadership and support that was needed to maintain our programming and continue on with a successful year full of impact. This is just one example of the ways that KWIC goes above and beyond to tangibly support youth and community education in our community.

Gchi-miigwech to Sam and the KWIC Board for their unwavering support of TRACKS throughout 2023.

We also wish to share our appreciation for **James Miller** (Indigenous Enrolment Advisor, First Peoples House of Learning) as he has moved on from his role with the TRACKS Steering Team. Miigwech for all of your patient guidance over the years!

TRACKS

ADVISORY CIRCLE

The TRACKS Advisory Circle is a group of community members who bring unique perspectives, skills and knowledges to advise and inform the direction of TRACKS programs. Over the last 14 years, TRACKS has grown larger in impact and reach than was ever imagined, but the program has never swayed from its original vision and practice, to offer culturally-relevant, land-based programming to youth interested in the braiding of multiple sciences and worldviews.

The Advisory Circle represents the incredibly supportive and knowledgeable community which has surrounded the program for the last decade. We extend our deepest thanks to them for their continued involvement.



THIS YEAR IN NUMBERS

Youth Engagement

2,387

Total # of youth engaged

247

of Indigenous youth

85

of workshops for youth

Educator & Parent Engagement

206

Total # of educators & parents engaged

70

of educators in workshops

115

of classroom teachers engaged

Employee Engagement

20

Total # of staff employed

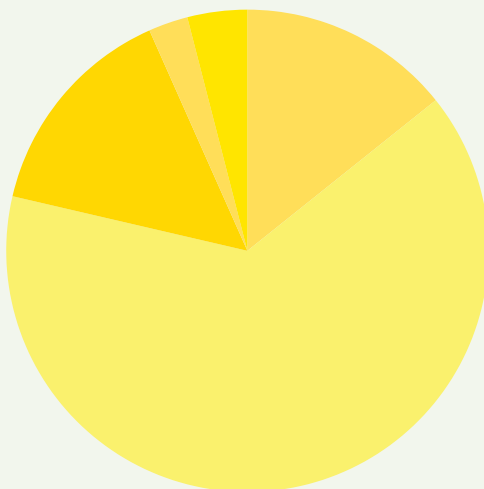
12

of Indigenous staff employed

10

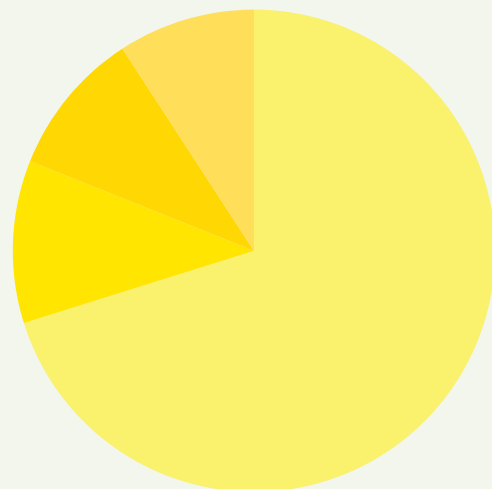
of University students employed

REVENUE



Actua	64.4%	\$178,813
Other Grants	14.7%	\$40,858
Federal Grants	14.3%	\$39,635
Self-Generated	4%	\$11,141
Donations & Sponsorships	2.6%	\$7,351

EXPENSES



Staff & Personnel Related	70.2%	\$180,527
Financial Administration	10.9%	\$28,047
School & Camp Programming	9.8%	\$25,109
Youth (Oshkwazin) Programming	9.2%	\$23,624

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023 SCHOOL PROGRAMS

TRACKS School Programs runs a wide variety of educational programs throughout the year for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Activities include classroom workshops about coding, Anishinaabemowin, and Indigenous and Western science. All programming is fun, hands-on, and experiential!

In the fall of 2023, we hit the ground running with 2 new amazing coding programs: **Manoomin Coding Connections** and the **Hawk & Hare Unplugged Coding Game**. It was so rewarding to help develop students' coding skills and increase their knowledge of western and Indigenous science! A special chi-miigwech to Geneva Walker for her work in developing these workshops!

We were able to offer these Indigenous science & digital skills-based workshops barrier-free (i.e. at absolutely NO COST) to schools and groups in the Peterborough area thanks to funding from Actua via the Government of Canada's Cancode program. Miigwech to Actua and the Government of Canada for this impactful funding!



HAWK & HARE UNPLUGGED CODING GAME

Hawk & Hare is always full of laughs and surprises as students learn valuable coding skills while having fun outside! Students don't just learn to code - they also practice teamwork and leadership skills while learning about predator-prey dynamics in local ecosystems. During this unplugged coding activity, students work in teams to collect food and safely return home. They have to adapt to a series of obstacles that Waaboz and Mshikekek (hares and hawks) encounter in real life and listen to their teammate's coding commands!

WHAT DID TEACHERS HAVE TO SAY?

"TRACKS brings Science and Indigenous learning together in an interesting and engaging way. Students enjoy the activities and have the opportunity to develop their collaboration, listening, and participation skills."

"Our class thoroughly enjoyed the workshop presented by TRACKS! The presenters were fun, engaging, and knowledgeable, and the students appreciated a hands-on, interactive learning experience related to ecosystems and Indigenous language. Thanks for a great workshop!"

MANOOMIN CODING CONNECTIONS



During Manoomin Coding Connections, students use code and Anishinaabemowin to build a map for a small ozobot robot to follow. As the ozobot robot travels through the map, students encounter different beings and learn about the relationships these beings have with Manoomin (wild rice). It's exciting to watch students use creative problem solving and learn about the interconnectedness of all living things during this workshop.

WHAT DID TEACHERS HAVE TO SAY?

"My students absolutely LOVED the Manoomin Coding Connections TRACKS workshop presented by Trent University! The hands-on activity that incorporates concepts of coding, Anishinaabemowin language, the workings of ozobots and the importance of reciprocity in nature ensures full engagement by all! This is a must for all Intermediate teachers so book your TRACKS workshop today!"

"Fun and engaging way to learn coding and indigenous language. We all loved the workshop and I would recommend it to anyone! Thank you so much!"

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023 SCHOOL PROGRAMS

In addition to workshops for youth, TRACKS School Programs also offers our workshops as professional development opportunities for teachers, teacher candidates and community educators. In this way, we are able to help equip educators with the tools necessary to integrate Indigenous science into their curriculum. We are very proud to have grown this offering this year, and look forward to engaging many more educators in the future!



WHAT DID TEACHER PARTICIPANTS THINK?

It was great to have TRACKS facilitators come in and work with our teacher-candidates. This enabled [teacher-candidate]'s to experience the activity as learners and be aware that they could do these activities in their own teaching"

"What a great way to demystify coding, and to bring indigenous ways of knowing into [coding], something that seems very scientific and daunting. The instructors were well prepared and engaging. I would highly recommend this workshop!"

OUR SCHOOL PROGRAMS INSTRUCTORS

This year, TRACKS was lucky to have such an incredible team of School Programs instructors this year! These instructors were willing to dive head-first into new programs and experiences. They brought incredible knowledge and enthusiasm to every workshop they delivered across the Peterborough area. Our instructors have been exceptional in every way!

CHI- MIIGWECH TO:



KELSEY ROOTE
TANEZ SANDERS-NAKOGEE
JESSICA COOK
DIONOVAN GROSBECK
LOGAN LAZORE

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A SCHOOL PROGRAMS INSTRUCTOR WITH TRACKS?

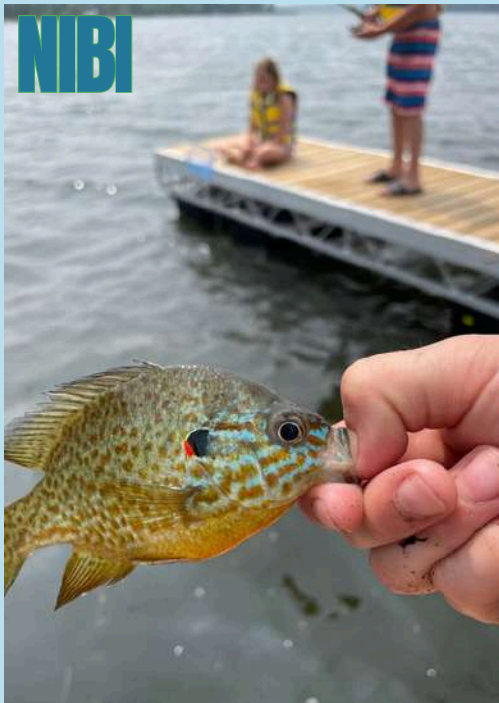
"Facilitating TRACKS workshops is like having a cup of coffee: it provides good energy! Being an instructor this year was a good and reliable position that helped connect me to the real world outside of university. It was nice to make an impact again! I enjoyed working with TRACKS!"

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023 CAMP PROGRAMS

In 2023, TRACKS Camp Programs were busy throughout the summer season! We collaborated with the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre to host two 5-day long summer camps from our shared tipi space at their location. We also hosted camps in Curve Lake and Alderville First Nations. As usual, all of our camp programs were targeted to youth ages 6-12 and braided multiple worldviews and scientific principles through fun activities!

Throughout our Camp Programs this summer we incorporated teachings about Nibi (water) and Shkode (fire). Our Camp Programs team decided to focus on these themes because not only were the campers able to hear from Knowledge Holders about these important teachings, but they were also able to try their hand at things such as fire starting, fire keeping, and play fun games about water beings like River Race & Turtle Hurdles!

NIBI



WHAT DID CAMPERS & PARENTS HAVE TO SAY?

"I liked TRACKS camp because it taught me so much about Indigenous culture and science. I learned how to say animal names in Anishinaabemowin language. I also liked how you taught me so much about respecting nature and the living beings around us. I loved dissecting owl pellets because it taught me so much about the animal's body and how it works. I loved how you taught us how the puff ball mushrooms are edible. We also played so many fun games that were both awesome and educational."

"My children thoroughly enjoyed this enriching, outdoor camp. They returned home each night with excitement as they shared their experiences dissecting owl pellets, hiking and exploring the forest, meeting new friends, connecting with nature and the physical environment and learning about Indigenous culture through the teachings of an Elder."

SHKODE



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023 YOUTH PROGRAMS

There are many ways that TRACKS is involved in community education outside of our School Programs and Camp Programs. Starting in 2023, these offerings are encapsulated under our Youth Programs which include our Oshkwazin Indigenous Leadership programs.

In 2023, we ran a handful of exciting and immersive Youth Programs including a Building our Bundles event and a Cultural Connections event in collaboration with KPRDSB, Curve Lake First Nation and Hiawatha First Nation. In 2023, TRACKS also continued a strong partnership with the Youth Circle for Mother Earth (YCME) through Ontario Nature! Our youth Programs team helped to host a 3-day YCME Youth Summit which was held at Camp Wahanowin in Rama First Nation. At the summit, TRACKS facilitated Orange Shirt Beading workshops for participants and got to soak in the beautiful scenery across all 3-days of the summit!

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS



BUILDING OUR BUNDLES



YCME YOUTH SUMMIT



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023 YOUTH PROGRAMS

During the summer of 2023, our Youth Programs team grew with the addition of 5 Indigenous high school Trailblazers! Our Trailblazer Summer Employment program provides part-time summer employment for Indigenous youth during July and August. During their time as a Trailblazer, youth receive teachings and mentorship from TRACKS staff, local Indigenous Elders, and Knowledge Holders.

By the end of the summer, the youth took some of the knowledge they learned, and with support from TRACKS staff, they paired up to prepare one of four Trailblazer Land Camps for other Indigenous youth in their community. All land camps are based around a Traditional Knowledge topic with teachings shared by an invited Elder or Knowledge Holders, as well as a craft or hands-on activity. In 2023, we hosted land camps with teachings on making & birthing shakers, water ecosystems, beading & berries, and tracking!

SHAKERS



WATER ECOSYSTEMS



BEADING & BERRIES



TRACKING



TRAILBLAZER LAND CAMPS & ACTUA

For the first time in 2023, the Summer Trailblazers were also eligible for a high school course credit (GPP30) through the Ontario Ministry of Education via our network membership with Actua. With this incredible opportunity, our Trailblazers got to take an important step towards their futures as leaders in their communities!

WHAT DID THE TRAILBLAZERS HAVE TO SAY?

"It was so fun and I'm so glad I could be a part of the TRACKS team and a Trailblazer!"



THE TRACKS TEAM

SEASONAL STAFF



KELSEY ROOTE
Camp Programs
Coordinator



LUCILLE DOKIS
School Programs
Coordinator



JAJDA PONCE
Trailblazer Program
Supervisor



MONTSERRAT ESCOBEDO
Program Evaluation Intern



WILLOW GRAHAM DES VIGNES
Social Media &
Communications Lead



JESSICA COOK
Summer Camp
Programs Instructor



CHEYENNE JACOBS-CULKEEN
Summer Camp
Programs Instructor



ZIGWAN LAPOINTE
Summer Camp
Programs Instructor



TANEZ SANDERS-NAKOGEE
Summer Camp
Programs Instructor



DAISY HEARD
Oshkwazin Trailblazer/
Focus on Youth
Placement Student



LAILA MACKENZIE
Oshkwazin Trailblazer



MARK SUTHERLAND
Oshkwazin Trailblazer



LACHLYNN HARTWICK
Oshkwazin Trailblazer



MIGIZI WEBB
Oshkwazin Trailblazer

PLACEMENT STUDENTS AND CONTRACTS

GENEVA WALKER
Coding and Curriculum
Development

KIMBER GOODKEY
4th-year BSW

DIONOVAN GROSBECK
IMPACT Leadership

AINSLEY DUNN
TEACH Outside the Box

***SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR SOME MEMORIES
WITH OUR TEAM THIS YEAR!***

THE TRACKS TEAM

CORE STAFF



SAM ROCKBRUNE
Interim Director
Steering Team Member



RACHEL GILHAM
School Programs
Coordinator



MADISON LAURIN
Manager of Administration,
Finance & Development



JAIDA PONCE
Program Assistant



KELLY KING
Education Director

CHI MIIGWECH EVERYONE!



A network
member of

actua

Actua provides training, resources and support to its national network of members located at universities and colleges across Canada in the delivery of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education outreach programming. Each year, these members engage over 350,000 youth in 500 communities nationwide. Please visit Actua at www.actua.ca.

2023-24 Actua National Funders

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UNIVERSITY

INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES &
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KwIC
Kawartha World Issues Centre
Connecting for Change



PETERBOROUGH
KMHUNTER
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



TD Friends of the
Environment
Foundation



WE THANK YOU
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN
OUR PROGRAMS

TRACKS YOUTH PROGRAM

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Peterborough, ON K9L 0G2
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www.tracksprogram.ca
info@tracksprogram.ca



INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES &
SCIENCES PROGRAM



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